

## Executive Summary

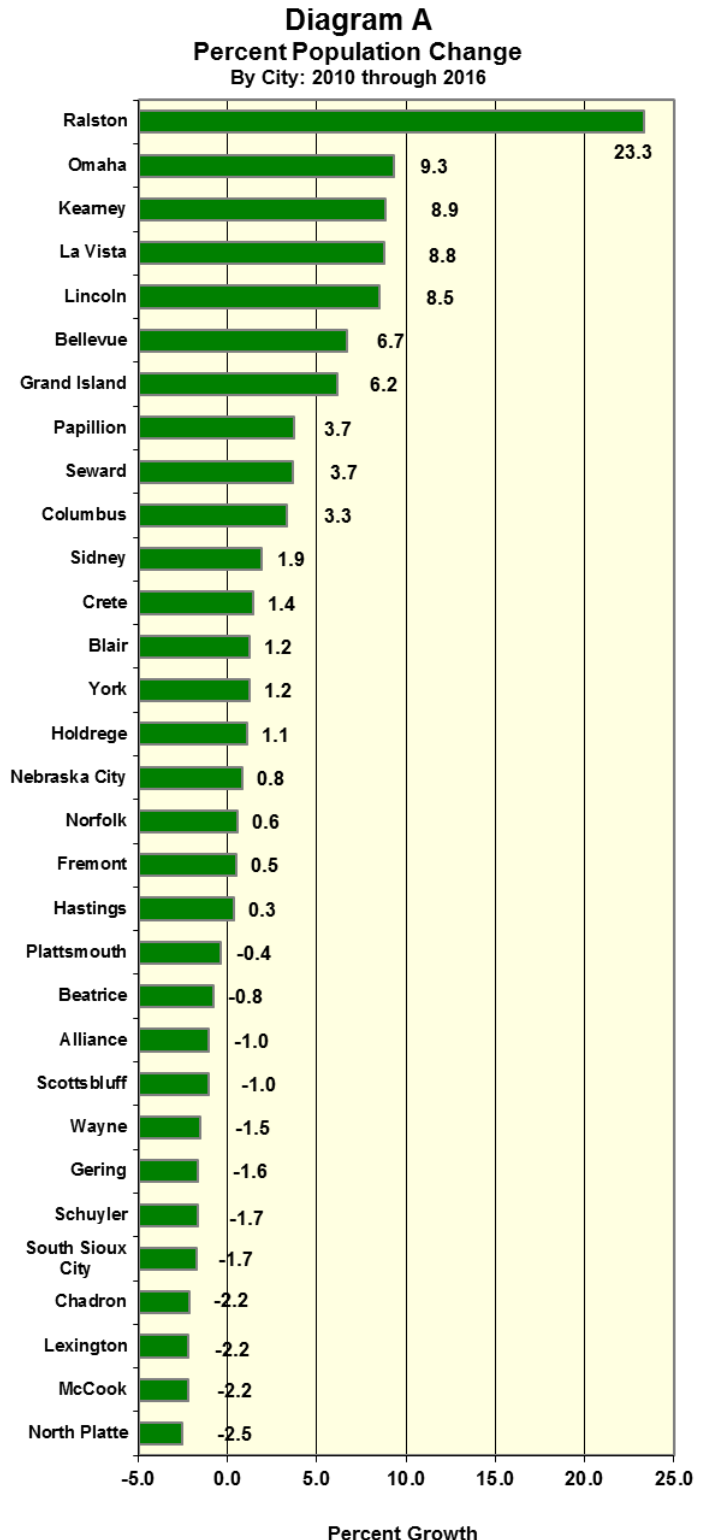
This document reports demographic, economic, and housing statistics for 31 Class I cities in Nebraska.

### Demographics

The U.S. Census Bureau released community level population counts with the 2015 intercensal estimates. These data indicated that statewide population increased by 69,849 persons, or by 3.8 percent over the five year period, from 2010 through 2015. Additionally, these data indicated that 19 of the 31 cities addressed herein expanded in population during that time.

The 31 cities had a combined population of 1,175,262 persons and comprised 62.0 percent of the state's population in 2015. These cities enjoyed an average rate of growth of 6.0 percent from 2010 through 2015, higher than the 3.8 percent growth rate of the population statewide.

