

City of Gering

Summary

- From 2010 to 2015, population decreased by 2.0 percent, or by 166 persons.
- The vacancy rate in the Fall 2016 Rental Survey was 4.3 percent, which compared to a vacancy rate of 4.1 percent one year ago.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population Characteristics

According to Census Bureau data, Gering’s population increased by 7.52 percent between 2000 and 2015, from 7,751 to 8,334 persons. This growth rate was lower than the 10.8 percent estimated increase statewide. Census estimates indicated a decrease of 38 persons in Gering between 2014 and 2015, as shown below in Table III.9.1.

Subject	Nebraska	% Growth Since 2000	Gering	% Growth Since 2000
2000 Census	1,711,263		7,751	.
July 2001 Estimate	1,719,836	0.5%	7,769	.2
July 2002 Estimate	1,728,292	1.0%	7,843	1.2
July 2003 Estimate	1,738,643	1.6%	7,893	1.8
July 2004 Estimate	1,749,370	2.2%	7,925	2.2
July 2005 Estimate	1,761,497	2.9%	7,998	3.2
July 2006 Estimate	1,772,693	3.6%	8,059	4.0
July 2007 Estimate	1,783,440	4.2%	8,157	5.2
July 2008 Estimate	1,796,378	5.0%	8,274	6.7
July 2009 Estimate	1,812,683	5.9%	8,377	8.1
2010 Census	1,826,341	6.7%	8,500	9.7
July 2011 Estimate	1,842,383	7.7%	8,496	9.6
July 2012 Estimate	1,855,973	8.5%	8,477	9.4
July 2013 Estimate	1,869,300	9.2%	8,472	9.3
July 2014 Estimate	1,882,980	10.0%	8,372	8.0
July 2015 Estimate	1,896,190	10.8%	8,334	7.5

Table III.9.2, on the following page, shows the population of Gering by race and ethnicity, as reported in the 2010 Census and 2015 five-year American Community Survey (ACS) data. The white population accounted for 95.0 percent of the population, with a total of 8,006 persons. There were also 87 black and 17 or Native American persons residing in the City of Gering. In 2010 the Hispanic population accounted for 17.2 percent of the population, with 1,461 persons, which compared to a population share of 16.1 percent in 2015 and a Hispanic population of 1,360.

Table III.9.2				
Population by Race and Ethnicity				
City of Gering				
2010 Census and 2015 5-year ACS Data				
Race	2010 Census		2015 Five-Year ACS	
	Population	% of Total	Population	% of Total
White	7,612	89.6%	8,006	95.0%
Black	50	.6%	87	1.0%
American Indian	126	1.5%	17	.2%
Asian	33	.4%	0	.0%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	8	.1%	22	.3%
Other	466	5.5%	136	1.6%
Two or More Races	205	2.4%	161	1.9%
Total	8,500	100.0%	8,429³²	100.0%
Hispanic	1,461	17.2%	1,360	16.1%

Table III.9.3, below, shows the population of Gering by age, as reported in the 2010 Census and 2015 five-year ACS data. The percentage of persons from 15 to 24 years of age changed from 11.7 percent of the total population in 2010 to 10.4 percent in 2015. The number of people from 25 to 34 years of age accounted for 15.5 percent of the population in 2015, or 1,307 persons. The percentage of people aged 65 or Older changed from 17.1 percent of the total population in 2010 to 19.1 percent in 2015. Additional age details are shown below.

Table III.9.3				
Population by Age				
City of Gering				
2010 Census and 2015 5-year ACS Data				
Age	2010 Census		2015 Five-Year ACS	
	Population	% of Total	Population	% of Total
Under 14	1,809	21.3%	1,811	21.5%
15 - 24	995	11.7%	877	10.4%
25 - 34	1,074	12.6%	1,307	15.5%
35 - 44	929	10.9%	871	10.3%
45 - 54	1,110	13.1%	808	9.6%
55 - 64	1,130	13.3%	1,145	13.6%
65 or Older	1,453	17.1%	1,610	19.1%
Total	8,500	100.0%	8,429	100.0%

³² The 2015 five year ACS population figure is a five year average and will not match the one year 2015 population estimate shown in the previous table.

School Enrollment

Between 2010 and 2016, the number of children enrolled in schools in the City of Gering decreased by 6.7 percent. Over the same period the school enrollment for those aged 15 to 18 fell by 4.4 percent to 614 persons, while the enrollment for those aged 5 to 10 decreased by 12.8 percent, to 751 persons. Between 2015 and 2016, school enrollment fell by 2.4 percent or from 2,030 to 1,982 persons. These results can be seen in Table III.9.4, at right.

