

Fremont County

Key Findings

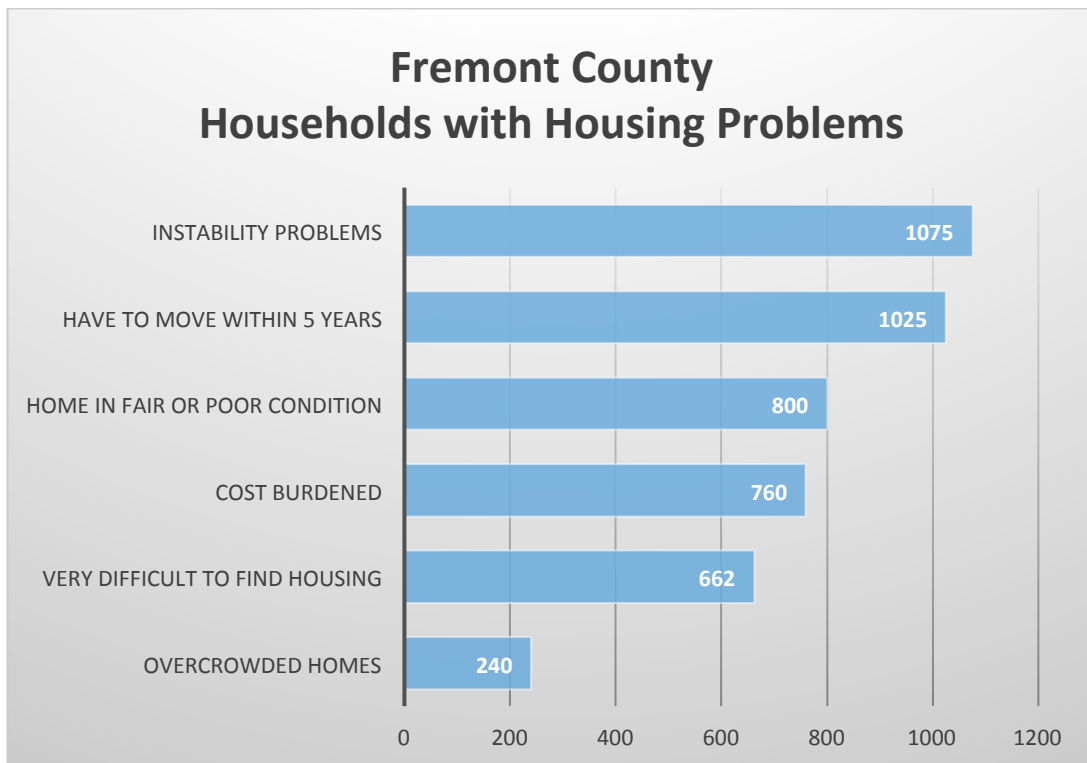
Fremont County is in many respects unique within the four-county region. It has the lowest rents and homes prices that are lower than the other counties in the region except Madison. It has relatively more households with children, but also more senior households. It has less diversity in the housing supply, but, with low rents that are holding steady, little evidence that many more rental units are needed.

- Growth in the housing supply in Fremont County has been relatively slow and stable since 2010 and slowed even more during and after the recession.
- There has been more stability in Fremont County than elsewhere in the region in terms of job numbers, although growth in 2013 resulted in the county's number of jobs surpassing pre-recession levels.
- Just over half the units in the county are occupied by primary residents. The very high percentage of vacant/second homes in the Island Park area is the reason; in both Ashton and St. Anthony, just under 90% of homes are occupied by resident households.
- Fremont County is family oriented with a high percentage of households with children, except in the Island Park area. The county also has the highest percentage of senior households in the region.
- The homeownership rate is very high, even though it declined between 2000 and 2010 in contrast to the national trend. Home prices have returned to 2007 levels. The overall median list price is about \$242,000, influenced by prices in the Island Park area that are considerably higher than elsewhere in the county, driven up by second home buyers.
- Incomes in Fremont County are low relative to the rest of the region; the median household income is \$40,000.
- The rental market is small. Fremont County has the lowest percentage of renter occupied units in the region. Rents are low relative to the rest of the region, and rents vary little. Rates for more than half of the units are less than \$500 per month.
- 55 of the county's rental units are restricted for low income households that pay 30% of their income for rent; 23 of these units are restricted for seniors.

Despite low purchase prices and rents relative to the region, many households in Fremont County have housing problems.

- Problems associated with housing instability have been the most common type of housing problem in Fremont County.

- Many households plan on having to move within the next five years, a factor that could be influenced by BYU-I student households in the St. Anthony area.
- About 800 households live in housing they consider to be in fair or poor condition.
- Almost as many households are cost burdened by housing payments that exceed 30% of their income.
- Over 660 households found it very difficult to find housing they could afford that met their needs when they last moved.
- About 240 households live in overcrowded conditions with more than two persons per bedroom.



Source: 2014 Housing Survey and Team calculations.

1. Households and Housing Units

Number of Units and Occupancies

Between 2000 and 2010, the housing supply in Fremont County increased by 1,641, which equated to a growth rate of nearly 24% over the ten year period or an annual average of just over 2% per year. The rate of growth has slowed this decade. Between 2010 and 2013, 187 new units were built, which equates to a growth rate over the three-year period of 2.2% or an annual rate of approximately 0.7%.

Of the estimated 8,718 housing units in Fremont County, 4,533 units are occupied by resident households, both owners and long-term renters. This is the figure used for the number of households in the county to which survey results are applied.

The other 48% are occupied for seasonal, occasional or recreation use (mostly as second homes, but some are used to house seasonal workers) or vacant. Fremont County has the lowest number of primary homes compared to seasonal/second/vacant homes in the region. Since 2000, the relationship between primary homes and seasonal/second/vacant homes has shifted 4.4 percentage points with relatively fewer homes occupied by residents. This trend has negative implications for the workforce as proportionately more homes generate demand for housing and fewer units house employees.

**Fremont County, Idaho
Housing Units by Occupancy, 1990 – 2013**

	2000	2010	2013
# of Housing Units	6,890	8,531	8,718
# Occupied Units	3,885	4,436	4,533
% Occupied	56.4%	52.0%	52.0%
Renter Occupied	607	851	887
Owner Occupied	3,278	3,585	3,646
Homeownership Rate	84.4%	80.8%	80.8%

Source: 2000 and 2010 Census; Census Bureau and Team estimates for 2013.

In contrast to the national trend, the homeownership rate also declined between 2000 and 2010. In 2000, nearly 85% of occupied units were owner occupied. By 2010, this rate decreased to just under 81%. Despite the decrease, the homeownership rate is still the highest in the region. The higher growth among rental units could have had a positive overall impact on housing affordability in Fremont County during the past decade.

Income

Housing affordability is a function both of the cost of housing and household income. When a single median income figure is referenced, it is typically income published by HUD for a family of four. The 2014 figure for Fremont County is \$53,100.

Median Family Income for Fremont County, ID, 2014

Persons/Household	50% AMI	80% AMI	100% AMI	120% AMI
1	\$18,600	\$29,750	\$37,200	\$44,640
2	\$21,250	\$34,000	\$42,500	\$51,000
3	\$23,900	\$38,250	\$47,800	\$57,360
4	\$26,550	\$42,500	\$53,100	\$63,720
5	\$28,700	\$45,900	\$57,400	\$68,880
6	\$30,800	\$49,300	\$61,600	\$73,920

Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development

The median income for all households in Fremont County is \$40,000, which includes both family and non-family households. This is \$13,100 lower than the HUD median income for a family of four.

Fremont County Household Income Distribution

	OVERALL	Employee(s) in Households	No Employee(s) in Household
Under \$25,000	28%	23%	49%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	29%	27%	34%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	26%	29%	12%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	10%	12%	2%
\$100,000 - \$124,999	4%	5%	-
\$125,000 - \$149,999	1%	0%	2%
\$150,000 - \$174,999	1%	1%	1%
\$175,000 - \$199,999	1%	1%	-
\$200,000 - \$224,999	1%	1%	-
Average	\$48,293	\$52,514	\$30,304
Median	\$40,000	\$48,648	\$25,023

Source: 2014 Housing Survey. Note: Part time residents who are second home owners are not included in these figures

The median income of households without any employees is considerably lower than for households with employees.

When expressed as a percentage of the area median income (AMI), household size is considered in tandem with household income to determine the income category into which households fall. Overall, 27% of Fremont County's households have very low incomes (equal to or less than 50% AMI) and another 17% have incomes that are considered low (51% - 80% AMI).

Owners generally have higher incomes than renters.

- Over 65% of renters have low or very low incomes compared to about 38% of owner households. Because so many more residents own than rent, low income owners outnumber low income renters.
- Only 15% of renters have incomes above 120% AMI, which makes construction of free market (unsubsidized) rental units difficult since most renters earn too little to afford rents that will cover debt service on unsubsidized construction;
- About 39% of owners have incomes above 120% AMI, which is low for the region.