However, the rate of change from 2010 to 2015 varied significantly among the cities, with the population in Bellevue rising the fastest, at 10.7 percent. Five other cities also increased by more than 5.0 percent: Grand Island, Kearney, Lincoln, La Vista and Omaha, as shown in Diagram A, at right.



While many cities saw positive growth rates through 2015, it was the state’s two most populous cities, Omaha and Lincoln, which saw the most significant increases in total population: 34,927 and 18,969 persons, respectively. Each of the 31 cities’s population change from the 2010 Census to the 2016 current estimate is presented in Table A, ranked in order of absolute change.

<b>Table A</b> <b>Population Change by County</b> <b>2010 Decennial Census through July 1, 2016</b>			
<b>Area</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Change</b>
Omaha	38,012	Hastings	84
Lincoln	21,985	Holdrege	60
Bellevue	3,368	Nebraska City	58
Grand Island	2,997	Plattsmouth	-23
Kearney	2,733	Wayne	-87
Ralston	1,386	Alliance	-88
La Vista	1,385	Beatrice	-97
Columbus	740	Schuyler	-105
Papillion	703	Chadron	-126
Seward	255	Gering	-140
Norfolk	138	Scottsbluff	-156
Sidney	131	McCook	-172
Fremont	122	Lexington	-226
Blair	99	South Sioux City	-233
Crete	99	North Platte	-623
York	94	<b>Nebraska</b>	<b>72,373</b>

## Housing

Housing production in Nebraska, as indicated by new construction building permits, was relatively strong during the previous decade, reaching 9,929 units in 2005. The issuance of building permits slowed during 2006, 2007, and 2008, with a total of 8,230, 7,604, and 6,346 units permitted, respectively. In 2011, permitted units continued to decline, with only 5,203 units permitted statewide. However, this number increased sharply to 7,543 units in 2013, and rose by an additional 7,605 permits in 2014. The most recent 2016 data shows permits rose to 8,096, almost reaching pre-recession levels. Permits in these 31 cities in 2016 accounted for 78.9 percent of Nebraska’s total permitted new residential construction; this figure was an increase from 2015, when permits in these cities represented 77.9 percent of total permitted units statewide.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, permitted construction was more concentrated in the two most populous cities, Omaha and Lincoln, with these two communities comprising 58.6 percent of all of Nebraska’s permitted units in 2016. Permit activity decreased statewide, with 14 out of the 31 cities, or 45.2 percent also seeing a decrease in permitting activity.

<sup>1</sup> No corrections have been made to account for any annexations that may have occurred over this period, thereby potentially increasing permits more than might have been observed without annexation.

