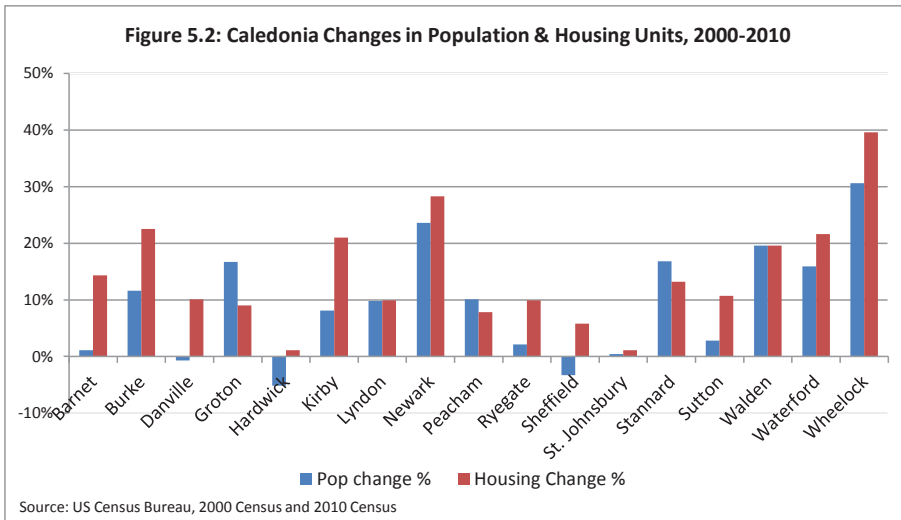
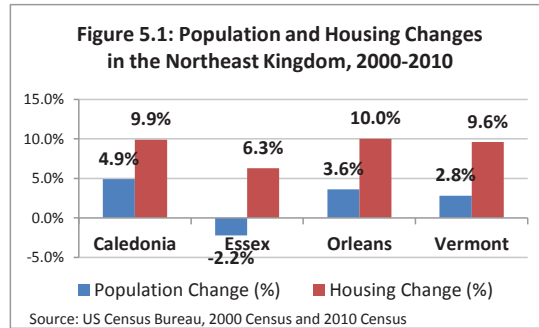


# Chapter Five: Housing

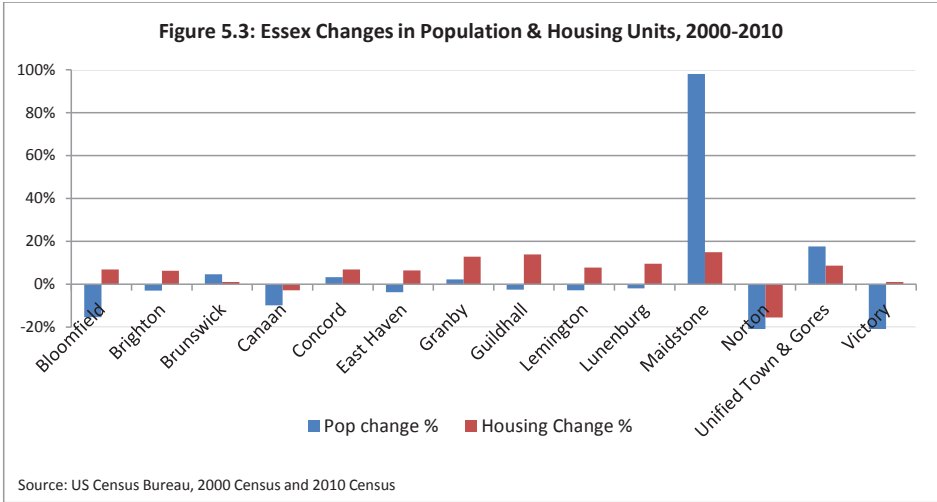
## I. HOUSING OVERVIEW

According to the 2010 Census, there are 37,123 housing units in the Northeast Kingdom, an increase of 9.4% from 33,939 units in the previous decade. The Census defines a “housing unit” as a house, apartment, mobile home, group of rooms, or a single room that is occupied (or if vacant, is intended for occupancy) as separate living quarters. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Northeast Kingdom’s population in 2010 was 64,692, which represents a modest increase of 3.6% from the 2000 Census, far slower rate of growth than the region has seen in prior decades. The increase in housing units significantly outpaced the rate of population change, even in Essex County, which saw a net loss in population. (Figure 5.1)

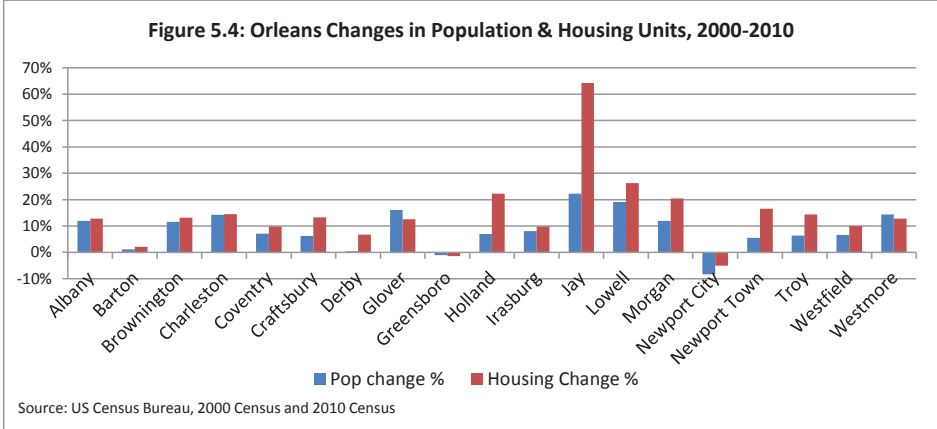
Municipalities throughout the Northeast Kingdom that lost population still saw an increase in housing units: Bloomfield, Brighton, Danville, East Haven, Hardwick, Guildhall, Lemington, Lunenburg, Sheffield, and Victory. The exceptions to the rule were Canaan, Greensboro, Norton, and Newport City.