AMI – Overall and by Own/Rent, Fremont County

	All Households	Owners	Renters
≤50%	27%	21%	45%
50.1% - 80%	17%	17%	20%
80.1% -120%	22%	23%	20%
>120%	33%	39%	15%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey; differences due to rounding

Another way to look at the incomes of owners and renters is to consider the mix in each AMI category. In total, 80% of households own and 20% rent; however, in the very low income category, 64% of households are owners and 36% are renters.

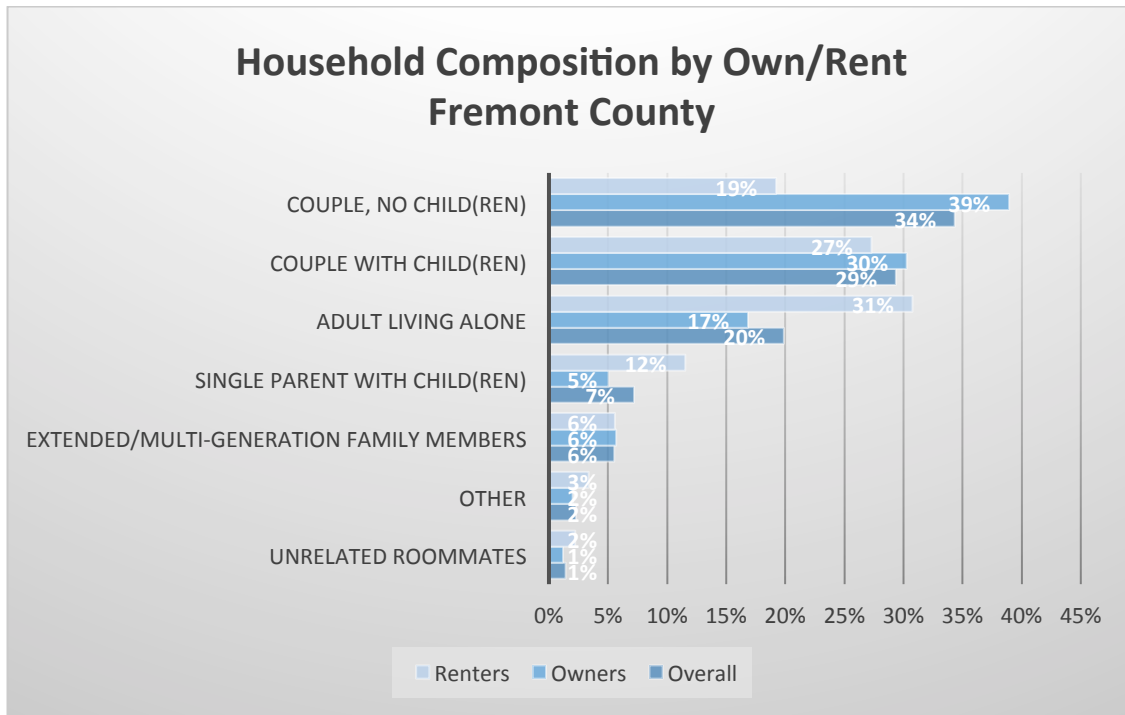
Owner and Renter Households by AMI, Fremont County

	All Households	Owners		Renters	
		%	#	%	#
Total	4,533	80%	3,649	20%	887
≤50%	1,181	64%	780	36%	400
50.1% - 80%	785	76%	611	24%	174
80.1% -120%	1,023	80%	843	20%	179
>120%	1,547	90%	1,415	10%	133

Source: 2014 Housing Survey; differences due to rounding

Household Composition

The majority of occupied housing units in Fremont County are lived in by couples with or without children. Renters are more likely than owners to live alone or to be single parents living with a child(ren). There are very few roommate households in the county.



Source: 2014 Housing Survey. Note: Caretakers are included with renters in all tabulations except those involving rent calculations.

- Low income households are more likely to have only one income, often consisting of one person living alone or a single parent with children.
- Approximately 39% of households include at least one member under the age of 18. Very low and low income households are more likely to have children.
- Fremont County has a high proportion of households with a member age 65 or older – 29% overall. Low income households are more likely to include a senior than other households.

Household Composition by AMI, Fremont County

	Overall	AMI			
		≤50%	50.1% - 80%	80.1% -120%	>120%
Adult living alone	20%	29%	20%	22%	11%
Couple, no child(ren)	34%	20%	18%	32%	52%
Couple with child(ren)	29%	33%	34%	36%	24%
Single parent w/ child(ren)	7%	15%	15%	5%	1%
Unrelated roommates	1%	1%		1%	2%
Extended/multi-generation family	6%		14%	3%	6%
Other	2%	2%		1%	4%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
With Persons under 18	39%	52%	61%	35%	24%
With Seniors	29%	27%	34%	26%	21%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

Unit Type

Overall, three-fourths of all households and nearly half of all renters live in single-family homes or cabins. The lack of multi-family units for renters has implications for affordability since single family homes are generally the most expensive type of housing to build and maintain. None of the survey respondents from Fremont County reported that they were camping, living in a motel or sleeping in a vehicle.

Type of Units Occupied by Own/Rent, Fremont County

	Overall	Owners	Renters
Single-family house/Cabin	76%	84%	49%
Duplex or triplex	1%	0%	6%
Apartment, Townhouse or condominium	6%	0%	27%
Mobile home	14%	13%	15%
Motel			
Tent/Camper/RV/Yurt/Truck/Van			
Other	3%	2%	3%
	100%	100%	100%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

Very low income households do not reside in the same types of units as the rest of the population – 42% live in mobile homes and only 39% live in single family homes.

Type of Units Occupied by AMI, Fremont County

	AMI			
	≤50%	50.1% - 80%	80.1% -120%	>120%
House/Cabin	39%	72%	88%	92%
Duplex or triplex	3%	2%	2%	1%
Apartment/TH/Condo	14%	9%	2%	2%
Mobile home	42%	12%	5%	3%
Motel/Camping/Other*	2%	5%	3%	2%
	100%	100%	100%	91%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

*Employee housing, basements and single rooms common among “other” responses.

Bedrooms

More than 70% of households live in homes with three or more bedrooms; however, this varies by income. The majority of very low income households live in smaller homes with one or two bedrooms.

Bedrooms in Occupied Homes by AMI, Fremont County

Bedrooms	Overall	AMI			
		≤50%	50.1% - 80%	80.1% -120%	>120%
One	5%	9%	6%	4%	4%
Two	22%	43%	24%	12%	8%
Three	37%	35%	40%	44%	39%
Four	21%	2%	21%	33%	28%
Five+	14%	11%	9%	7%	21%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Average	3.2	2.7	3.0	3.3	3.6

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

Restricted/Subsidized Inventory

Four income restricted, subsidized apartment complexes are located in Fremont County with a combined total of 55 units. The properties were constructed with Rural Development or HUD Section 8 financing. Two of the properties (23 units) are restricted for seniors. All four properties base rents on 30% of income. All properties are at least 35 years old.

Subsidized Housing Inventory in Fremont County

Project Name	Location	Total Units	Bedrooms			Subsidy	
			1*	2	3	≤50% AMI	Type
Pondside Gardens	St. Anthony	24		16	8	24	Sec 8
South Fremont Senior Housing	St. Anthony	14	8	6		14	N/A
Parkview Apts	St. Anthony	8		8		8	RD
Village Gardens (senior)	Ashton	9	9			8	Sec 8
Total		55	17	30	8	54	

Source: Idaho Housing and Finance Association; property manager interviews. *Includes one studio.

There are two owner occupied housing units in Fremont County with financing through Habitat for Humanity that will make them affordable over time. There are no plans in the pipeline at this time for development of additional income restricted housing, either for sale or for rent.