Age	5 to 10	11 to 14	15 to 18	Total
2000	697	618	615	1,930
2001	747	623	603	1,973
2002	734	607	627	1,968
2003	726	635	621	1,982
2004	761	661	628	2,050
2005	825	631	642	2,098
2006	879	649	616	2,144
2007	848	647	681	2,176
2008	862	612	687	2,161
2009	831	603	640	2,074
2010	861	621	642	2,124
2011	890	619	642	2,151
2012	897	646	617	2,160
2013	849	660	636	2,145
2014	824	624	609	2,057
2015	805	611	614	2,030
2016	751	617	614	1,982

HOUSING

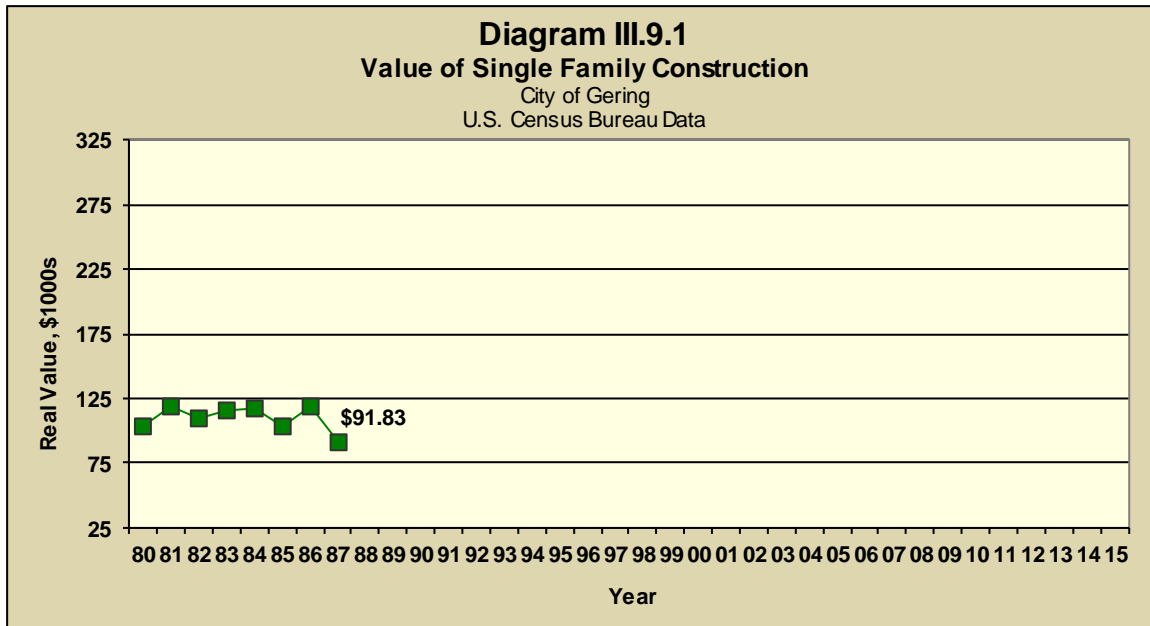
Housing Development

Annually, the Census Bureau reports for each city the number and valuation of building permits issued by permit-issuing agencies.³³ In most years for which data are presented, single-family unit construction represented the majority of residential development in the city, with single-family building permit authorizations in Gering numbering 41 in 1980, 0 in 1990, 0 in 2000, and 0 in 2008. Between 2014 and 2015, single-family permits remained unchanged at 0 units. Additional details of permit activity and per-unit valuations are shown in Table III.9.5.

³³ Permits do not necessarily translate into a precise and full count of housing production. Some dwellings permitted are never constructed. As well, some dwellings may be built in areas that lack a building permitting process, have a lax permitting process, or have insufficient oversight of construction activity.