**Table B**  
**Permitted Housing Construction**  
 Census Bureau Data

<b>Towns</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>Change 15-16</b>
Alliance	1	2	5	28	25	2	18	0	3	2	1	6	3	-3
Beatrice	37	34	25	21	31	5	15	5	8	9	7	7	11	4
Bellevue	342	383	337	602	563	503	137	104	340	205	415	133	137	4
Blair	45	52	30	26	9	12	15	12	17	23	24	26	15	-11
Chadron	9	6	7	9	1	3	2	6	1	5	1	1	5	4
Columbus	52	62	66	70	86	79	83	52	93	54	60	68	86	18
Crete	13	36	44	13	7	62	9	5	23	2	2	7	11	4
Fremont	94	90	53	45	32	29	26	26	32	47	31	36	31	-5
Gering	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0
Grand Island	211	170	228	323	115	128	103	115	335	208	198	211	291	80
Hastings	123	60	73	55	26	41	86	62	32	36	58	55	56	1
Holdrege	4	8	5	8	19	5	30	10	11	8	7	20	7	-13
Kearney	407	275	177	114	126	80	103	112	192	288	265	164	184	20
La Vista	524	231	153	102	106	121	335	107	55	67	42	34	63	29
Lexington	7	12	16	9	0	19	19	9	7	4	22	30	4	-26
Lincoln	2,153	1,453	1,175	1,107	666	604	833	923	1,092	1,375	1,792	2,353	2,166	-187
McCook	11	5	6	3	2	3	0	30	32	5	5	24	24	0
Nebraska City	13	32	15	24	8	8	18	4	5	3	6	5	39	34
Norfolk	128	111	76	62	73	40	48	25	41	47	50	43	49	6
North Platte	87	49	53	39	31	20	54	26	13	19	16	46	34	-12
Omaha	2,974	3,462	2,902	2,627	2,657	1,868	1,579	1,834	1,915	2,570	2,453	2,633	2,564	-69
Papillion	487	417	367	327	220	239	233	210	390	562	322	262	438	176
Plattsmouth	19	24	22	10	15	4	15	4	5	6	4	10	7	-3
Ralston	1	3	1	2	1	2	283	266	4	1	0	0	1	1
Schuyler	3	8	3	10	5	7	5	5	6	9	5	4	25	21
Scottsbluff	26	19	20	27	6	18	17	22	7	25	13	9	22	13
Seward	50	46	35	33	22	18	29	15	19	27	35	13	31	18
Sidney	23	29	60	43	8	3	3	8	13	84	25	22	4	-18
South Sioux City	13	17	18	21	18	23	105	12	11	23	16	15	18	3
Wayne	12	12	7	5	13	18	9	12	21	47	34	25	36	11
York	21	24	12	29	7	31	10	16	27	22	8	12	15	3
<b>Total Nebraska</b>	<b>10,920</b>	<b>9,929</b>	<b>8,230</b>	<b>7,604</b>	<b>6,455</b>	<b>5,215</b>	<b>5,450</b>	<b>5,267</b>	<b>6,201</b>	<b>7,633</b>	<b>7,659</b>	<b>8,096</b>	<b>8,078</b>	<b>-18</b>
Cities as % of Total	72.3%	71.8%	72.8%	76.2%	75.9%	76.6%	77.5%	76.6%	76.6%	75.8%	77.4%	77.5%	78.9%	.

The average value of new single-family construction throughout Nebraska increased from \$203,629 per unit in 2015, to \$206,586 in 2016. This figure excluded the cost of land and any development costs for lot construction such as installation of utilities, roads, and streets. Nevertheless, the average real price of new single-family construction varied significantly among these cities. In 2016, La Vista, Alliance, and Papillion had the highest prices, with average values of \$329,613, \$310,000 and \$290,414, respectively. Relatively affordable housing was constructed in Schuyler, Crete and Omaha with average real values of construction of \$159,273, \$178,884 and \$137,906, respectively. These data are presented in Table C.

