

The Next Hot Neighborhoods

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February 28, 2019

Where will the next “it” place to live be in 2024, 2029 and even 2034?

Gardner, Kansas

Following Interstate 35, Gardner is almost exactly 30 miles from downtown Kansas City. In ten years, that might seem like a quick commute. It’s also close to employers who are located “out south” such as Garmin and Black and Veatch. With Leawood and Overland Park having some of the highest housing costs in the metro and Olathe booming (it was recently ranked number 11 on Money Magazine’s 100 best places to live list) there aren’t a lot of housing bargains left in Johnson County.

This makes Gardner in a position to experience impressive growth. The cost of living is about 13 percent lower than the rest of the county. The city has a B-plus ranked school district, and with larger-than-average lot sizes, this once-rural community is becoming very attractive to families. (The median home price is in the mid-\$200,000 range. New construction is starting at \$300,000.)

“You are getting so much more home for your dollar,” says realtor Melissa Irish, who lives in Gardner. “You can save \$10,000 to \$20,000 more for the same home just by driving another five to seven minutes down the road.”

Irish credits city planners for what she calls Gardner’s “thoughtful growth.” In the next 10 years, she predicts the city will retain its country charm but boom with new construction. “Gardner will attract people who want big-city amenities with a small-town feel,” she says.