1



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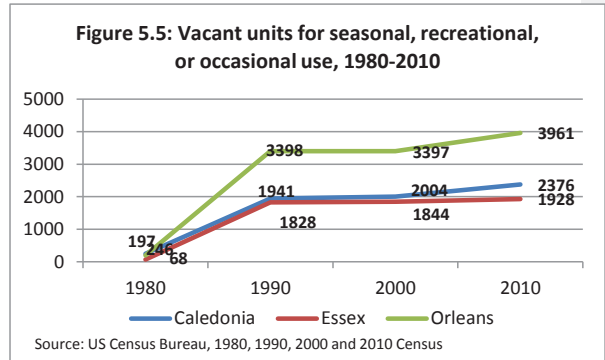


### 3 Seasonal Housing

4 A partial explanation for the discrepancy between population growth rates and housing units is the  
 5 disproportionate share of seasonal and vacation housing. The Northeast Kingdom has traditionally had some  
 6 the highest percentages of seasonal and vacation housing stock in the state. According to the 2010 Census,  
 7 more than one out of every five housing units in the Northeast Kingdom is a vacant housing unit intended  
 8 for “seasonal, recreational, or occasional use.” By comparison, the statewide percentage of vacant seasonal  
 9 housing stock is only 15.6%. Like the rest of Vermont, the Northeast Kingdom saw significant growth in  
 10 seasonal housing units from 1980 to 1990. Growth slowed in the following decade, but appears to have  
 11 picked up slightly from 2000 to 2010. (Figure 5.5)

12

1 In Orleans County, seasonal housing  
 2 accounts for more than half of the housing  
 3 stock in Greensboro (53.3%), Jay (63.4%),  
 4 Morgan (58.0%) and Westmore (67.9%). In  
 5 Essex, seasonal units account for more  
 6 than half the housing stock in Brunswick  
 7 (50.0%), Maidstone (69.7%), Norton  
 8 (58.2%), and the Unified Towns and Gores  
 9 (90.6%). Granby's seasonal stock is at  
 10 44.3%. Historically, Caledonia has had a  
 11 smaller share of seasonal housing stock  
 12 (currently only 14.9% of all housing units),  
 13 but seasonal units account for close to half  
 14 of all units in Newark (49.3%) and  
 15 Peacham (40.2%).



16 The high proportion of seasonal and vacation housing creates complicating factors in the region's housing  
 17 scenario. ~~Seasonal homes consistently command higher prices on the real estate market (Table 5.1). Also, as~~  
 18 Vermont becomes a more attractive destination for retirees, long-time seasonal residents may be more likely  
 19 to become full-time residents. This appears to be the case in Maidstone, where the population practically  
 20 doubled ~~over the past decade from 2000 to 2010~~, the community's share of owner-occupied housing *increased*  
 21 by more than 13% and the share of seasonal *decreased* by more than 13%. Growth in seasonal units ~~over the~~  
 22 ~~past decade during this period~~ was largely concentrated in Barnet, Burke, and Jay (a net of 81, 97, and 200  
 23 units respectively).

24

	Primary Residences Sold		Vacation Residences Sold	
	Average	Median	Average	Median
Caledonia	\$144,047,154,846	\$130,000,147,000	\$217,986,145,206	\$178,000,116,500
Essex	\$400,645,111,525	\$89,250,96,500	\$147,238,135,024	\$120,000,110,000
Orleans	\$142,371,160,428	\$119,000,146,000	\$200,212,183,015	\$162,500,128,000
Franklin	\$190,051,208,933	\$183,000,202,000	\$155,824,128,685	\$135,000,118,950
Lamoille	\$286,820,304,960	\$200,000,224,500	\$447,374,559,394	\$299,900,313,900
Washington	\$208,795,213,899	\$178,000,188,000	\$284,332,214,956	\$231,000,153,750
Orange	\$172,608,184,490	\$150,000,174,900	\$214,007,208,292	\$140,000,139,700
Vermont	\$227,635,242,332	\$200,000,205,000	\$303,720,289,547	\$220,000,205,000

Source: Vermont Department of Taxes, accessed from Housingdata.org. Average and Median figures include single family residences, mobile homes with land and condominiums sold in 2013-2016.

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25

26 The relatively lower cost of vacation homes in the Northeast Kingdom in comparison with the rest of the  
 27 state is likely an ongoing attraction to potential seasonal home buyers. In all cases the median – the “middle”  
 28 selling price of all residences when prices are sorted in ascending order – is lower than the average. This  
 29 indicates that outliers -- sales of extremely high-priced homes -- are skewing averages upward.

30

The following figure shows the median price of single family home primary residences sold in 2013 in each municipality in the region.

**Figure 5.6: Median Single Family Home (Primary Residences)\* Prices by Municipality, 2013**



Source: Vermont Department of Taxes. \*Sales of mobile homes with land and condominiums can skew median figures at the town level, so they were omitted from this analysis.

Even though the average and median prices of primary residences in the Northeast Kingdom may be lower than statewide, real estate is not necessarily a bargain for those who live and work here, because median and mean (average) household and family incomes are lower than statewide incomes (Table 5.2).

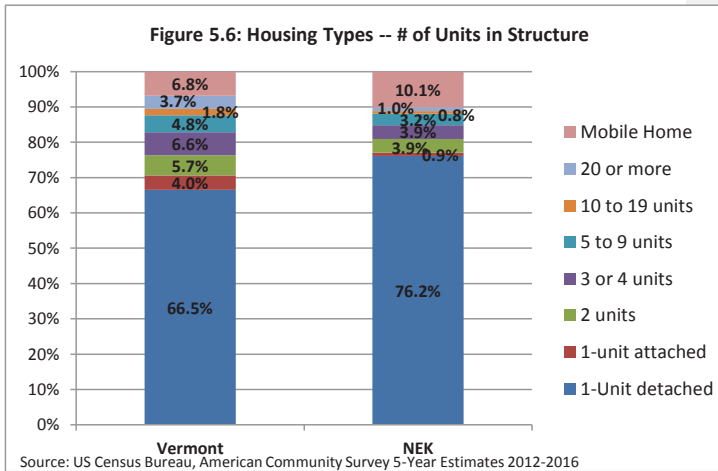
	Household Income		Family Income	
	Median	Mean	Median	Mean
Caledonia	\$46,931,453,995	\$60,787,574,426	\$60,141,549,941	\$72,354,682,228
Essex	\$39,467,376,799	\$49,494,446,190	\$48,316,455,500	\$57,532,544,463
Orleans	\$43,959,419,953	\$56,883,527,730	\$55,101,522,235	\$66,155,631,174
Franklin	\$58,884,562,240	\$73,478,697,784	\$72,249,684,408	\$86,993,811,089
Lamoille	\$53,316,526,686	\$69,394,656,629	\$67,566,645,500	\$81,495,756,640
Washington	\$58,171,572,281	\$73,660,700,028	\$74,036,746,640	\$88,431,840,083
Orange	\$54,263,524,480	\$67,388,653,350	\$67,105,632,253	\$78,337,757,798
Vermont	\$56,104,542,267	\$73,016,697,716	\$71,465,681,111	\$88,340,837,752

