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The Herald-Times

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UNAFFORDABLE BLOOMINGTON HOMES

The Standard on 14th Street on Feb. 11. RICH JANZARUK/HERALD-TIMES

Why even Realtors struggle with housing affordability

Andrew Miller
The Herald-Times | USA TODAY NETWORK

Editor's note: This is the first part of a series about housing affordability in Bloomington.

Bloomington's housing market has already been deemed inaccessible by many in the city. Renters feel they're paying too much, and homebuyers often feel constricted.

It's hard to describe the crisis or define it accurately because of its many causes. But experts and people impacted by high costs alike say something needs to change.

Average income, above-average housing prices

According to Zillow, Bloomington's average rent in June was nearly \$2,000 (sources vary, however). Average home listing prices have risen by around \$66,500 in five years, more than 16%. In eight years, they've risen by almost \$130,000, almost a 38% jump. The apartment-reported vacancy rate is around 4%.

Neilsberg Research found that average household

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The new VA medical clinic in Bloomington will open Sept. 15. PROVIDED BY MARK TURNEY/RICHARD L. ROUDEBUSH VA MEDICAL CENTER

Area veterans get one-stop health care

New \$7.5M Bloomington clinic to open Sept. 15

Boris Ladwig
The Herald-Times | USA TODAY NETWORK

A new \$7.5 million, 24,000-square-foot clinic in Bloomington that will provide comprehensive health care to military veterans will open on Monday, Sept. 15.

The facility is at 3098 N. Lintel Drive, about 1.5 miles northwest of the intersection between Interstate 69 and the Ind. 45/46 Bypass. The facility is just northwest of the intersection between the bypass and West Hunter Valley Road.

The new clinic will be operated and staffed by employees of the U.S. Department of Veterans Services and will replace the two privately operated Bloomington facilities — on Arch Haven Avenue and South Liberty Drive — with which the VA had contracted to provide services. The VA also is closing its Martinsville location on Sept. 12 and consolidating it with the Bloomington facility.

The new Bloomington clinic will offer primary care, mental health,

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12,000 manufacturing jobs lost in August

Unsure yet how Trump tariffs affecting industry

Bailey Schulz
USA TODAY

The U.S. manufacturing industry shed more workers in August despite policies from President Donald Trump's administration aimed at bolstering the sector.

The United States lost 12,000 manufacturing jobs for the month, continuing a downward trend since its most recent peak in February 2023, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. Overall, employers added a disappointing 22,000 jobs in August, signaling a slowdown in U.S. hiring.

It will take time to see how tariffs' impact on the manufacturing labor force plays out. So far this year, the uncertainty around the new trade policies and consumer spending has prompted some businesses to slow hirings.

"There's no good reason for manufacturing to be hiring right now, and

there are a lot of good reasons for it to be taking it easy," said Ron Hetrick, a senior economist at labor market analytics company Lightcast.

Manufacturing job loss isn't exclusive to the Trump administration. Jobs in the industry — which slid to 12.7 million in August, or about 8% of total nonfarm employment — have dipped dramatically since their peak in 1979 when they accounted for roughly 22% of total employment. While there were gains made after the Great Recession, jobs began trending down again in early 2023.

That downward trend has continued into 2025, with the sector losing roughly 78,000 jobs over the year through August, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Economists point to a continuation of long-term trends driven by increased production among manufacturing facilities.

"As you get better at making manufactured product — that is productivity growth — you don't need as many people to make the same things you did before,"

said Chad Syverson, an economics professor at the University of Chicago.

Higher interest rates, meant to ease inflation by cooling economic activity, also play a role, said Hetrick.

More recently, changes under the Trump administration seem to be adding fuel to the fire. A crackdown on immigration means fewer workers on factory payrolls. A decline in consumer confidence has manufacturers questioning production plans. And uncertainty around Trump's new trade policy has some companies pausing hiring until they have a better picture of how tariffs will impact pricing.

"We know nothing reduces investment quite like a bunch of uncertainty, especially in regard to policy," Syverson said. "And to say that we've had uncertainty in policy for the past several months is a massive understatement."

A report published in from the Institute for Supply Management, a trade group, found economic activity in the manufacturing sector contracted for the sixth consecutive month in August.

Jobs in the manufacturing industry — which slid to 12.7 million in August, or about 8% of total nonfarm employment — have dipped dramatically since their peak in 1979 when they accounted for roughly 22% of total employment. MICHAEL HICKEY/GETTY IMAGES FOR GE APPLIANCES FILE

One survey respondent quoted in the report, who works in the electrical equipment, appliances and components space, said their company has had to increase prices 24% to offset tariffs and let go about 15% of its U.S. workforce — including engineering and IT

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