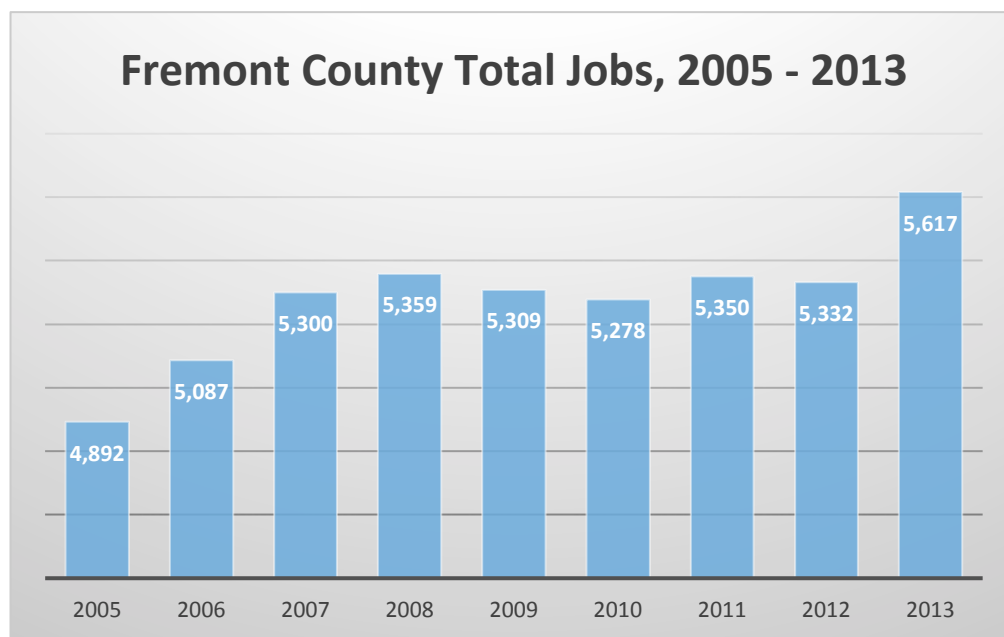
Employer Assisted Housing

Employers providing housing assistance is not widespread –fewer than 2% of survey respondents indicated they receive a place to rent or down payment/mortgage assistance from their employers.

2. Economic Conditions and Trends

Number of Jobs and Rate of Growth

Approximately 5,600 full- and part-time jobs are now located in Fremont County. The number of jobs in the county has fluctuated less in recent years than in the rest of the region. Employment growth was strong from 2005 through 2007 and into 2008 – the number of jobs increased by about 470, which equated to a growth rate of 9.5%. Only about 80 jobs were lost between 2008 and 2010 during the recession. The recovery started slowly in 2011, yet, between 2012 and 2013, the average annual number of jobs grew by over 200. There are now more jobs in Fremont County than prior to the recession.



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

The county's five largest employment sectors produce 57% of the jobs in the county. While government is the largest employer, as is the case in Teton County, ID and Madison County, farm employment is the second largest employment sector in Fremont County

Top Employment Sectors in Fremont County

Sector	% of Total Jobs	Avg. Annual Wage	Avg. Hourly Wage
Government	21%	\$33,727	\$16.86
Farm employment	13%	\$24,927	\$12.46
Retail trade	9%	\$20,879	\$10.44
Construction	7%	\$37,716	\$18.86
Other services	7%	\$30,154	\$15.08

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis and Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Wages

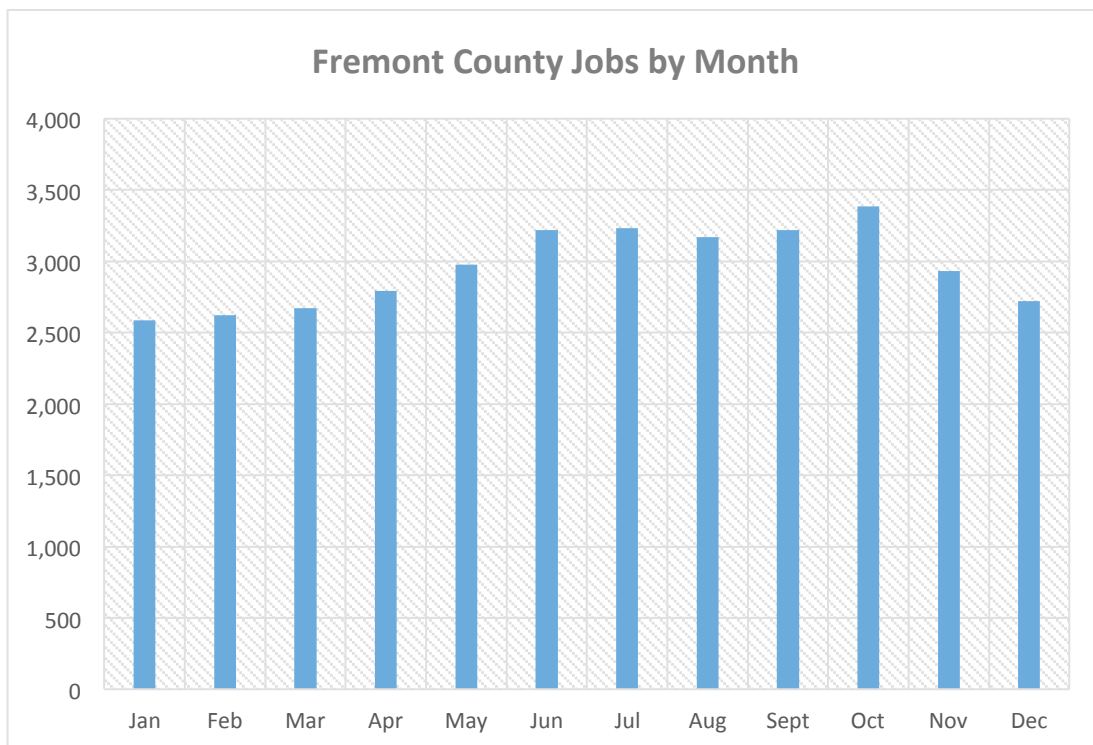
The average annual wage in 2013 in Fremont County was \$29,576, which equates to \$14.79 per hour.

Number of Jobs Held and Employees per Household

On average, there are 1.7 employees per household in Fremont County based on households with at least one employed member, and 1.4 employees per household for all households. Each employee, on average, holds 1.2 jobs part- and full-time combined. These figures are important when determining the impact that job-generating development has on housing demand.

Seasonality in Employment

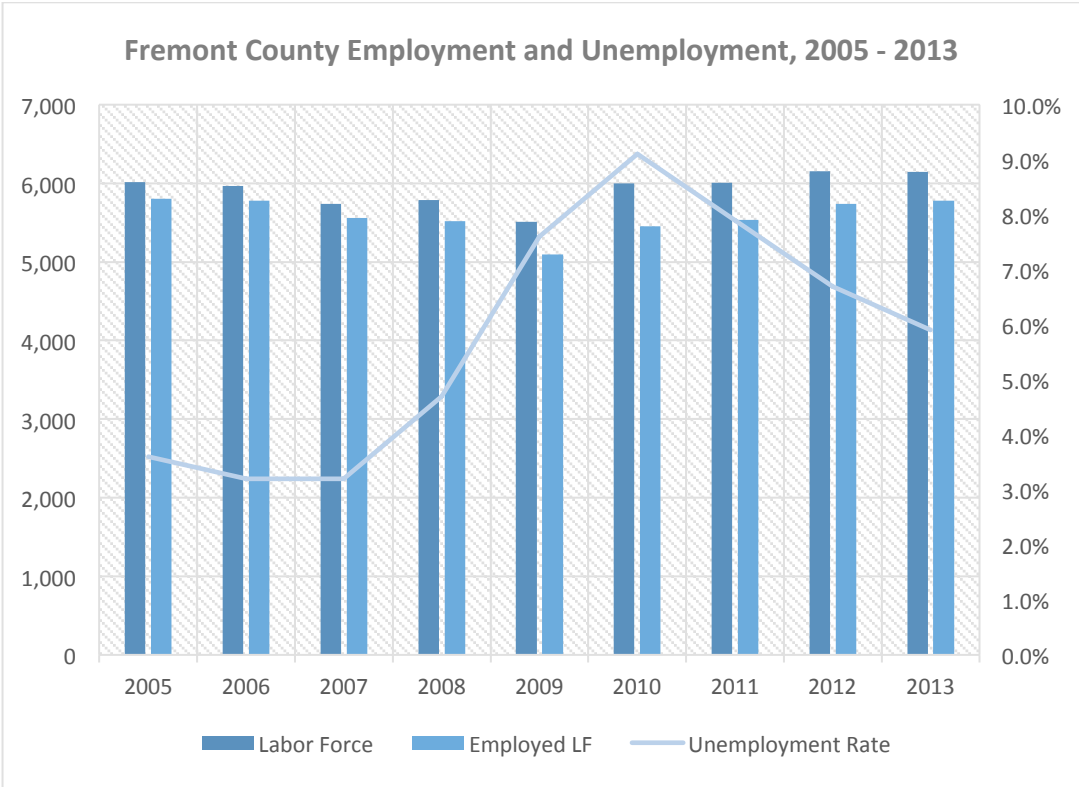
Seasonal variation in employment tends to be lower in Fremont County than in Teton County, ID and Teton County, WY. There are more jobs in the summer than in the winter, but the peak is in October as is the case in Madison County.



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW); note: sole proprietors not included in this data.

Labor Force and Unemployment

Labor force is a measurement of persons who work or are seeking work based on where the employed person lives, not where their job is located. The number of Fremont County residents who worked decreased slightly but steadily from 2005 through 2009 in contrast to other counties in the region. Unemployment remained low initially as the size of the labor force also decreased but shot upward in 2008, peaking in 2010. Unemployment dropped with job growth, averaging 5.9% in 2013, which was well below the national average.