Source: US Census Bureau- American Community Survey 5 Year Averages, 2008-2013/2012-2016

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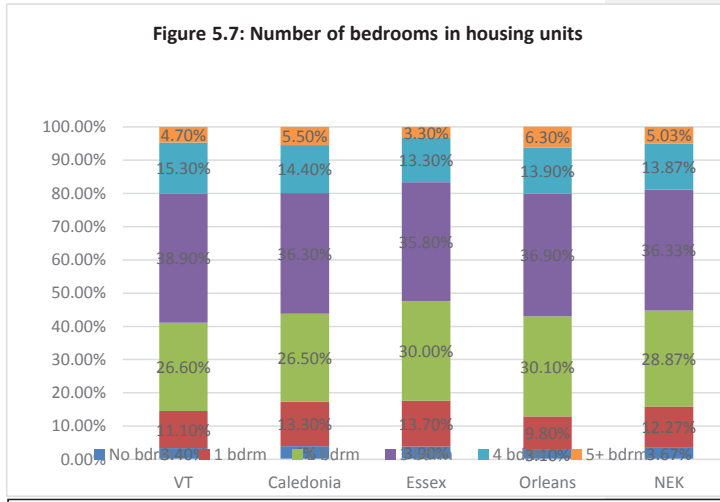
### Housing Supply

The Northeast Kingdom's supply of housing primarily consists of single family dwellings (1-unit unattached). Compared with statewide figures, single family homes and mobile homes account for a greater share of the overall housing stock. Multiunit dwellings and attached 1-unit dwellings (such as accessory dwelling units and apartments over a commercial use) account for a smaller share. (Figure 5.6) More than half of the region's housing units have three or more bedrooms. (Figure 5.7)



1 Residential development trends have  
 2 favored large lot rural residential in  
 3 recent years. According to the 2016  
 4 Grand List, there are ~~21,563~~22,249  
 5 residential properties in the Northeast  
 6 Kingdom (i.e. not seasonal or mobile  
 7 homes). More than a third of residential  
 8 properties (~~37.2~~37.7%) are on lots that  
 9 are ~~larger than six acres or larger~~.  
 10 (Vermont Department of Taxes).

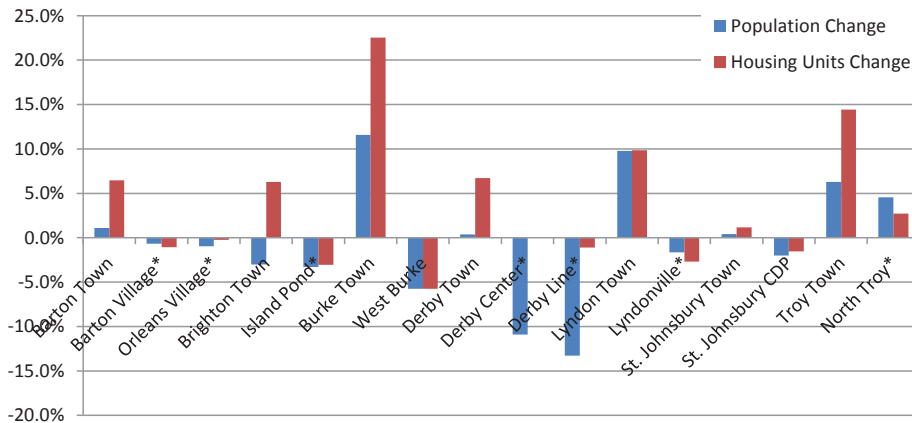
11  
 12 A key ~~planning~~ statewide planning goal  
 13 is to plan development in order to  
 14 maintain historic settlement patterns of  
 15 compact villages and urban centers  
 16 separated by rural countryside. (24  
 17 V.S.A. 4302(1)). Residential  
 18 development in the Northeast Kingdom  
 19 does not appear to be furthering this  
 20 goal. A recent NVDA GIS analysis  
 21 shows that over the past decade, more  
 22 than 95% of residential development in the Northeast Kingdom has occurred outside of development centers  
 23 (areas characterized by compact settlement patterns and clusters of mixed uses). Furthermore, a review of  
 24 Census data from 2000 to 2010 shows a loss of population and housing units in “Census places,”  
 25 concentrated settled areas that are not necessarily incorporated. In Vermont, Census places often are  
 26 traditional village settlement areas with the capacity to support additional housing opportunities with off-site  
 27 water and sewer and provide convenient access to civic, cultural, and commercial amenities. Boundaries of  
 28 Census places can change from one decennial Census to the next, so only the Census “places” with  
 29 unchanged boundaries are evaluated here. Every Census place in the Northeast Kingdom with comparable  
 30 historic data shows a loss of both population and housing units, with the exceptions of Derby Center (no net  
 31 change in housing units) and North Troy (Figure 5.8).



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2012-2016

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Figure 5.8: Population and Housing Units, 2000-2010 in Census Places



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census \*contains areas served by offsite sewer and water

Real estate markets in St. Johnsbury and Newport City – both of which contain the Northeast Kingdom’s regional urban centers – are underperforming against the rest of their respective counties. Single family homes in both markets tend to take a little longer to sell and command a lower sales price. This is significant because according to the Vermont Realtors Association Market Report, St. Johnsbury accounts for about 20% of all available single-family inventory in Caledonia and Newport City 18%.

Table 5.3 Real Estate Sales in St. Johnsbury and Newport City, YTD through November 2014

	Days-on-Market Until Sale	Median Price	Average Price	% of Original Asking Price
St. Johnsbury	169	\$119,750	\$134,145	88.9
Caledonia County	168	\$143,000	\$166,342	88.2
Newport City	186	\$128,500	\$162,794	87.9
Orleans County	176	\$136,000	\$171,925	88.6

Source: Vermont Association of Realtors, YTD through 12-2014

The Northeast Kingdom’s housing stock is relatively old. With a few exceptions (Beecher Falls, Danville CDP, Derby Center, Barton Village, and Greensboro Bend) the majority of units built before 1939 are concentrated in the Census Designated Places. The deferred maintenance and energy inefficiency of these aging structures are likely to make them less attractive to potential homebuyers. This may be one reason why real estate markets in St. Johnsbury and Newport City – both of which contain the Northeast Kingdom’s regional urban centers – are underperforming against the rest of their respective counties.