Table III.9.5									
Building Permits and Valuation									
City of Gering									
1980–2015 Census Bureau Data									
Year	Authorized Construction in Permit Issuing Areas					Per Unit Valuation, 1000s of Real 2015 Dollars			
	Single-Family Units	Duplex Units	Tri- and Four-Plex Units	Multi-Family Units	Total Units	Single-Family Units(\$)	Duplex Units (\$)	Tri- and Four-Plex Units (\$)	Multi-Family Units (\$)
1980	41	2	0	0	43	104	124	0	0
1981	29	0	24	0	53	118	0	40	0
1982	13	0	0	0	13	110	0	0	0
1983	15	0	0	0	15	115	0	0	0
1984	8	2	0	0	10	118	54	0	0
1985	6	0	0	0	6	104	0	0	0
1986	10	0	0	0	10	119	0	0	0
1987	1	0	0	0	1	92	0	0	0
1988	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1989	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1990	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1991	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1992	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1993	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1994	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1995	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1996	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1997	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1998	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1999	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2002	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2004	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2005	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2006	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2007	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2010	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	0	10	0	0	10	0	79	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	.0

As shown in Diagram III.9.1, on the following page, the average value of newly constructed single-family units.



The 2015 five-year ACS released data on the vacancy and tenure of housing units in Gering. As shown in Table III.9.6, below, 7.7 percent, or 283 housing units were vacant in 2015. Of the 3,383 housing units that were occupied in 2015, 71.6 percent, or 2,422 units, were owner-occupied, and the remaining 28.4 percent were renter-occupied. This compares to 3,361 housing units that were occupied in 2010 with 2,418 units, or 71.9 percent, being owner-occupied, and the remaining 28.1 percent being renter-occupied.

Table III.9.6
Housing Units by Tenure
 City of Gering
 2010 Census and 2015 Five-Year ACS Data

Tenure	2010 Census		2015 Five-Year ACS	
	Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total
Occupied Housing Units	3,361	93.3%	3,383	92.3%
Owner-Occupied	2,418	71.9%	2,422	71.6%
Renter-Occupied	943	28.1%	961	28.4%
Vacant Housing Units	240	6.7%	283	7.7%
Total Housing Units	3,601	100.0%	3,666	100.0%

As shown in Table III.9.7, on the following page, there were 2,930 single family dwellings in 2015, which accounted for 79.9 percent of all housing units. Apartment units accounted for 10.9 percent of housing units, with 399 units. Mobile homes also accounted for an additional 1.3 percent of housing with 47 units.

Table III.9.7 Housing Units by Type City of Gering 2010 and 2015 Five-Year ACS Data				
Tenure	2010 Five-Year ACS		2015 Five-Year ACS	
	Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total
Single-Family	2,812	79%	2,930	79.9%
Duplex	47	1%	91	2.5%
Tri- or Four-Plex	218	6%	199	5.4%
Apartment	402	11%	399	10.9%
Mobile Home	64	2%	47	1.3%
Boat, RV, Van, Etc.	0	0%	0	.0%
Total	3,543	100.0%	3,666	100.0%

Table III.9.8, below, shows the disposition of vacant housing units in Gering. At the time of the 2015 five-year ACS, 20.8 percent of vacant units were for rent, 0.0 percent were for sale, and 6.7 percent were rented or sold but not yet occupied. At the time of the 2010 Census, there were 78 “other vacant” units, representing 32.5 percent of vacant units, which compared to 59.4 percent in 2015. “Other vacant” units are those not available to the market and may fall into disrepair and contribute to neighborhood blight.

Table III.9.8 Disposition of Vacant Housing Units City of Gering 2000 Census and 2015 Five-Year ACS Data				
Disposition	2010 Census		2015 Five-Year ACS	
	Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total
For Rent	102	42.5%	59	20.8%
For Sale	34	14.2%	0	.0%
Rented or Sold, Not Occupied	18	7.5%	19	6.7%
For Seasonal, Recreational, or Occasional Use	8	3.3%	37	13.1%
For Migrant Workers	0	0.0%	0	.0%
Other Vacant	78	32.5%	168	59.4%
Total	240	100.0%	283	100.0%

Rental Property Survey

From September through November of 2016, a telephone survey was conducted with landlords and rental property managers throughout Nebraska. Table III.9.9 presents basic statistics about the completed surveys from this and other surveys conducted from 2002 through 2016 in the City of Gering. The number of completed surveys increased from 12 in 2015 to 18 in 2016. Between 2015 and 2016 the vacancy rate for all units increased by 0.3 percentage points and was at 4.3 percent in 2016.

