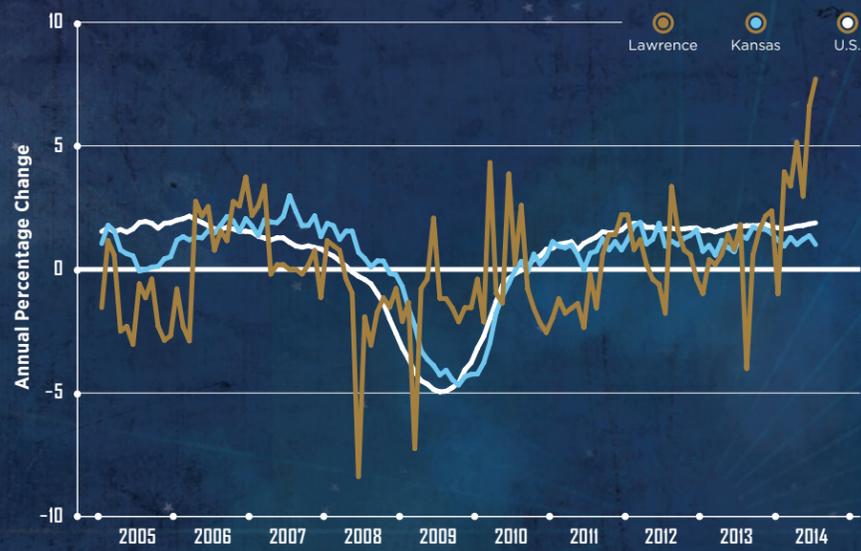


# ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

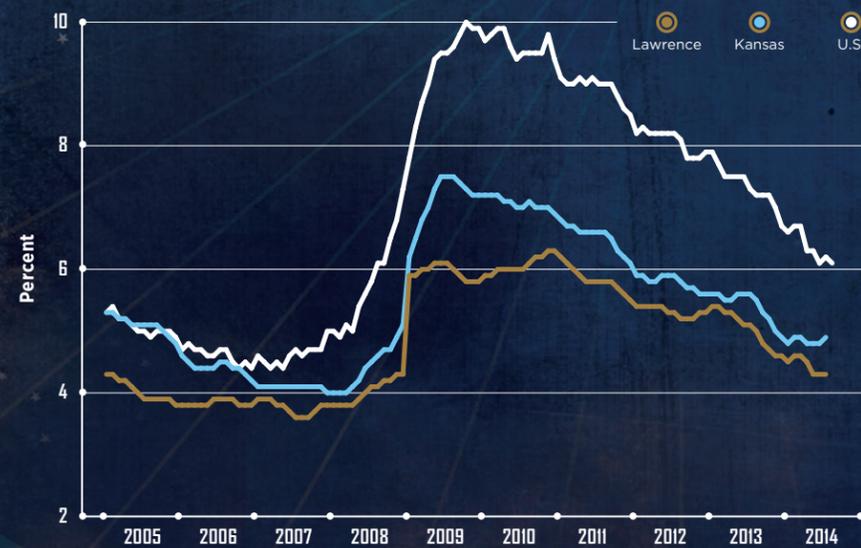


## EMPLOYMENT GROWTH<sup>A</sup>



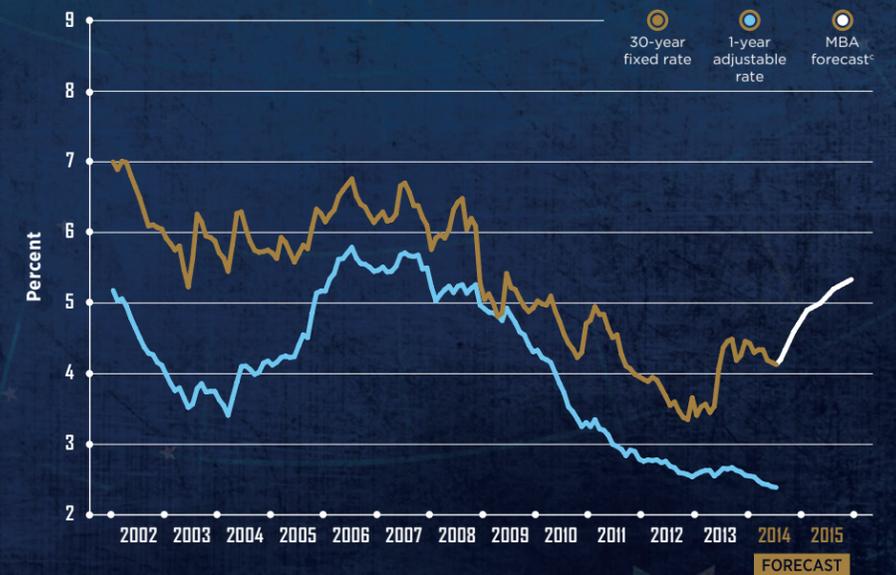
Over the past year, Lawrence employment growth has been surprisingly strong, with average employment in the first half of the year up 3.5 percent over 2013. The unemployment rate has continued to fall as well, and was sitting at 4.3 percent by mid-summer. Hopefully, the strong labor market will continue into next year.

## UNEMPLOYMENT RATE<sup>B</sup>



TOTAL EMPLOYMENT IN LAWRENCE WAS UP 3.5 PERCENT OVER THE FIRST HALF OF THIS YEAR.

## MORTGAGE RATES



Mortgage rates remain exceptionally low, and the Mortgage Bankers Association forecasts that the 30-year fixed rate will remain below 5.3 percent through the end of next year, suggesting that financing costs will not become a hindrance to the housing market any time soon.

Sources: Freddie Mac; Mortgage Bankers Association; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Notes:  
 a) Year-over-year percentage change in total, non-farm employment, seasonally adjusted  
 b) Seasonally adjusted  
 c) Mortgage Bankers Association August 2014 forecast of the 30-year conventional mortgage rate