Table 5.34 Percentage of Housing Stock Built Before 1939 in Municipalities with CDPs

Town/CDP	% of Stock Pre 1939	Town/CDP	% of Stock Pre 1939
Albany Town	35.7%	Albany Village	56.5%
Barnet Town	38.5%	Barnet CDP	60.0%
Barton Town	42.9%	Barton Village	48.2%
		Orleans Village	72.9%
Brighton Town	36.3%	Island Pond CDP	47.7%
Burke Town	27.0%	East Burke CDP	70.4%

		West Burke Village	65.5%
Canaan Town	33.1%	Beecher Falls CDP	25.6%
		Canaan CDP	54.9%
Concord Town	21.8%	Concord CDP	59.3%
Coventry Town	21.8%	Coventry CDP	51.9%
Danville Town	30.6%	Danville CDP	31.0%
Derby Town	26.4%	Derby Center Village	28.7%
		Derby Line Village	52.0%
Glover Town	29.7%	Glover CDP	39.6%
Greensboro Town	45.3%	Greensboro CDP	62.0%
		Greensboro Bend CDP	25.0%
Groton Town	32.1%	Groton CDP	56.9%
Hardwick Town	51.5%	Hardwick CDP	63.7%
Irasburg Town	21.1%	Irasburg CDP	52.0%
Lyndon Town	33.4%	Lyndonville Village	70.6%
Newport City*	54.0%		
St. Johnsbury Town	50.1%	St. Johnsbury CDP	54.6%
Troy Town	44.2%	North Troy Village	70.6%
		Troy CDP	63.4%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau – American Community Survey 5-Year Averages, 2009-2013			
* Newport City is a Census Designated Place and a County Subdivision.			

1  
2 In 2016, the Town of St. Johnsbury commissioned a Housing Study and Needs Assessment which was  
3 completed in December 2017 by Bowen National Research. The study included a comprehensive inventory  
4 of the Town's existing housing stock and identified strategies to improve the quality and range of housing  
5 options. One of the study's findings was that the Town's lack of diverse and modern housing alternatives put  
6 it at a competitive disadvantage with surrounding rural communities. Suggested strategies noted in the report  
7 included not only building new housing units, but creating incentives to support reinvestment in the Town's  
8 historic neighborhoods. These existing neighborhoods, with an average density of 4 housing units per acre,  
9 typify the model of residential density that the State seeks to foster in order to retain the pattern of compact  
10 centers surrounded by rural working lands. However, the age and deteriorating condition of the housing  
11 stock hinders reinvestment.

12 A particular problem in communities with aging housing stock and depressed markets is that homeowners  
13 that want to use their home equity as collateral in seeking loans for renovations are hampered by low home  
14 appraisals. The loan needed to fund needed renovations and weatherization could well exceed the appraised  
15 value of the property, making traditional home equity loans inaccessible even if the homeowner has excellent  
16 credit and acceptable debt-to-income ratio.

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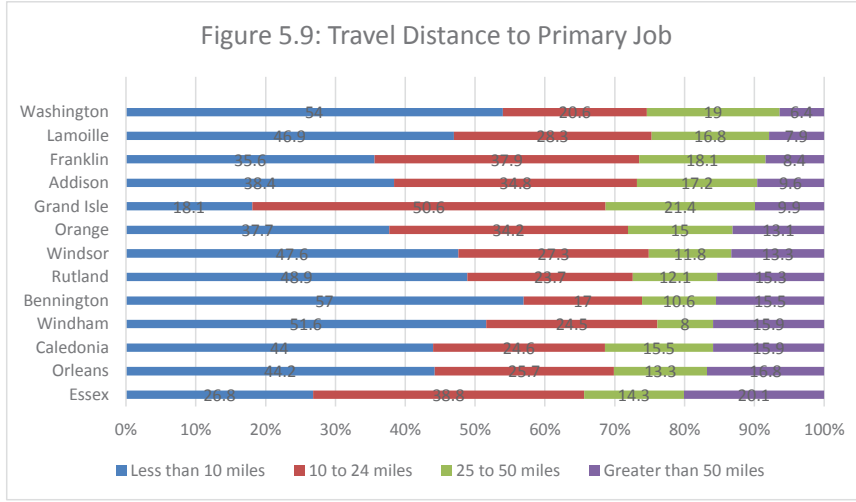
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1 Auto Dependence

2 Auto dependence (particularly work-related) may be reinforcing scattered rural residential development  
 3 patterns. Jobs are relatively scarce in this region, and residents are used to traveling  
 4 far and wide to work. Essex, Orleans and Caledonia Counties have the state's highest  
 5 percentages of residents who travel greater than 50 miles in one direction to their  
 6 place of work. (Figure 5.9)

Figure 5.10:...

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7  
 8 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning  
 9 of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2015).

10  
 11 Auto dependence (particularly work-related) maybe reinforcing scattered rural residential development  
 12 patterns. Jobs are relatively scarce in this region, and residents are used to traveling far and wide to work.  
 13 Essex, Orleans and Caledonia Counties have the state's highest percentages of residents who travel to work at  
 14 least 25 miles or more in one direction. (Figure 5.10)

15 Home Ownership

16 According to the U.S. Census Bureau 2010 Census, of the 26,691 occupied housing units in the Northeast  
 17 Kingdom, 20,046 (75.1%) are owner-occupied. Of these owner-occupied units, 61.6% have a mortgage or  
 18 loan, and 38.4% are owned free and clear. The Northeast Kingdom continues to have high percentages of  
 19 owner-occupied housing units. However, higher owner occupancy rates are often typical of a rural area and  
 20 are not necessarily an indicator of economic well-being or affordability. Rather, it may be a reflection of the  
 21 relative lack of alternatives to home ownership, such as apartments and home shares. For example Essex  
 22 County, which has the lowest median household income in the state, also has the second highest rate of  
 23 owner occupancy in the state of just over 80%. By contrast, Chittenden County, which has the highest  
 24 median household income, has the lowest rate of owner-occupancy in the state of just over 65%.