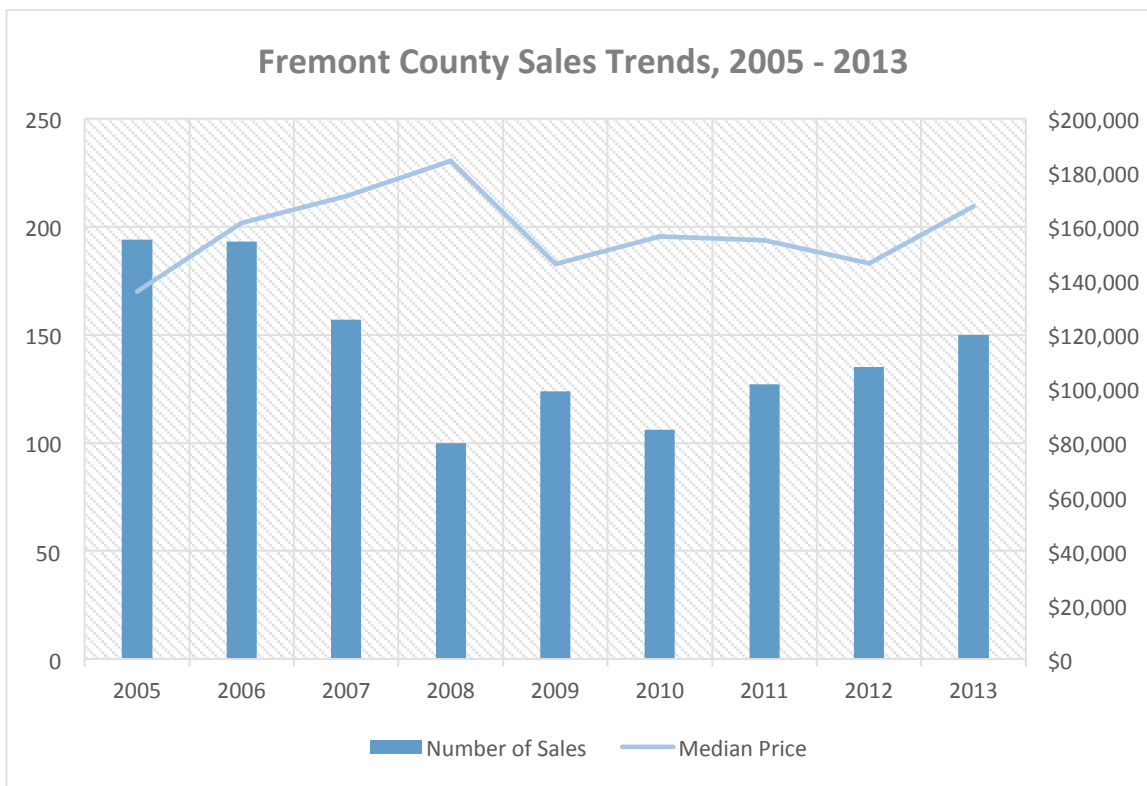


Source: LAUS, Idaho Department of Commerce

3. Ownership Market Analysis

Sales and Price Trends

Home prices increased moderately between 2006 and 2008 then dropped off sharply in 2009, decreasing about 30% in price. The real estate market is now recovering. Prices hit bottom in 2009, remained flat for a couple of years then started to slowly rebound in 2012. Price increases have restored about half of the value lost in the recession, and prices are now roughly comparable to 2007.



Source: Snake River MLS

The number of home sales peaked in 2005/2006 then declined in 2007 through 2008 although prices were continuing to rise during this period. This suggests a shortage in the inventory of homes listed for sale. This shortage was temporary, however, as demand for housing dropped off sharply during the recession. As prices dropped in 2009 in response to lower demand and a rise in the number of homes listed for sale, the number of sales remained relatively stable with a more noticeable increase in 2013.

Market Characteristics

Based on interviews of realtors in combination with data on sales and listings in the area: Foreclosures are still having an impact on the real estate market though not to the extent as a couple of years ago.

- Homes listed at the lower end are often in need of repair. Prices are not as affordable when investments in needed improvements are taken into account.
- The inventory of homes listed for sale is now much smaller than five years ago.
- The greatest shortage (inventory compared with buyers) is now in the entry level \$150,000 to \$250,000 range.
- Homes priced over \$300,000/\$350,000 are oversupplied at this point in time.
- Buyers are very concerned about energy efficiency, having a garage and schools.
- Cash buyers are common particularly for second/vacation homes; about half of second/vacation home buyers are from Utah.

Current Availability

A total of 293 residential units were listed for sale in early July. Of these 293 listings:

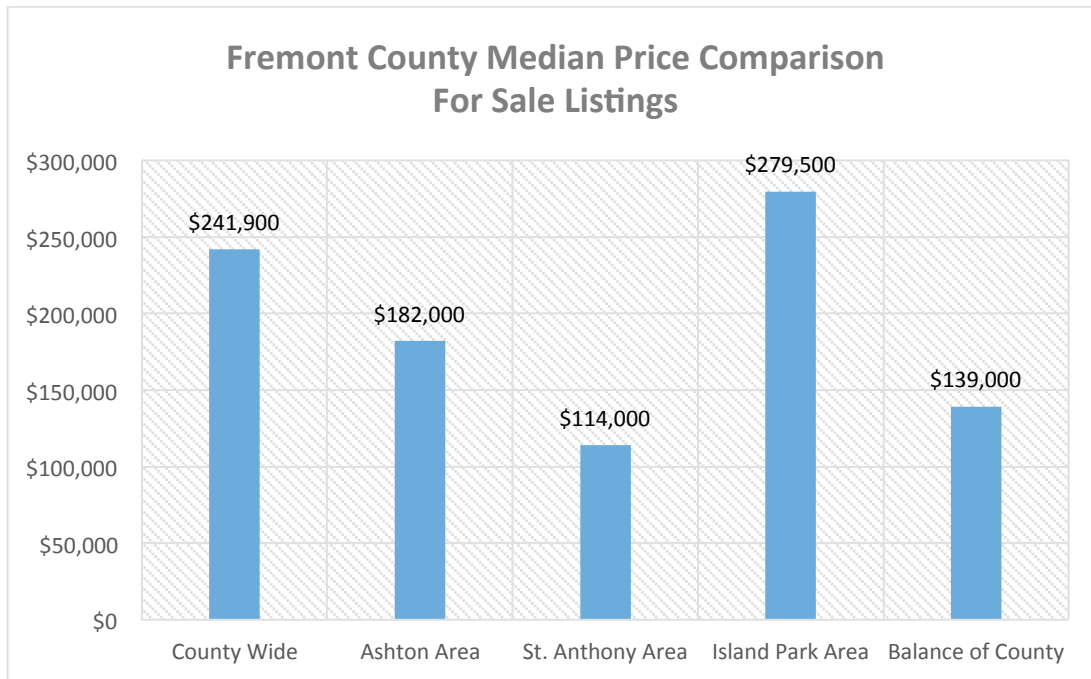
- 271 were for single family homes;
- 191 or 70% were in the Island Park area;
- The overall median price was \$241,900 or \$195 per square foot.

Fremont County MLS Listings by Location, Price and Unit Type, July 28, 2014

# of Listings	Total County	Ashton Area	St. Anthony Area	Island Park Area	Balance of County
Condos/TH's	1	0		1	
Single Family	271	38	43	177	13
Manufactured on Land	14	2	3	7	2
Recreation/cabin	7	1		6	
Total	293	41	46	191	15
Median Price					
Condos/TH's	\$125,000			\$119,000	
Single Family	\$249,900	\$196,000	\$116,900	\$289,500	\$169,900
Manufactured on Land	\$41,803	\$160,500	\$69,520	\$84,900	\$124,000
Recreation/cabin	\$425,000	\$505,000		\$362,500	
Overall	\$241,900	\$182,000	\$114,000	\$279,500	\$139,000
Median Price/SF					
Condos/TH's	\$178			\$100	
Single Family	\$200	\$141	\$101	\$217	\$121.15
Manufactured on Land	\$93	\$110	\$62	\$128	\$73
Recreation/cabin	\$347	\$326		\$460	
Overall	\$195	\$139	\$91	\$220	\$121

Source: Snake River MLS; fractional ownership excluded. Note: Units listed under each community are in that general area; the MLS does not have separate area designations for within municipal limits.

There is wide variation in median home prices within Fremont County. The Island Park area has the highest priced real estate and the St. Anthony area has the lowest, with a difference of nearly \$100,000.