Table III.9.9 Survey of Rental Properties City of Gering 2002–2016 Survey of Rental Properties				
Year	Completed Surveys	Total Units	Vacancy Rate	Absorption Rate
2002	2	55	3.6	15.9
2003	2	120	.8	9.5
2004				
2005	4	304	1.6	22.7
2006	2	47	12.8	7.5
2007	7	213	7.0	36.6
2008	10	277	4.0	30.5
2009	7	424	3.3	28.0
2010	10	418	3.1	21.0
2011	13	503	5.4	26.4
2012	11	341	2.9	22.4
2013	12	356	5.1	52.5
2014	8	239	1.3	14.0
2015	12	239	4.1	84.5
2016	18	554	4.3	19.7

Table III.9.10 on the following page, shows the amount of total and vacant units with their associated vacancy rates. At the time of

the survey, there were an estimated 67 single family units in City of Gering, with 5 of them available. This translates into a vacancy rate of 7.5 percent in City of Gering, which compares to a single family vacancy rate of 3.6 percent for the State of Nebraska. There were 453 apartment units reported in the survey, with 17 of them available, which resulted in a vacancy rate of 3.8 percent. This compares to a statewide vacancy rate of 4.1 percent for apartment units across the state. The average vacancy rate for all unit types over the last five years was 3.5 percent.

Table III.9.10				
Rental Vacancy Survey by Type				
City of Gering				
2016 Survey of Rental Properties				
Place	Total Units	Vacant Units	Vacancy Rate	5-Year Vacancy Rate Average
Single Family	67	5	7.5%	3.8%
Apartments	453	17	3.8%	4.1%
Mobile Homes	26	2	7.7%	2.6%
“Other” Units		0	.0%	.
Don't Know	8	0	.0%	.9%
Total	554	24	4.3%	3.5%

Table III.9.11, below reports units by Number of Bedrooms. Four bedroom units were the most common type of reported single family unit, with 7 units. The most common apartment units were two bedroom units, with 135 units. Details for additional unit types are reported below.

Table III.9.11						
Rental Units by Number of Bedrooms						
City of Gering						
2016 Survey of Rental Properties						
Number of Bedrooms	Single Family Units	Apartment Units	Mobile Homes	“Other” Units	Don't Know	Total
Efficiency	0	0	0	0	.	0
One	0	17	2	0	.	19
Two	3	135	20	0	.	158
Three	7	16	4	0	.	27
Four	7	0	0	0	.	7
Don't Know	50	285	0		8	343
Total	67	453	26		8	554

Table III.9.12, at right, displays the vacancy rate of single family units by the number of bedrooms. Four bedroom units were the most common type of reported single family unit, which had a vacancy rate of 14.3 percent.

Table III.9.12 Single Family Units by Number of Bedrooms City of Gering 2016 Survey of Rental Properties			
Number of Bedrooms	Units	Available Units	Vacancy Rates
Efficiency	0	0	0
One	0	0	0
Two	3	0	.0%
Three	7	0	.0%
Four	7	1	14.3%
Don't know	50	4	8.0%
Total	67	5	7.5%

Table III.9.13, below displays the vacancy rate of apartment units by the number of bedrooms. The most common apartment units were two bedroom units, which had a vacancy rate of 5.9 percent.

Table III.9.13 Apartment Units by Number of Bedrooms City of Gering 2016 Survey of Rental Properties			
Number of Bedrooms	Units	Available Units	Vacancy Rates
Efficiency	0	0	0
One	17	1	5.9%
Two	135	8	5.9%
Three	16	0	.0%
Four	0	0	0
Don't know	285	8	2.8%
Total	453	17	3.8%

Average market-rate rents by unit type are shown in Table III.9.14, below. Not all respondents were able to disclose the rental amounts for their units, so there may be some statistical aberrations in the computed rental rates, but generally those units with more bedrooms had higher rents.

Table III.9.14 Average Market Rate Rents by Number of Bedrooms City of Gering 2016 Survey of Rental Properties					
Number of Bedrooms	Single Family Units	Apartment Units	Mobile Homes	"Other" Units	Total
Efficiency	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
One	\$	\$374	\$300	\$	\$355
Two	\$658	\$615	\$400	\$	\$607
Three	\$937	\$640	\$410	\$	\$731
Four	\$1,450	\$	\$	\$	\$1,450
Average	\$918	\$572	\$370	\$	\$673

Table III.9.15, below, shows vacancy rates for single family units by average rental rates for the City of Gering. The most common rent for single family units was \$750 to \$1,000 dollars and units in this price range had a vacancy rate of 7.4 percent.

Table III.9.15 Single Family Market Rate Rents by Vacancy Status City of Gering 2016 Survey of Rental Properties			
Average Rents	Single Family Units	Available Single Family Units	Vacancy Rate
Less Than \$500	0	0	0
\$500 to \$750	2	0	.0%
\$750 to \$1,000	54	4	7.4%
\$1,000 to \$1,250	6	0	.0%
\$1,250 to \$1,500	5	1	20.0%
Above \$1,500	0	0	0
Missing	0	0	0
Total	67	5	7.5%

The average rent and availability of apartment units is displayed in Table III.9.16, below. The most common rent for apartments was \$500 to \$750 dollars and the units in this price range had a vacancy rate of 3.3 percent.