Table 5.45 Owner-Occupied Housing Units in the Northeast Kingdom, 2000-2010

	Occupied Housing Unit Change (Absolute)	Rate (%) of change	Owner Occupied Change (Absolute)	% of occupied units that	% of occupied units that



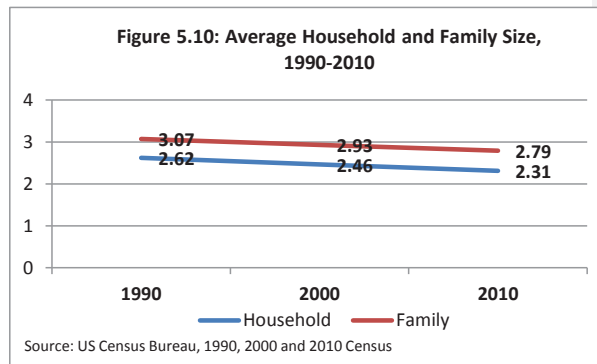
				Rate (%) of change	are owner occupied, 2000	are owner occupied, 2010
Caledonia	890	7.6	734	8.6	72.9	73.6
Essex	216	8.3	188	9.1	79.6	80.2
Orleans	874	8.4	816	10.5	74.1	75.6

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census

Owner-occupancy rates are lowest in the region’s urban centers, where more rental housing is likely to be found: ~~in 2010 the percentage of owner-occupied households in~~ St. Johnsbury ~~is was~~ 56.5%, Lyndon 68%, and Newport City 54.6%. It should be noted, however, that Newport City saw a net loss of 231 occupied units ~~over the past decade from 2000 to 2010~~. Despite modest gains in regional owner-occupancy rates from the previous decade, many communities experienced a decrease. In Caledonia County, only Burke, Danville, Hardwick, Peacham, Sheffield, St. Johnsbury, and Sutton saw modest increase in owner-occupancy rates from the previous decade. In Orleans County, eight communities saw a drop in owner-occupancy rates: Albany, Craftsbury, Derby, Glover, Jay, Lowell, Newport Town, and Westfield.

### Household and Family Characteristics

As is with the rest of Vermont, there has been significant shift in the makeup of the region’s households that may have a profound impact on the region’s housing supply and demand. The US Census Bureau defines a “household” as all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. A “family” is a group of two or more people who reside together and who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. Both household sizes and family sizes are shrinking in the Northeast Kingdom (Figure 5.10).



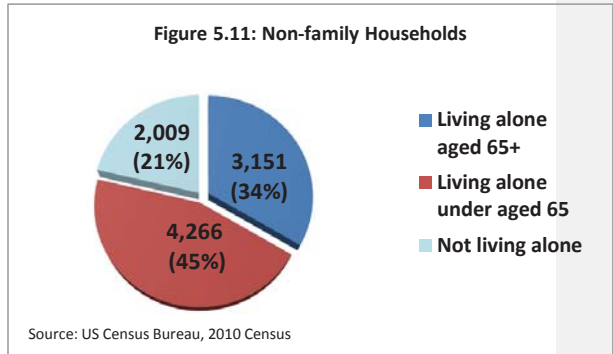
There are three drivers behind this trend: 1) a smaller percentage of family households from the previous decade, 2) a net loss of families with children under the age of 18 from the previous decade, and 3) an increase in the share of non-family households (Table 5.56).

	Total Households	Families	% of Households	Families with Children < Age 18	Non-Family Households	Householder Living Alone
2000	24,711	16,861	68.2%	7,962	7,850	6,248
2010	26,691	17,265	64.7%	6,898	9,426	7,417

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census

Studies show that married couple households tends to have higher rates of home ownership due to a number of factors, such as dual incomes, better access to credit, and cost-efficiencies from sharing resources. According to the 2010 Census there ~~are were the~~ 13,389 married couple households in the Northeast Kingdom – the same number as in the previous decade –yet ~~in 2010 they now~~ accounted for less than 50% of all households.

In 2010, non-family households now accounted for more than 35% of all households in the Northeast Kingdom, up from just under 28% in 1990. The overwhelming majority of non-family households are individuals who live alone. More than a third of those who live alone are 65 years or older. (Figure 5.11). This sector of the region’s population grew by more than 15% over the previous decade.



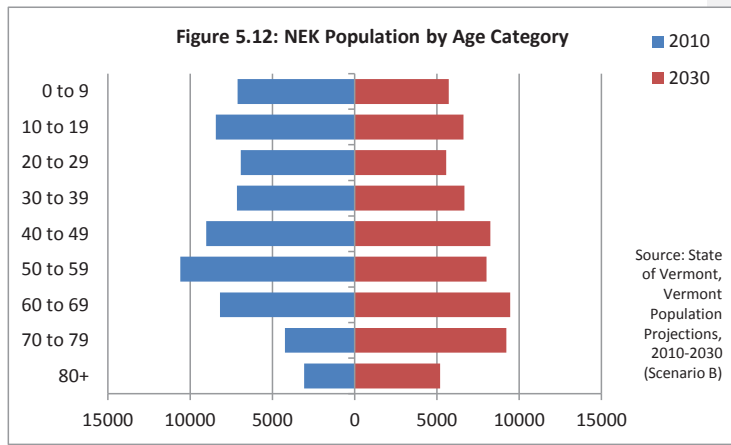
### Aging Population

According to the 2010 Census, about just under a quarter of the Northeast Kingdom’s population was aged 65 and older. By 2030 this age group could account for nearly 40% of the population. In 2013, the State of Vermont released two sets of population projections:

A) Based on more robust growth and migration rates seen in the 1990s, and

B) Based on slower migration rates seen in the 2000s.

Both sets of projections show a decrease in every age group under 60 and an increase in every age group over 60. This demographic shift could have a dramatic impact on future housing demands, such as smaller, lower maintenance homes that are located closer to goods and services.