**Table C**  
**Value of New Single-Family Construction**  
 Census Bureau Data

Towns	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Alliance	81,280	213,836	130,912	280,455	162,605	217,370	134,562	0	346,702	150,631	768,049	185,073	310,000
Beatrice	174,361	198,669	223,201	199,422	163,126	222,231	173,873	144,990	233,956	188,134	244,306	228,766	222,934
Bellevue	227,148	242,768	226,819	218,856	246,903	179,532	234,238	239,497	255,807	280,043	296,862	280,356	287,220
Blair	230,911	234,836	250,784	229,932	226,180	266,920	280,549	245,970	240,811	251,436	271,689	222,256	241,810
Chadron	106,632	113,379	74,875	133,239	148,203	152,641	134,867	180,798	186,207	247,848	217,499	154,813	261,409
Columbus	248,890	236,051	268,223	269,450	256,608	232,240	245,394	257,954	255,190	239,949	241,648	241,080	282,965
Crete	171,627	96,438	152,711	134,253	179,944	76,104	201,185	231,931	246,535	174,019	215,566	187,002	178,884
Fremont	203,150	206,268	209,355	180,894	194,280	221,293	169,731	193,378	196,881	248,267	210,253	259,511	269,810
Gering	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Grand Island	166,634	168,120	164,480	77,889	151,857	163,504	180,318	186,061	166,801	180,088	195,367	184,121	183,229
Hastings	187,562	25,680	187,990	210,213	278,787	249,723	225,367	259,693	248,090	261,839	207,488	219,816	234,957
Holdrege	212,580	278,138	269,834	211,286	172,937	263,011	150,574	277,238	239,725	288,622	279,424	258,207	260,714
Kearney	124,337	177,761	190,127	204,010	214,124	179,749	211,407	181,220	200,698	198,239	230,372	201,909	237,014
La Vista	292,458	290,201	297,669	265,547	228,046	206,735	217,469	212,148	247,267	303,145	321,957	342,334	329,613
Lexington	123,261	137,307	147,978	144,709	0	141,304	138,257	122,977	146,524	237,152	217,614	215,299	275,000
Lincoln	196,744	197,550	207,119	194,493	191,022	174,884	199,051	203,258	203,344	199,698	196,021	207,852	206,296
McCook	102,538	159,680	132,424	152,660	87,030	299,981	0	136,641	207,605	219,952	216,078	239,045	201,750
Nebraska City	184,819	157,499	131,437	120,983	96,856	151,148	106,898	192,060	195,954	385,698	209,080	304,357	243,489
Norfolk	181,279	189,163	189,519	200,404	177,738	178,964	192,936	205,143	186,950	197,358	178,440	208,492	250,653
North Platte	294,496	184,772	187,849	170,058	142,743	135,741	105,472	131,275	164,585	159,689	162,070	162,532	174,660
Omaha	149,191	134,257	130,288	124,023	118,053	116,473	146,221	143,069	150,459	154,950	152,926	148,071	137,906
Papillion	218,731	213,774	216,067	213,645	248,595	279,005	291,110	281,766	304,376	288,278	284,298	295,602	290,414
Plattsmouth	128,896	131,782	149,337	156,515	120,606	99,465	140,923	132,147	114,183	220,994	142,857	180,344	188,714
Ralston	350,131	210,403	264,457	194,177	75,239	55,723	136,357	120,829	186,273	135,515	0	0	80,000
Schuyler	132,907	159,317	231,155	186,908	169,568	141,695	153,211	127,292	190,170	193,584	237,583	159,574	159,273
Scottsbluff	185,304	149,593	203,485	181,393	239,753	124,262	183,760	179,136	233,026	226,152	249,502	258,922	283,200
Seward	193,248	480,217	284,998	220,187	214,972	217,798	193,434	217,266	202,623	223,618	199,727	198,247	182,181
Sidney	219,246	220,001	299,826	187,334	229,880	259,984	338,155	212,738	256,595	346,763	319,666	259,517	142,500
South Sioux City	161,957	144,111	145,474	121,369	143,292	141,477	122,651	146,665	156,570	177,802	232,475	196,503	254,128
Wayne	189,703	201,417	233,898	104,877	155,521	171,781	206,881	173,948	202,748	169,128	181,013	219,656	209,108
York	185,153	191,931	221,295	208,328	219,751	263,762	227,601	292,893	264,802	231,729	240,370	299,841	280,313
<b>Total Nebraska</b>	<b>173,377</b>	<b>167,364</b>	<b>173,639</b>	<b>163,904</b>	<b>174,006</b>	<b>166,375</b>	<b>185,172</b>	<b>188,168</b>	<b>194,089</b>	<b>201,190</b>	<b>203,801</b>	<b>203,629</b>	<b>206,586</b>

Table D, presents the number of total housing units, as well as occupied and vacant units, for the 31 cities. Homeownership varies throughout the state, with several cities having homeownership rates above 65.0 percent in 2016. Gering had the highest homeownership rate, at 71.7 percent. However, high homeownership rates tend to occur in cities with smaller numbers of housing units. Among the largest cities, homeownership rates were lower, with Lincoln and Omaha having homeownership rates of 56.5 and 57.5 percent, respectively.

