

Prairie Plains

700 W. 8th Street
Lamar, MO 64759



In Missouri, Lamar is best-known as the birthplace of President Harry S. Truman. POAH's 2001 purchase of the Prairie Plains development in Lamar is notable, however, for preserving three-quarters of the affordable rental units in the town of 4300.

Project Partners

- Missouri Housing Development Commission
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

The Preservation Challenge

Lamar, Missouri, is located on Interstate 71, the north-south route from southwestern Missouri to Kansas City. While it is perhaps best known as the birthplace of President Harry S. Truman, a few demographic statistics tell much of the story of this small rural town of 4,300: its population decreased by 2% between the 1990 and 2000 census counts, and its average household income of \$36,096 is only 60% of the statewide Missouri average of \$61,173. One in five of its residents is aged 65 or over; 17% of those elders live below the poverty line. At the time Prairie Plains was put up for sale in 2001, one evaluation concluded that if the property were not preserved, "most of the residents likely would not find adequate affordable housing in the area."

POAH's Role

POAH purchased Prairie Plains and a portfolio of 12 other properties in 2001 to preserve their long-term affordability. The development represents three-quarters of the affordable subsidized rental housing in Lamar. The site includes five one-story buildings with 20 units for low-income seniors, and five two-story townhouse-style structures with 30 family-sized apartments. A community building with meeting space, the management office and laundry facilities rounds out the seven acre site. A project-based Section 8 contract ensures that current and future Prairie Plains residents who are income-qualified will pay only 30% of their household income for rent.