Successful aging in place requires “liveable communities,” ones that are

characterized by safe, appropriate, accessible and affordable housing located in walkable neighborhoods with convenient access to goods and services. Newport City has taken on this challenge by receiving Vermont’s first “Age-Friendly Community” designation from AARP. In 2014, an advisory council has recently completed an exhaustive survey of the residents in Newport City and Orleans County age 45 and up. Among their findings:

Orleans county residents have lived in Orleans County and their town for a long time and are likely to remain there as they get older. 53% have lived in Orleans County for at least 45 years and 53% have lived in their current town for at least 25 years. More than a third said it was extremely or very important to stay in their town as they aged, and 71% said they are not very or not at all likely to move outside of Orleans County after retirement.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> AARP Research, “Successful Aging in Orleans County: The 2014 Survey of Community Residents Age 45+ in Orleans County, Vermont,” April 2015

1 Existing housing supply in the region is not likely to meet the needs of an aging population. According to the  
 2 AARP Liveability Index, less than 3% of housing units nationwide provide “basic passage,” which is  
 3 determined by doorways and hallways that are at least 36” wide, floors with no steps between rooms, and at  
 4 least one entry level bedroom and bathroom.

5 NVDA encourages municipalities to inventory existing housing stock at the town level.

6 The 2017 St. Johnsbury housing study has identified a need for senior housing, as homeowners seek to  
 7 downsize and find more accessible housing options. The study notes demographic trends regarding senior  
 8 homeowners in the secondary study area (SSA), which includes the balance of Caledonia County:

9 “Within the SSA, it is projected that the greatest growth will occur among senior homeowners with  
 10 incomes of \$50,000 and higher (292 households, or 13.5%). An increase of 107 households (4.1%) is  
 11 also projected to occur among senior owner households earning less than \$50,000.”

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12 There are very limited housing options in the NEK region reserved for independent seniors. Even among  
 13 those units reserved for elderly tenants, a limited number have the proper doorway widths and other features  
 14 that earn the designation of “accessible.” A list of subsidized housing units are shown on Table 5:10,  
 15 indicating those units reserved for seniors, as well as how many units are accessible. Most of these units are  
 16 reserved for tenants with incomes no higher than 80% of Area Median Income. Housing options for  
 17 independent seniors that have accessible design and are available at a variety of price points are needed in the  
 18 region.

19 For seniors who are unable to live independently, options in the State include Assisted Living Residences,  
 20 Residential Care Homes, and Nursing Facilities. These facilities are licensed by the Vermont Department  
 21 Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living, and are not necessarily limited to seniors but also serve persons  
 22 of any age with a variety of disabilities.

23 Assisted Living facilities combine housing, health and supportive services to support resident independence,  
 24 and offer, at a minimum, a private bedroom, private bath, living space, kitchen capacity, and a lockable door.  
 25 There are no Assisted Living facilities in the NEK region, although there are 12 such facilities in other parts  
 26 of Vermont.

27 Residential Care Homes provide room, board, personal care, general supervision, medication management  
 28 and nursing overview; while Nursing facilities provide a high level of care with 24-hour nursing services,  
 29 including room & board. In the NEK region there are 13 licensed Residential Care Homes with a total  
 30 capacity of 207; and 8 licensed Nursing Homes with a total capacity of 421 (see table below).

**Table 5.6: Residential Care Homes and Nursing Facilities in the NEK**

<b>Caledonia County</b>			
<b>Town</b>	<b>Facility Name</b>	<b>Facility Type</b>	<b>Capacity</b>
Danville	Cedar Lane Home	Residential Care Home	4
Lyndon	Pines Rehabilitation and Health Center	Nursing Home	60
Lyndon	Pine Knoll Community Care Home	Residential Care Home	10
St. Johnsbury	Canterbury Inn	Residential Care Home	42
St. Johnsbury	St. Johnsbury Health and Rehab	Nursing Home	29
Waterford	Waterford Group Home	Residential Care Home	4
<b>Total for County</b>			<b>219</b>
<b>Essex County</b>			

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<u>Town</u>	<u>Facility Name</u>	<u>Facility Type</u>	<u>Capacity</u>
<u>Concord</u>	<u>Loch Lomond</u>	<u>Residential Care Home</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>Total for County</u>			<u>16</u>
<u>Orleans County</u>			
<u>Town</u>	<u>Facility Name</u>	<u>Facility Type</u>	<u>Capacity</u>
<u>Barton</u>	<u>Maple Lane Nursing Home</u>	<u>Nursing Home</u>	<u>71</u>
<u>Barton</u>	<u>Maple Lane Retirement Home</u>	<u>Residential Care Home</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>Craftsbury</u>	<u>Craftsbury Community Care</u>	<u>Residential Care Home</u>	<u>24</u>
<u>Derby</u>	<u>Derby Green Nursing Home</u>	<u>Nursing Home</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>Derby Line</u>	<u>Michaud Memorial Manor</u>	<u>Residential Care Home</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>Glover</u>	<u>Union House Nursery Home</u>	<u>Nursing Home</u>	<u>44</u>
<u>Greensboro</u>	<u>Greensboro Nursing Home</u>	<u>Nursing Home</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Newport</u>	<u>Bel Aire Quality Center</u>	<u>Nursing Home</u>	<u>44</u>
<u>Newport</u>	<u>Bel Aire Center</u>	<u>Residential Care Home</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>Newport</u>	<u>Kingdom Way Group Home</u>	<u>Residential Care Home</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Newport</u>	<u>Newport Health Care</u>	<u>Nursing Home</u>	<u>50</u>
<u>Newport</u>	<u>Newport Residential Care Center</u>	<u>Residential Care Home</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Newport</u>	<u>South Bay Home</u>	<u>Residential Care Home</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Westfield</u>	<u>Scenic View Rural Edge</u>	<u>Residential Care Home</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>Total for County</u>			<u>393</u>
<u>Source: Vermont Department Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living, January 2018</u>			

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1 ~~NVDA encourages municipalities to inventory existing housing stock at the town level.~~

## 2 **Safety of Housing Stock**

3 **Fire** poses the greatest safety risk to the region's housing supply. According to the ~~2014-2016~~ Annual Report  
4 of the State Fire Marshal, first responders were called to ~~347-373~~ structure fires in the Northeast Kingdom ~~in~~  
5 ~~the past that~~ year. According to statewide data, ~~about 80% of structure fires involve residences~~ residential  
6 ~~properties account for the majority of structure fires and civilian fatalities.~~ The region's senior population is  
7 particularly vulnerable. The 2016 State Fire Marshal's report notes that over the last five years, ~~54.2% of~~  
8 ~~Vermont's fire deaths have been seniors over the age of 60. Over the past four years 68% of fire deaths in~~  
9 ~~Vermont have involved individuals over the age of 60.~~ There a number of factors that exacerbate the risk of  
10 fire in the Northeast Kingdom:

- 11 • **Age of housing stock:** The region's housing stock is relatively old and more likely to be  
12 noncompliant with fire and safety codes. About 36% of the region's housing stock was built before  
13 1950, compared to just under 31% statewide. (American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates)  
14 Additionally, Vermont Housing Conservation Board reports that more than a fifth of the state's  
15 mobile homes were built before 1976, predating federal safety standards, such as prohibiting  
16 louvered windows that obstruct escape from fire.