Source: Snake River MLS

Availability of Ownership Housing

Low and very low income households have opportunities to buy a home in Fremont County with 84 homes listed for sale at prices they could afford. Most are old; the median age is close to 50 years. A total of 155 of the for-sale listings are affordable for households with incomes greater than 120% AMI.

MLS Listings by AMI

	Total	AMI			
		≤50%	50.1% - 80%	80.1% -120%	>120%
Maximum Price*		\$88,900	\$142,400	\$212,100	>\$212,100
Listings					
Condos/THs	1		1		
Single Family	271	28	45	49	149
Manufactured on Land	14	6	4	3	1
Recreation/Cabin	7			2	5
Total	293	34	50	54	155
Percent of Total	100%	12%	17%	18%	53%

*Based on a 30 year fixed rate mortgage at 5.5% with 5% down and 20% of the monthly payment covering taxes, insurance and HOA fees.

Mortgage Financing

Most local residents obtain either FHA (3.5% down) or conventional Freddie Mac/Fannie Mae mortgages (20% down). When it remains difficult to obtain mortgage financing for condominiums, there are very few condominiums in Fremont County. Most local buyers cannot afford to pay more than 5% down. Poor credit scores are impacting their ability to qualify. While the Idaho Housing and Finance Association offers down payment programs, they are not well known or utilized in Fremont County.

4. Rental Market Analysis

The rental market in Fremont County is small. As of 2013, an estimated 887 housing units were renter occupied. This equates to just under 20% of all occupied units, the lowest percentage in the region.

Rents

The median rent in Fremont County is \$474 per month, the lowest in the region. Rents for subsidized/income restricted units about roughly \$100 below market.

Overall Rents* by Bedrooms and by AMI

	Overall
Overall Median Rent	\$474
Overall Average Rent	\$491
Med. Restricted Rents	\$392
Med. Market Rents	\$500

Source: 2014 Housing Survey *Utilities not included.

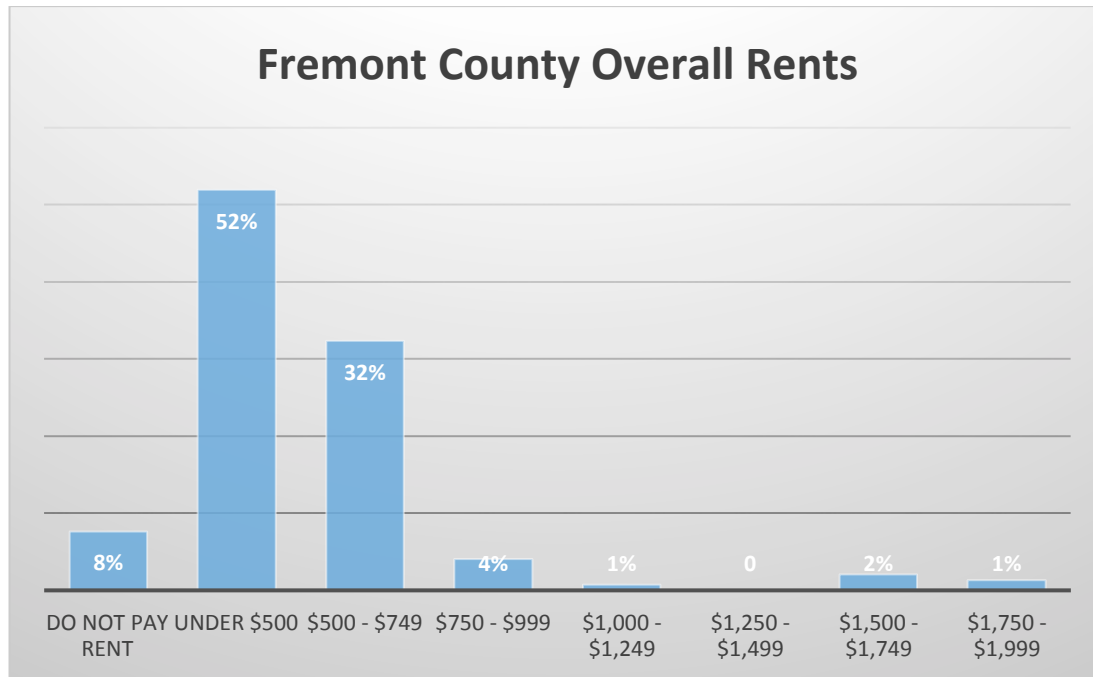
Rents do not vary as much as usual by size; the median rent for one bedroom units is only \$50 less than for three bedrooms. While households tend to pay rents that correlate to their income levels, this is not the case in Fremont County. Households with incomes greater than 120% AMI pay less overall than low and very low income households.

Rents by Bedrooms and by AMI

Med. Rents by Bedrooms		Med. Rents by AMI	
1 BR	\$424	≤50% AMI	\$408
2 BR	\$495	51% - 80% AMI	\$500
3 BR	\$474	81%-120% AMI	\$583
4 BR	\$771	>120% AMI	\$387**

Source: 2014 Housing Survey **Based on small sample of only 11 units

The following chart shows how little rents vary in Fremont County with over half under \$500 per month.



Source: 2014 Housing Survey

Current Availability

A total of 14 units were identified as being available for rent in July through:

- a property management company that manages 12 units in the county;
- managers of four subsidized/income restricted apartment properties with 55 units combined; and
- Craigslist.

In total, these units represent a vacancy rate of 1.5% although it should be noted that research methods did not capture all available units (such as those posted with an on-site sign or on a bulletin board). Of the vacant units, two were in restricted apartment projects, for a vacancy rate of 3.6% among those 55 units. Two of the 12 units leased through the property management company were vacant, which equaled a vacancy rate of 17%. Determining an overall vacancy rate for the purposes of determining how many additional rental units should be built, if any, would best be done with research conducted when BYU-I is in full session.

Of the 14 vacant units, 12 were in the St. Anthony area with one each in Ashton and Island Park. Unlike the rest of the region, vacancies are highest in the St. Anthony area during the summer months because of decreased student enrollment at BYU-I. Four of the vacant units were in one property on Main St. in St. Anthony. Ashton is relatively stable year round, while rental availability for seasonal employees is very limited during the summer in the Island Park area.

Rents have changed little in recent years, likely due to the fact that the number of jobs in Fremont County remained relatively stable during before, during and after the recession and because of BYU-I's

influence. Units listed for rent are about the same as rents paid for occupied units. This confirms that rents are not rising; however, according to property managers, rents may increase in the St. Anthony area during the coming year.

Fremont County Rental Rates Compared - Available and Occupied Units

	For Rent Median Mkt. Rents	Occupied Median Rents
1 BR	\$420	\$424
2 BR	\$563	\$495
3+ BR	N/a	\$474
Total/Median	\$513	\$491

Sources: 2014 Housing Survey, interviews, on-line research

5. Housing Problems

Housing costs are unaffordable for 17% of the county's households, and many residents are experiencing other housing problems, ranging from difficulty finding housing to a variety of physical deficiencies. Renters are more likely than owners to have housing problems.

Threats to Quality of Life

- The affordability of housing for the workforce is considered to be a threat to the quality of life in the region by about one-third of the population, with 25% considering it to be a moderate threat and 10% indicating it is a serious threat.
- The availability of housing for seniors and persons with special needs is also considered to be a threat to a similar degree as housing for the workforce - 26% feel it is a moderate threat; 7% a serious threat.

Affordability

Approximately 760 households are cost burdened by housing payments that exceed 30% of the gross income of household members combined. When payments exceed 30%, households have insufficient residual income to afford other necessities like food, transportation and health care. Very low income households ($\leq 50\%$ AMI) are particularly hard hit by the cost of housing in Fremont County – 35% of them are cost burdened. Affordability increases as incomes increase with none of the households in the 120% AMI category reporting that they spend more than 30% of their income on housing.

Percentage of Income Spent on Housing Payment by AMI, Fremont County

Shading Denotes Cost Burden

% Income=Housing Pmt.	Overall	AMI			
		$\leq 50\%$	50.1% - 80%	80.1% -120%	>120%
$\leq 30\%$	83%	65%	81%	92%	100%
31% - 40%	8%	14%	8%	7%	
41% - 50%	5%	11%	8%	1%	
>50%	4%	10%	3%		
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total Cost Burdened	17%	35%	19%	8%	0%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

Renters are much more likely than owners to pay more than 30% of their income on housing (21% compared with 15%).

Percentage of Income Spent on Housing Payment by Own/Rent, Fremont County
Shading Denotes Cost Burden

% Income=Housing Pmt.	Owners	Renters
30% and under	85%	78%
30.1-40%	7%	10%
40.1-50%	4%	7%
Over 50%	4%	4%
	100%	100%
Total Cost Burdened	15%	21%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

Heat and Utilities

About 30 Fremont County households have no source of heat. This estimate includes seasonal employees who completed the survey (though seasonal households are likely under-represented). Many households use more than one type of heat. Electricity is used by the majority of the county's households (58%), followed by propane (35%), wood (33%) and natural gas (29%). None of the survey respondents indicated they use solar for heat.