**Table D**  
**Total Units by Tenure**  
**2000 Census and 2016 5-year ACS Data**

Towns	2016 five-year ACS					2010 Census
	Owner	Renter	Vacant Units	Total Units	Homeownership 2016	Homeownership 2010
Alliance	2,357	1,234	419	4,010	65.6%	67.0%
Beatrice	3,299	2,190	709	6,198	60.1%	63.4%
Bellevue	12,808	7,200	1,142	21,150	64.0%	66.8%
Blair	2,242	1,093	149	3,484	67.2%	66.8%
Chadron	1,141	1,125	242	2,508	50.4%	50.5%
Columbus	6,041	3,036	497	9,574	66.6%	68.3%
Crete	1,278	1,017	244	2,539	55.7%	57.2%
Fremont	6,355	4,227	771	11,353	60.1%	61.1%
Gering	2,320	915	302	3,537	71.7%	71.9%
Grand Island	10,931	7,928	1,196	20,055	58.0%	61.0%
Hastings	6,555	3,579	684	10,818	64.7%	63.8%
Holdrege	1,605	805	312	2,722	66.6%	70.7%
Kearney	7,226	5,396	736	13,358	57.2%	56.6%
La Vista	3,822	3,127	150	7,099	55.0%	54.6%
Lexington	1,998	1,269	244	3,511	61.2%	62.6%
Lincoln	61,728	47,475	5,428	114,631	56.5%	58.6%
McCook	2,376	865	371	3,612	73.3%	65.5%
Nebraska City	2,058	992	250	3,300	67.5%	65.2%
Norfolk	6,021	3,881	570	10,472	60.8%	60.1%
North Platte	6,036	4,344	939	11,319	58.2%	61.1%
Omaha	100,503	74,325	14,242	189,070	57.5%	58.3%
Papillion	4,990	2,378	178	7,546	67.7%	69.7%
Plattsmouth	1,626	860	379	2,865	65.4%	65.1%
Ralston	1,970	1,341	110	3,421	59.5%	67.2%
Schuyler	1,197	642	105	1,944	65.1%	68.1%
Scottsbluff	3,380	2,522	589	6,491	57.3%	57.7%
Seward	1,693	914	185	2,792	64.9%	68.9%
Sidney	2,108	1,038	223	3,369	67.0%	65.9%
South Sioux City	2,814	1,846	233	4,893	60.4%	56.5%
Wayne	1,054	1,016	135	2,205	50.9%	54.1%
York	2,095	1,251	292	3,638	62.6%	64.2%
<b>Total Nebraska</b>	<b>489,806</b>	<b>251,775</b>	<b>73,425</b>	<b>815,006</b>	<b>66.0%</b>	<b>67.2%</b>

For each of the past 15 years, a statewide rental vacancy survey has been undertaken; however this is the fourth year in which results for all 31 cities have been tabulated. According to the November 2016 survey, statewide rental vacancy rates increased from 3.6 percent in 2015 to 4.3 percent in 2016. Vacancy rates varied widely among these 31 cities. Housing markets appeared tight in several communities, such as Ralston, Columbus and Schuyler, with vacancy rates below 2.1 percent. The availability of rental units in Alliance, Sidney, and Crete appeared to be greater, with the vacancy rates all exceeding 9.0 percent, as presented in Table E.

### Summary

Population continued to grow in most of the 31 communities; however, the level of growth varied significantly, ranging from a negative 2.2 percent to a positive 10.7 percent. Housing production statistics indicated that the larger communities, such as Lincoln, and Omaha, generated the most additions to the housing stock during the past year. However, the value of construction softened in several of these areas but remained strong in other areas such as La Vista and Nebraska City. The 2016 rental market survey saw low vacancy rates in most of these 31 cities, with several below 3.0 percent. These factors indicate that opportunities for housing development exist but that more opportunities may currently exist in the rental market, with lower vacancy rates.

<b>Table E</b> <b>Vacancy Rate by City</b> <b>2016 Rental Vacancy Survey</b>			
<b>Area</b>	<b>Change</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Change</b>
Sidney	20.5	Omaha	4.1
Alliance	10.8	Bellevue	3.8
Chadron	9.8	Hastings	3.7
Beatrice	8.8	Kearney	3.7
McCook	8.0	Holdrege	3.6
Crete	7.4	Fremont	3.4
York	7.0	Norfolk	2.7
Lexington	6.9	La Vista	2.4
Nebraska City	6.7	Grand Island	2.2
Gering	6.6	Ralston	2.1
North Platte	6.4	Columbus	2.0
Wayne	5.8	Plattsmouth	1.7
Scottsbluff	5.6	South Sioux City	1.7
Papillion	5.2	Schuyler	1.1
Seward	4.8	Blair	0.5
Lincoln	4.6	<b>Nebraska</b>	<b>4.3</b>