1 • **Scattered rural development:** Rural low-density development is likely to lead to greater response  
2 times.

3 • **Long cold winters:** The State Fire Marshal reports that 43% of residential structure fires in 2014  
4 were caused by heating appliances. Rising heating costs may force lower income individuals to turn  
5 to unsafe or improperly installed heating alternatives.

6 Towns do have the authority to address unsafe housing conditions by enforcing rental housing codes.  
7 Typically enforced by a town health officer or fire chief, local codes may address fire safety hazards, in  
8 addition to lead, mold, sewer, and water. Lyndon and St. Johnsbury have local rental housing codes.

9 **Junky yards,** accumulation of household debris, and hoarding create nuisances and reduce property values,  
10 but they also pose public health hazards and threaten drinking water supplies. NVDA regularly receives  
11 requests from municipalities for assistance with enforcement, which can require a degree of tenacity and  
12 perseverance. In 2009 the regulation of salvage yards – the outdoor storage of junk, motor vehicles, metal  
13 scrap, appliances, etc. – was delegated to the Agency of Natural Resources. ANR’s criteria for jurisdiction is  
14 *any* place or outdoor storage or junk, regardless of whether the activity is connected with a business.

15 Municipalities may adopt salvage or junk ordinances that meet or exceed ANR standards. They may also  
16 request enforcement assistance from ANR’s Dept. of Environmental Conservation Salvage Yard Program.  
17 ANR will evaluate and prioritize requests based on a number of factors, including whether of the municipality  
18 has a duly adopted salvage yard ordinance in place. To date only a handful of communities have such  
19 ordinances: Concord, Ryegate, Barton, and Burke.

20 **Flooding** and flood-related losses can be financially ruinous for any homeowner, but the region’s lower  
21 income populations may be most vulnerable. Older housing, which is often located in traditional centers of  
22 development, may be more likely to be located near rivers. To date, NVDA has assisted two communities  
23 with FEMA buyouts of two repetitive loss properties. Mobile home dwellers are also more prone to flood-  
24 related losses. Statewide, about 15% of all properties affected by Tropical Storm Irene were mobile homes.  
25 Two mobile home parks in the region –in Lyndon and Concord – have lots that are either located in mapped  
26 inundation areas or in areas close to rivers and streams prone to fluvial erosion. Most of the region’s flood  
27 maps are paper, which makes it difficult to quantify the extent of risk to residential properties. NVDA is  
28 likely to develop better data as individual communities develop Local Hazard Mitigation Plans. (See Flood  
29 Resilience Chapter.)

### 30 **EB-5 Investments and Potential Housing Developments Impact on Housing** 31 **Demand**

32 Several significant commercial developments in the northern part of the region, including Jay, Newport and  
33 Burke, were proposed in the last decade. While not all projects have come to fruition, investments in the  
34 region’s recreational resources have brought, and are expected to continue to bring, more visitors and  
35 permanent residents to the region, as well as additional employment.

36 Over the last decade Jay Peak Resort has undertaken a major expansion of its facilities, including a new  
37 indoor ice arena, golf course, hotel, restaurant, spa, conference center, and an indoor waterpark. In late 2017  
38 Jay Peak opened an indoor recreation center adjacent to the Stateside Hotel, featuring a climbing wall and a  
39 movie theater, and in early 2018 applied for an Act 250 permit to install two synthetic turf soccer fields.

40 In 2016, the 116-unit Burke Mountain Hotel and Conference Center was completed, and a partnership  
41 between Burke Mountain Resort, the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association (USSA) and Burke Mountain  
42 Academy (BMA) resulted in the designation of Burke Mountain as an official U.S. Ski Team Development  
43 Site.

44 These and other additions to outdoor recreational offerings in the region, particularly trail developments, are  
45 expected to attract new residents – both permanent and part-time – to the region.

1 Residential development in the NEK has historically occurred piecemeal, and multi-unit residential  
2 developments that rise to the threshold of Act 250 have typically been rare. It is therefore significant that  
3 there are three pending residential developments in Orleans County (Newport City, Derby and Jay)  
4 comprising 28 single-family house lots, 20 multifamily units and 84 attached units. Construction of all three  
5 of these projects were delayed due to uncertainty regarding market conditions, and have received extensions  
6 of their original Act 250 permits, allowing construction to be completed as late as 2022.

7 In the fall of 2012 an infusion of funds from the federal EB-5 Visa program created the potential for  
8 significant economic growth in the Northeast Kingdom. Current project include:

- 9 ● ~~AnC BIO Vermont: An 84,000 square foot biotech manufacturing facility located on a 40 acre~~  
10 ~~research campus in Newport City is currently under construction. At full capacity, the employer is expected to~~  
11 ~~about 500 people, of which 150 will earn salaries of \$75,000 and up.~~
- 12 ● ~~Expansion to the Newport State Airport in Coventry. Associated with the airport expansion are~~  
13 ~~plans to construct warehousing facilities, as well as a 50,000 square foot airplane assembly plant at the airport,~~  
14 ~~which is expected to bring a number of skilled jobs to the region.~~
- 15 ● ~~Resort development in Jay and in Burke. A 116-unit hotel and conference center is planned for~~  
16 ~~Burke Mountain, which will draw increased numbers of tourists. Similarly in Jay, new ski amenities, as well as~~  
17 ~~a 100 new housing units and an 84 unit hotel, will draw more visitors to the region.~~
- 18 ● ~~Renaissance Block: An entire city block in Newport City was recently demolished. In its place will be~~  
19 ~~a four story mixed use development with anchor businesses on the first two floors and short and~~  
20 ~~long term residential suites on the upper two.~~

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21 While these developments will invariably bring more people to the region, it is difficult to accurately predict  
22 the total expected in migration and resulting demand on housing. Early estimates for total direct, indirect, and  
23 induced job creation indicated about 2,000 direct jobs, 3,000 total jobs (which includes indirect and induced  
24 jobs), and a net migration to the region as high as 4,500. A workforce development study released in July  
25 2013 attributed about 1,100 new hospitality and tourism jobs related to ongoing resort development and the  
26 Renaissance block. The majority of these jobs would be hourly, pay less than \$20.00 an hour, and require  
27 minimal post-secondary education.