The average cost of utilities in Fremont County is \$227 per month. The average varies somewhat by income; very low income households spend \$186 on average, while utilities for households with incomes over 120% AMI average \$245. Renters pay less than owners on average (\$185 compared with \$237).

When the cost of utilities is added to the base rent or mortgage payment, as is often done under Federal housing programs, the percentage of households that are cost burdened increases to 30% of owners and 47% of renters.

Percentage of Income Spent on Housing Payment Plus Utilities by Own/Rent, Fremont County
Shading Denotes Cost Burden

% Income=Housing Pmt. Plus Utilities	Owners	Renters
30% and under	71%	52%
30.1-40%	16%	23%
40.1-50%	4%	10%
Over 50%	10%	14%
	100%	100%
Total Cost Burdened	30%	47%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

Difficulty Finding Housing

Approximately 15% of residents (662 households) indicated that finding housing that was affordable and met their needs was very difficult when they last moved. Another 37% had a moderately difficult time finding housing. There is no clear correlation, however, between income levels and the perceived

difficulty of finding adequate, affordable housing. All income bands have found it difficult to find housing to roughly the same extent. Renters, however, were more likely to find it very difficult to find housing than owners (29% of renters compared with 11% of owners).

Difficulty Finding Housing Last Time Moved, Fremont County

	Overall	AMI			
		≤50%	50.1% - 80%	80.1% -120%	>120%
Not Difficult	49%	50%	31%	43%	53%
Moderately Difficult	37%	35%	55%	38%	36%
Very Difficult	15%	15%	15%	19%	11%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

Difficulty finding housing has increased within the last five years. Whereas 11% of household that moved more than 10 years ago found it very difficult to find housing, 23% of the households that have lived in their current home less than one year found it very difficult.

Difficulty Finding Housing by Years Lived in Current Home, Fremont County

	Overall	Years Lived in Current Home			
		<1 year	1 to 5 years	6 to 10 years	>10 years
Not difficult	49%	38%	27%	62%	56%
Moderately difficult	37%	39%	50%	31%	33%
Very difficult	15%	23%	22%	7%	11%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

Unable to Live Where Desired

Most of the households now living in Fremont County want to live there, but 13% or 590 households would rather live in another county, primarily in neighboring Madison County. There is a slight correlation between income and location preferences. Very low income households are more likely to want to live elsewhere.

Where Residents Live Compared with Where Want to Live

Want to Live in:	Overall	AMI			
		≤50%	50.1% - 80%	80.1% -120%	>120%
Fremont County	87%	76%	87%	84%	90%
Madison County	7%	14%	7%	9%	5%
Elsewhere	6%	10%	6%	7%	5%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

Commuting

Commuting to jobs located outside of Fremont County is very common with 1,960 households (54% of 3,626 households with an employee) including at least one employee who works in another county. Most commuters travel to work in Madison County. Low income residents are less likely to commute, as is typically the case since lower paying jobs are available where they live and they cannot afford the cost to commute.

The cost of commuting out of county averages \$645 per month for Fremont County households. It exceeds the average monthly expense for housing alone. The impact is particularly acute for very low income households where the increase in the monthly payment for housing and commuting costs combined is 178% higher than the cost of housing alone. For higher income households, the relative increase in cost is much lower. This shows the importance of providing housing near jobs, especially for low wage employees.

The Cost of Commuting for Fremont County Households

Households with Employees Working in:	AMI				
	Overall	≤50%	50.1% - 80%	80.1% -120%	>120%
Madison County	37%	35%	42%	36%	33%
Teton County, WY	2%		5%	1%	2%
Fremont County	82%	71%	86%	84%	85%
Other county	15%	7%	7%	9%	20%
Teton County, ID	4%	4%	7%	2%	5%
Total	139%	117%	146%	131%	144%
Commute Out of County	58%	46%	61%	48%	60%
Average Commute Miles	27.6	27.6	27.6	27.6	27.6
Monthly Commute Cost	\$645	\$645	\$645	\$645	\$645
Rent/Mortgage Pmt.	\$636	\$362	\$617	\$689	\$861
Housing & Commute Cost	\$1,281	\$1,007	\$1,262	\$1,334	\$1,506
Increase in Payment	101%	178%	104%	94%	75%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey. Note: Multiple response question; totals exceed 100%.

Overcrowding

Approximately 240 households live in overcrowded conditions in Fremont County based on the standard of more than two persons per bedroom. Overcrowding is more common among very low income households. In the over 120% AMI category, 86% of households have less than one person per bedroom. Renter households are more likely to live in overcrowded housing than are owners (11% compared with 4%).

Overcrowding – More than Two Persons per Bedroom, Fremont County

Persons per Bedroom	Overall	AMI			
		≤50%	50.1% - 80%	80.1% -120%	>120%
≤1-person	71%	50%	61%	74%	86%
>1 to 1.5	12%	16%	11%	15%	9%
>1.5 to 2	12%	21%	23%	9%	3%
> 2 persons	5%	14%	5%	2%	2%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

Homes in Fremont County tend to be large with 35% having four or more bedrooms. Most households indicated they need fewer bedrooms than they now have. This is not the situation for low income households, however. The majority of very low income household live in one or two bedroom units, whereas most indicate they need three or more bedrooms. The reverse is true for households with incomes greater than 120% AMI – they have 3.6 bedrooms on average but only need an average of 2.7 bedrooms.

Bedrooms Now Have Compared to Needed, Fremont County

Bedrooms	Overall	AMI			
		≤50%	50.1% - 80%	80.1% -120%	>120%
Have					
1	5%	9%	6%	4%	4%
2	22%	43%	24%	12%	8%
3	37%	35%	40%	44%	39%
4+	35%	13%	30%	40%	49%
Average	3.2	2.7	3.0	3.3	3.6
Need					
1	19%	14%	18%	29%	17%
2	28%	28%	27%	20%	32%
3	25%	31%	24%	27%	26%
4+	27%	28%	31%	24%	25%
Average	2.7	2.9	2.8	2.5	2.7

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

Physical Deficiencies

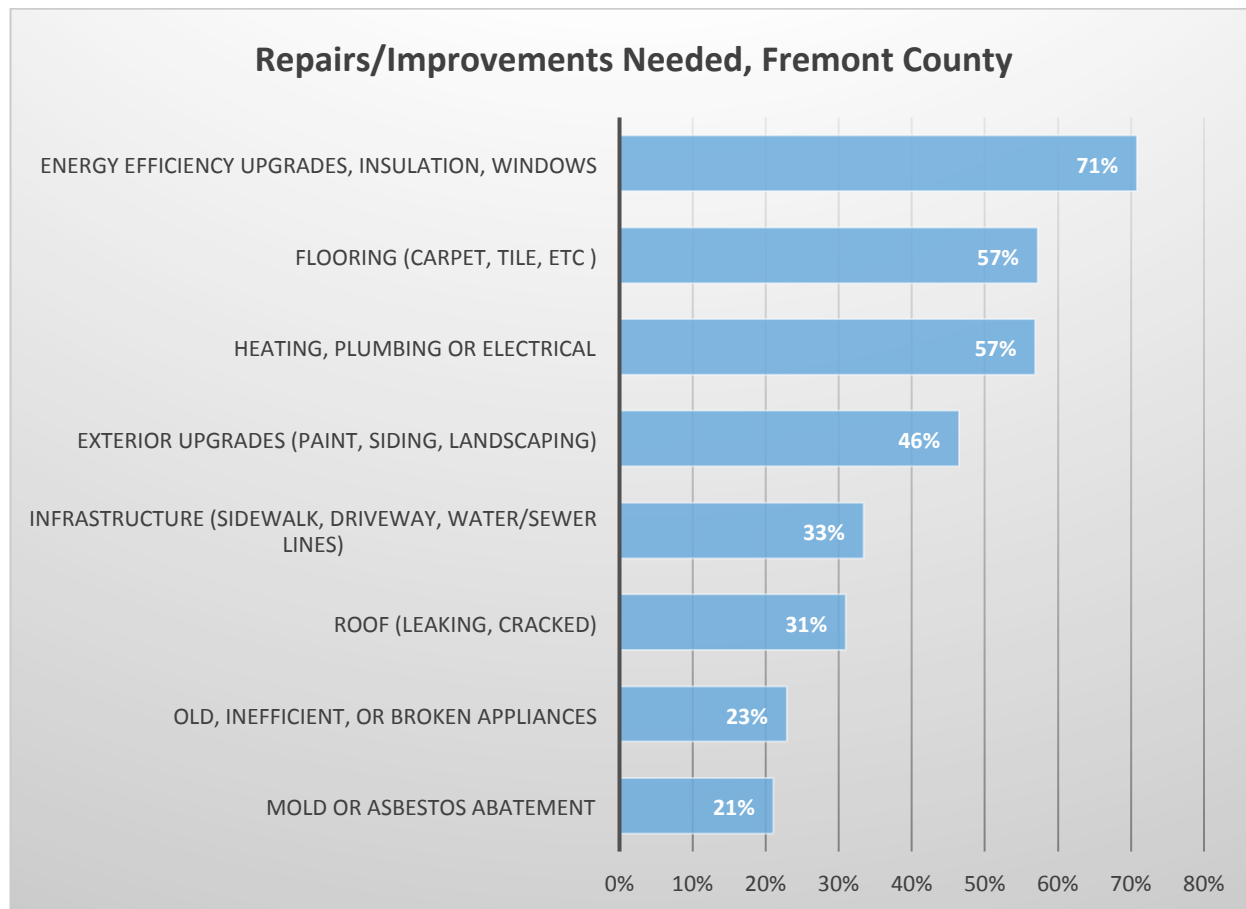
Just over 800 households live in homes that they consider to be in fair or poor condition. Households with incomes over 120% AMI are most likely to rate the condition of their housing as excellent or good, whereas very low income households are most likely to live in housing that in in fair or poor condition. Renters are nearly twice as likely as owners to indicate their housing is in fair or poor condition (28% compared with 16%). About 125 households in Fremont County do not have adequate/safe running water.