Table III.9.16 Apartment Market Rate Rents by Vacancy Status City of Gering 2016 Survey of Rental Properties			
Average Rents	Apartment Units	Available Apartment Units	Vacancy Rate
Less Than \$500	36	5	13.9%
\$500 to \$750	269	9	3.3%
\$750 to \$1,000	10	2	20.0%
\$1,000 to \$1,250	25	0	.0%
\$1,250 to \$1,500	0	0	0
Above \$1,500	0	0	0
Missing	113	1	.9%
Total	453	17	3.8%

Respondents were asked if utilities are included in the rent and as shown in Table III.9.17, on the following page, 11 respondents, or 68.8 percent, included some sort of utility in the rent.

Table III.9.17 Are there any utilities included with the rent? City of Gering 2016 Survey of Rental Properties	
Period	Respondent
Yes	11
No	5
% Offering Utilities	68.8%

The type of utility included in the rent is shown in Table III.9.18, below. There were 2 respondents who included electricity, 2 respondents who included natural gas, 11 respondents who included water and sewer and 8 respondents included trash collection in the rent.

Table III.9.18 Which utilities are included with the rent? City of Gering 2016 Survey of Rental Properties	
Type of Utility Provided	Respondent
Electricity	2
Natural Gas	2
Water/Sewer	11
Trash Collection	8

Table III.9.19, at right, shows the number of survey respondents who keep a waiting list. As can be seen 6 respondents said they keep a waiting list, with an estimated 146 number of persons on the waiting list.

Table III.9.19 Do you keep a waiting list? City of Gering 2016 Survey of Rental Properties	
Period	Respondent
Yes	6
No	10
Waiting list Size	146

Respondents were also asked how they would rate the need for renovating existing units. As shown in Table III.9.20, below, 1 respondent said there was no need for renovating single family units, with 4 respondents saying there was extreme need for renovating single family units. Likewise, 1 respondent indicated no need for renovating existing apartment units, with 4 respondents saying there was extreme need for renovating existing apartment units.

Table III.9.20 How would you rate the need for renovation of existing units in the city? City of Gering 2016 Survey of Rental Properties				
Need	Single Family	Apartments	Mobile Homes	Other Units
No Need	1	1	1	
Low Need	1	1	1	
Moderate Need	5	5	5	
High Need	1	1	1	
Extreme Need	4	4	4	

Respondents were also asked how they would rate the need for the constructing new units. As shown in Table III.9.21, below, 1 respondent said there was no need for new single family units, with 3 respondents saying there was extreme need for constructing new single family units. Likewise, 1 respondent indicated no need for constructing new apartment units, with 3 respondents saying there was extreme need for constructing new apartment units.

Table II.9.21 How would you rate the need for construction of new units in the city? City of Gering 2016 Survey of Rental Properties				
Need	Single Family	Apartments	Mobile Homes	Other Units
No Need	1	1	1	
Low Need	3	3	3	
Moderate Need	3	3	3	
High Need	2	2	2	
Extreme Need	3	3	3	

Local Commentary

Gering is the county seat of Scottsbluff County and is part of the Scottsbluff Micropolitan Statistical Area. Some of the largest employers are in agriculture, education, and manufacturing.³⁴ Gering has a solid farming industry, which is enhanced by the presence of the railroad. Good farmlands and the ability to easily distribute goods are significant factors in Gering’s economy.

Several new businesses have opened in the past year including retail and restaurants establishments. Employment is good and has stayed steady and the City is working with the high school and community college to help develop training programs. A new Chicory plant is currently in the pilot stages along with the Cobblestone Hotel construction. The Downtown Revitalization is currently under design in addition to the revitalization of the Plaza Park and a new baseball field with stadium seating is in the works for 2017

The City Council has approved the purchase of an industrial park and a Dickie’s Barbecue Pit will be opening in the spring of 2017. There are many infrastructure improvements scheduled for the coming year. Population is steady and there is still a need for more housing.³⁵

³⁴ Nebraska Public Power District Community Facts Scottsbluff/Gering, <http://sites.nppd.com/aedc/FactsBook/ScottsbluffGeringbook.pdf>

³⁵Telephone interview with City of Gering staff, 12/2016

