

Benchmark Home Prices

What do I get for my money when buying a house? In the Chicago area, the median sale price of existing single family homes was \$220,900 in 2002, while it was only \$98,100 in the Wichita area. Clearly housing is more expensive in Chicago. But someone moving to Wichita really wants to know something more: "What would it cost me to buy the same home I had in my old city?"

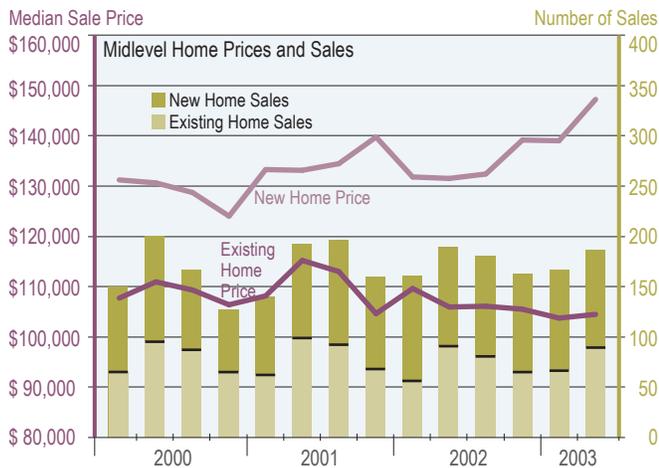
The WSU Center for Real Estate's new Benchmark Home Price Series will help answer this question. The Center has defined three "benchmark homes" based on physical

characteristics including size, number of bedrooms, number of bathrooms, and type of garage. Each Benchmark Home Price Series shows the median price of all homes matching these characteristics that have sold each quarter.

With this information, prospective homebuyers can get a better picture of what their money will buy in Wichita. The Center for Real Estate will update and release our Benchmark Home Price Series on a quarterly basis. For more details, visit our website at <http://realestate.wichita.edu>.

Starter Homes

Starter homes have between 800 and 1,200 square feet in finished living area, 1-3 bedrooms, 1-2 baths, and a 1- or 2-car garage. The market for new starter homes has remained solid over the last two years, with steady price gains and solid sales. At the same time, prices of existing starter homes have declined fairly dramatically, reflecting the overall weakness in the Wichita housing market.

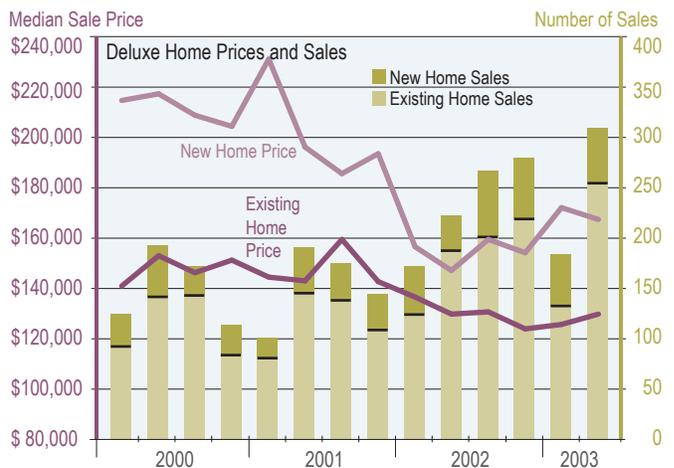


Mid-level Homes

Mid-level homes have between 1,200 and 1,800 square feet in finished living area, 3-4 bedrooms, 2 or more baths, and a 2-car or larger garage. Sales of both new and existing mid-level homes have remained fairly stable over the last several years. Prices of new mid-level homes have risen slightly over this time frame, even as existing mid-level home prices have fallen.

Deluxe Homes

Deluxe homes have between 1,800 and 2,500 square feet of finished living area, 3 or more bedrooms, 3 or more baths, and a 2-car or larger garage. In contrast to our other benchmarks, the median price of new deluxe homes has dropped sharply since the beginning of 2001, although prices have risen somewhat in the last year. Existing deluxe homes have fared somewhat better. While prices have declined slightly, sales of these homes have remained remarkably strong in the wake of record low interest rates.



Source: WSU Center for Real Estate, using data provided by the Wichita Area Association of REALTORS®