General Condition of Homes, Fremont County

Persons per Bedroom	Overall	AMI			
		≤50%	50.1% - 80%	80.1% -120%	>120%
1=Excellent	36%	18%	26%	29%	43%
2=Good	46%	52%	53%	49%	45%
3=Fair	15%	19%	18%	23%	11%
4=Poor	2%	11%	3%		1%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

Many households that feel their housing is in fair or poor condition indicated that multiple types of repairs or improvements are needed. The need for energy efficiency upgrades was cited by 71% of the households with housing in fair or poor condition. Renters need fewer exterior improvements and roof repairs than owners but are more likely to need replacement of old, inefficient or broken appliances.



Source: 2014 Housing Survey. Note: Multiple response question; total exceed 100%.

Housing Instability

Overall, 24% of the county's households (approximately 1,075 households) have experienced a problem while living in the region that causes instability in housing. Inability to pay bills has been the most common problem. Low income households have been disproportionately impacted by these problems. Households with incomes above 120% AMI, however, have also been forced to move often.

About 290 households have been evicted or gone through foreclosure, yet 80 households indicated they are currently late on their housing payments and facing eviction or foreclosure.

Instability Indicators Including Evictions/Foreclosures, Fremont County

	Overall	AMI			
		≤50%	50.1% - 80%	80.1% -120%	>120%
Experienced 1+ Problems	24%	47%	34%	21%	7%
Unable to Pay Bills	91%	89%	95%	100%	78%
Unable to Rent/Buy due to Poor Credit	27%	18%	43%	38%	8%
Forced to Move Often	4%	2%	5%	-	22%
Eviction/Foreclosure					
Have Experienced	6%	5%	13%	-	-
Current Facing	2%	5%	1%	1%	1%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

Renters have more often experienced housing instability problems than have owners (37% of renters compared with 20% of owners). Renters have been particularly impacted by an inability to obtain housing due to poor credit.

Forced to Move

About 1,025 households plan to move within the next five years, with 420 planning to leave the region. Most want to move, but about 38% or 160 households indicated they anticipate having to move. Being forced to move is more frequently a problem for very low income households. Households with incomes greater than 120% are more likely to stay in their current residences. The majority of renters indicate they plan to move within the next five years (57%, which is relatively low for the region) and are more likely than owners to indicate they will move because they have to.

Plans to Move, Fremont County

Within next 5 years...	Overall	AMI			
		≤50%	50.1% - 80%	80.1% -120%	>120%
Stay in your current residence	77%	77%	66%	74%	82%
Move into a different home within the region	13%	14%	19%	13%	13%
Leave the region	9%	9%	15%	13%	5%
Reason					
Want to	62%	44%	70%	60%	69%
Have to	38%	56%	30%	40%	31%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

6. Housing Units Needed

This section of the report provides estimates of the demand for both rental and ownership housing.

Affordable Housing Costs

The following table provides the incomes for each AMI category with the corresponding affordable housing costs. These costs are the *maximums* for each range. Affordable purchase prices were calculated based on an interest rate of 5.5%, which is about one point higher than prevailing rates for 30-year fixed rate mortgages. Interest rates are rising however and will have a profound impact on housing affordability. A one point increase in the rate, as occurred in 2013, would drop the affordable purchase price for a household with an income of around 80% AMI by \$20,000 to \$25,000.

Maximum Affordable Rents and Maximum Purchase Prices by AMI, Fremont County

	AMI			
	≤50%	50.1% - 80%	80.1% -120%	>120%
Max. Income*	\$23,900	\$38,250	\$57,360	>\$57,360
Max. Affordable Rent	\$600	\$960	\$1,430	>\$1,430
Max. Affordable Purchase Price**	\$88,900	\$142,400	\$212,100	>\$212,100

*Varies by household size; incomes for three-person households used based on average household size of 2.88 persons. The number of households at each AMI category is based on the actual size of those households and the corresponding income range.

**Assumes 30-year fixed rate mortgage at 5.5% interest with 20% of payment covering taxes, insurance and HOA fees and 5% down.

Rental Units Needed

The need for additional rental units is unclear since research was conducted in late July and August, yet rentals are most in demand in the St. Anthony area during the school year. It is clear, however, that rental availability is limited in the Ashton area and in the Island Park area during the summer. Rents are so low in Fremont County as to make market, unsubsidized construction of rental units very difficult; revenues would be too low to support debt service given construction costs.

Additional construction of subsidized units for low and very low income households, especially seniors, is likely warranted. None have been built since 1980, and vacancy rates are low among the 55 existing units in the county. Low cost housing for seasonal employees in the Island Park area also appears to be justified, though additional research through employers in the area is recommended to determine the appropriate number.

Ownership Units Needed

The majority of renters (57%) want to move within the next five years and most of them (73%) would like to move into ownership. Most owners plan to remain in their homes in which they now reside, yet

7% would like to buy a different home within the region. Combined, these households generate demand for about 465 housing units.

Desire to Move into Owned Units, Fremont County

	Percent	Number
Resident Households	100%	4,533
Plan to Move within 5 years	22%	1,025
Plan to Move within the Region	13%	580
Want to Own	87%	467

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

Comparing the incomes of households that want to move to homes listed for sale shows that the largest number of units needed is largest in the 81% to 120% AMI range. This is the category that most entry-level ownership housing efforts usually target. There are also gaps in the low income ranges, which usually require subsidies of some type to fill. There does not appear to be a net need for ownership housing priced above 120% AMI; however, since most of the units in this price range are in the Island Park area, there will be opportunities for the market to provide ownership units priced around \$212,000 in other areas of Fremont County.

Ownership Housing Needed by AMI, Fremont County

	AMI			
	≤50%	50.1% - 80%	80.1% -120%	>120%
Max. Income	\$23,900	\$38,250	\$57,360	>\$57,360
Max. Affordable Purchase Price	\$88,900	\$142,400	\$212,100	>\$212,100
Income Distribution – Households Plan to Move & Own	20.0%	18.5%	29.2%	32.3%
Ownership Units Needed by AMI	93	86	137	151
For Sale Listings	34	50	54	155
Net Units Needed	59	36	83	(4)

Source: 2014 Housing Survey; Snake River MLS, Team calculations

There are impediments to ownership beyond cost, such as inability to qualify for mortgages, lack of down payment and inability to sell homes now owned. Also, the units that are for sale and affordable may not be suitable/desirable due to a variety of factors, including the condition and location of the units.

Unit Type Desired

Among households that plan to move within the next five years, 85% prefer to move into a single family home. Their second choice in terms of unit type however shows that duplexes/townhomes are preferred over condominiums. No one selected mobile homes for their first choice; however, they were rated higher than condominiums as a second choice home.

Housing Type Desired by Fremont County Households that Plan to Move

	1st Choice	2nd Choice
Single-family home	85%	32%
Apartment	7%	15%
Duplex/townhome	6%	27%
Condominium	2%	11%
Mobile home	-	16%
Other	-	6%
	100%	100%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey

7. Community Comparison

Households and Housing Units

- 36% of Fremont County households reside within the municipalities of Ashton, Island Park and St Anthony.
- St Anthony is the largest town by far, with nearly three times more households than in Ashton.
- Fremont County's high overall percentage of vacant/second homes (52%) is because of Island Park and its surrounding area. Within the city limits of Island Park, only 18% of units are occupied by resident households. When over 80% of residential units drive demand for workforce housing by generating retail, service and home repair jobs and less than 20% of units potentially house members of the workforce, labor shortages often occur.
- In sharp contrast to Island Park, Ashton and St. Anthony have the highest percentage of units that house community residents, exceeded only by Rexburg in the region.
- In all three towns there are relatively more households with a member(s) age 65 or older than elsewhere in the region. Ashton has a particularly high concentration of senior households.
- St Anthony is a very family oriented community with 45% of households including at least one child. Island Park, however, has among the lowest percentage of households with children of communities in the region. Teton Village (which is an unincorporated area in Teton County, WY) has fewer, as is typically the case in resort areas; families with children tend to seek different amenities, like proximity to schools and other families with children, and are less concerned with proximity to recreation.
- Household incomes are higher in Island Park, while Ashton and St. Anthony are roughly the same.
- All three communities have a high homeownership rate (70% to 76%), but not as high as elsewhere in the county.

Households and Housing Units in Fremont County by Town

	Fremont County	Ashton	Island Park*	St. Anthony
Housing Units	8,718	452	697	1,252
Occupied Units/Households	4,533	398	123	1,118
Percent Occupied/Primary Residences	52%	88%	18%	89%
Owner Households	3,646	300	94	783
Renter Households	887	98	29	335
Homeownership Rate	80%	75%	76%	70%
Households with Member under 18	39%	39.3%	19.7%	45.3%
Households with Seniors	28.9%	27.5%	23.0%	23.7%

*Note: small sample size with 15 percentage point margin of error.

Household Incomes in Fremont County by Town

	Fremont County	Ashton	Island Park*	St. Anthony
Average Annual Income	\$48,293	\$46,864	\$56,427	\$46,237
Median Annual Income	\$40,000	\$38,000	\$50,000	\$40,000
Households by AMI				
Very Low Income ≤50% AMI	27%	29%	25%	30%
Low Income 51%-80% AMI	17%	17%	9%	18%
Moderate/Middle Income 81%-120% AMI	22%	25%	15%	20%
Middle/Upper Income >120%	33%	29%	51%	31%
Total Low Income	44%	46%	34%	48%

Source: 2013 Census Bureau estimates for counties; 2014 Housing Survey. *Note: small sample size with 15 percentage point margin of error.

Housing Costs

- Rents are lowest in Ashton, highest in the Island Park area and in between in St. Anthony. Purchase prices are lowest in St. Anthony, however.
- To afford the median priced home, an income equal to 64% AMI would be required in St. Anthony compared with 102% AMI in Ashton and 157% AMI in Island Park.

Housing Costs in Fremont County by Town

	Fremont County	Ashton	Island Park*	St. Anthony
Average Monthly Housing Payment	\$636	\$567	\$725	\$616
Median Rent – Occupied Units	\$474	\$483	\$300	\$495
Median Rent – Units for Rent	\$513	N/A	N/A	N/A
AMI Required to Afford Med. For Rent	43% AMI	N/A	N/A	N/A
Median List Price – Homes for Sale	\$241,900	\$182,000	\$279,500	\$114,000
AMI Required to Afford Med. Price	136%	102%	157%	64%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey; Snake River Board of Realtors MLS. *Note: small sample size with 15 percentage point margin of error.

Housing Problems

There are some similarities among the two largest communities of Fremont County in terms of the housing problems that their residents have and are experiencing. The condition of homes in Ashton and St. Anthony is similar, as is the incident rate for households spending in excess of 30% of their income on housing. But they contrast in terms of commuting patterns and other key indicators as explained below.

Island Park is unique from the other communities in almost all aspects. It should be noted, however, that the survey sample size for Island Park is small (35 responses); the margin of error for estimates for Island Park is higher than for the other communities or the county as a whole.

In Ashton:

- Fewer households are cost burdened by their housing payment (48 households), but approximately 75 households indicated it was very difficult to find housing they could afford and that met their needs the last time they moved.
- Overcrowding is rare, which is the result of so many one- and two-person senior households having fewer children as compared to St. Anthony.
- Few households would rather live in a different county; over three fourths of Ashton's residents want to live in Ashton.
- Ashton has a much lower percentage of out-of-county commuters than St. Anthony – only 36%.
- Few residents (about a dozen households) think they will have to move within the next five years.

In St. Anthony:

- 170 households spend more than 30% of their income on their housing payment, which is the same number that indicated it was very difficult to find affordable housing that met their needs.
- Overcrowding is more common with 80 households being overcrowded, which likely stems from the high percentage of households with children.
- Commuting out of county for work is very common; 680 households include at least one employee who commutes to work in another county.
- Most out commuters would rather live in Fremont County than in the county where they work, yet 190 households would rather live in a different county, mostly Madison.

Although the survey sample size is small, it appears that Island Park has a greater housing affordability problem than Ashton or St Anthony. Relatively more households spend in excess of 30% of their income on housing, even though it has not been very difficult to find housing. Homes tend to be in good condition. There is very little commuting to other counties for work, and residents who live in Island Park want to live there, though some will have to move within the next five years.

Housing Problems in Fremont County by Town

	Fremont County	Ashton	Island Park*	St. Anthony
Cost Burdened Households	17%	12%	27%	15%
Very Difficult to Find Housing	15%	19%	9%	15%
Home Overcrowded	5%	2%	7%	7%
Home in Fair or Poor Condition	18%	20%	6%	21%
Want to Live in Other County	13%	8%	0%	17%
Employees Work in:				
Fremont County	82%	90%	100%	81%
Teton County, WY	2%	2%		2%
Madison County	37%	8%		45%
Teton County, ID	4%	6%	7%	2%
Other county	15%	20%		12%
Households w/ Out-of-County Employee(s)	58%	36%	7%	61%
Will Have to Move	9%	3%	11%	10%
Instability Problems	24%	22%	21%	26%
Eviction/forced removal from housing	6%			9%
Unable to pay bills - food, utilities, medical	91%	97%	82%	92%
Unable to rent or buy due to poor credit	27%	31%	17%	25%
Forced to move often	4%		18%	4%

Source: 2014 Housing Survey. *Note: small sample size with 15 percentage point margin of error.

8. Strategy Recommendations

In Place

Island Park

Comp Plan Policy - A policy of the Comprehensive Plan enables the City to require large developments to provide housing for workers to accommodate the demand generated by the project. It distinguishes between “employee housing” which is onsite and “seasonal housing” which is offsite from the development. The policy has not been implemented since there have been no applications for large-scale developments since its adoption.

Fremont County

Comprehensive Plan Policy -- Fremont County’s Comprehensive Plans calls for large-scale developments to cover the cost of providing additional public facilities. Fremont County should require a careful examination of the public facilities and housing needs generated by large development proposals.

Habitat for Humanity - The Idaho Falls affiliate of Habitat for Humanity received a \$1.4 million gift from the estate of an Ashton-area farm family for use in the region. Ashton followed by St. Anthony are the top priorities as specified by the donor. After the communities in Fremont County, priorities in order are Madison, Jefferson and Teton counties. Significant improvements have been made to one Ashton home and another home is under construction.

Recommended

The following strategies are recommended to address identified housing needs.

Create a Housing Office/Authority – To implement the policies adopted by the towns and county and to act on the strategies recommended herein, time and expertise is needed. Perhaps a part time position or a staff person shared with a neighboring county would be sufficient.

Develop Senior Housing – With the county’s high percentage of seniors, many of whom occupy large homes, more appropriate housing for their needs could be developed in town, thereby freeing up the homes where they now live for families.

Expand Habitat’s Work – With so many older homes in need of repair in Fremont County, Habitat for Humanity offers the resources and skills to make needed improvements. Developing good working relationships between Habitat and the communities should be a priority.

Create Rehabilitation and Weatherization Program – In addition of the work that work that Habitat might undertake, Federal funding could also be pursued to make repairs to homes in Fremont County, particularly energy efficiency improvements that would reduce utility costs.

Research/Quantify Need for Seasonal Employee Accommodations in Island Park. Use an employer survey to determine the number of seasonal workers employed in the area, find out where they are housed and explore interest in employer participation in providing additional housing. Consider

sponsorship by the Town of Island Park and the Island Park Chamber of Commerce to maximize response rates. Focus groups could be used to supplement the survey. Explore design options for summer-only occupancy that would result in low cost construction.

Provide in-Town Land for Multifamily Housing – Additional diversity in the housing supply is needed. Many households do not need and cannot afford single family homes. Sites appropriate for construction of duplexes, tri-plexes and townhomes should be identified. Review and modify regulations that call for excessive land requirements for residential development.

Down Payment Assistance – A county wide or multi-county down payment assistance program should be established along with homebuyer education/counseling services for first time homebuyers possibly in conjunction with the Idaho Housing and Finance Association.