28 The Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development studied the impacts of Jay Peak  
29 investments from 2008 to 2013 (a value of about \$250 million). The study did not find evidence of net  
30 migration (in fact current population estimates indicate a net loss). However, there were indicators that more  
31 wage income was coming from Orleans County<sup>3</sup>. The next level of development, however, involves the  
32 creation of skilled manufacturing and technology jobs, which may lead to net migration. Where newcomers  
33 might choose to live remains unclear, but the region will see an increased demand for housing at all income  
34 levels, more visitors, and increased spending power. So far the region has not experienced an increase in  
35 annual housing starts based permitting figures on privately owned residential housing units from the U.S.  
36 Census Bureau, those figures are highly unreliable because of inconsistent reporting from towns. A review of  
37 recent Act 250 permitting activity related to housing shows that as many as 409 new housing units have either  
38 recently been created or may be established in the next 10 years in Orleans County. The majority of these  
39 units created are market rate, with about 20 identified as affordable. Much of the development involves the  
40 creation of single family units with some major exceptions:

- 41 ● ~~Newport City: Renovation of a 1920 hospital structure into 23 units.~~
- 42 ● ~~Newport City/Derby: 126 townhomes and 123 single family homes.~~
- 43 ● ~~Derby: 44 senior housing units in 8 buildings on a 12.2 acre tract off Route 5.~~

<sup>3</sup>Impacts of Growth on the Northeast Kingdom, October 3, 2014

1 ~~Derby: Five multi-family residential buildings with four units each.~~

## 2 3 II. AFFORDABLE HOUSING NEEDS IN THE NORTHEAST KINGDOM

4  
5 A household's total housing costs should be 30% or less of the household income in order to be considered  
6 affordable. While the 30% rule applies to housing costs for all income brackets, Vermont statute provides a  
7 definition for defines affordable housing which is tied to the incomes of those living in the housing. This  
8 definition was recently amended, in response to the Act 157 report which found that Vermonters with  
9 incomes higher than 80% of area median income were having difficulty finding suitable housing options that  
10 were affordable, and few programs existed to assist these households or provide incentives to developers to  
11 create housing for this income range.<sup>3</sup> The new definition of affordable housing sets different income limits  
12 for owner-occupied housing and for rental housing. Rental housing is still only classified as "affordable" if it  
13 serves households earning no more than 80% of median income, while owner-occupied housing is considered  
14 affordable if it is priced to serve households earning up to 120% of median income. Another significant  
15 change in the definition is that the higher of the State or area median income (AMI) is now the measure that  
16 is used. This change recognized that in areas with high poverty and low median incomes, full-time wage  
17 earners, even those in entry level jobs, are often disqualified from subsidized housing because their incomes  
18 are just over the limit established by AMI. The housing and rental housing stock that is both affordable and  
19 available to this middle income group is typically low-quality, as households with an income below 80% of  
20 their county median household income who pay no more than 30% of their income on total housing costs.  
21 By statutory definition, housing costs for home owners include principal, interest, taxes, insurance, and  
22 association fees. For renters, costs include rent, utilities, and association fees. ~~For a housing development to~~  
23 ~~be considered affordable, at least 20 percent of all the units or five units (whichever is greater) have to be~~  
24 ~~considered affordable and must be subject to covenants or restrictions to keep the units affordable for at least~~  
25 ~~15 years.~~

26 In the Northeast Kingdom, traditional forms of affordable housing are mobile homes, multi- units dwellings  
27 (three units or more), and accessory unit dwellings.

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<sup>3</sup> Act 157 Report to the Vermont General Assembly on ways to improve the quality and quantity of housing and tools to finance infrastructure, Agency of Commerce and Community Development, January 15, 2017.

1 **Mobile homes and Mobile Home Parks**

2 Mobile homes are the more prevalent form of affordable housing in the Northeast Kingdom. Overall they  
 3 comprise roughly 10% of the region’s housing stock (compared to 7% statewide), but even higher  
 4 concentrations can be found in the most rural communities with very small or no centers of development.

5

Caledonia County		Essex County		Orleans County	
Municipality	%	Municipality	%	Municipality	%
Stannard	28.29%	East Haven	23%	Coventry	34.33%
Sutton	23.30%	Lunenburg	20%	Brownington	23.21%
Sheffield	20.21%				

6 Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2012-2016

7 Although mobile homes are a significant source of affordable housing in our region, the lower price tag may  
 8 come at the expense of energy efficiency: Vermont Energy Efficiency Investment Corporation estimates that  
 9 mobile home owners spend about 66% more of their income on energy costs than owners of stick-built  
 10 properties. The Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB) recently concluded a pilot project to site  
 11 Vermod high-performance single-wide mobile homes. When equipped with a solar panel, these energy  
 12 efficient homes are nearly net-zero. To date there are two Vermod homes in the Evergreen Manor Mobile  
 Home Park in Hardwick.

13 Vermont statute defines a **mobile home park** as a parcel (or contiguous lots) of land that contains three or  
 14 more mobile homes. Subdivided lots with more than two mobile homes are also a mobile home park when  
 15 the lots are owned or controlled by the same person even if there are only one or two mobile homes on each  
 16 lot. There are ~~22-23~~ mobile home parks in the region. All lot rents run well below the statewide median of  
 17 ~~\$340-334~~ (Caledonia \$255,285, Essex, \$200,226, and Orleans \$225,280), and vacancy rates run above the  
 18 statewide average of just ~~under over~~ 5% (Caledonia is 7.52%, Essex 7.1%, and Orleans 7.85.7%) When a park  
 19 is slated for closure, Vermont law requires the owner to give sufficient notice to residents so that a purchase  
 20 of the park – coordinated among the residents or with a non-profit housing provider – may be established in  
 21 order to keep the park open. There are four such parks in the region now operated by non-profits.



1  
2

**Table 5.8: Mobile Home Parks in the Northeast Kingdom**

County	Town	Ownership	Lots	Vacant Lots	MHs Owned by MHP <u>Owner</u>	MHs Owned by Leaseholder
Caledonia	Burke (Glenwood)	For-profit	33	3	0	<del>6</del> <u>10</u>
Caledonia	Hardwick (BCP MHP)	For-profit	7	0	0	6
Caledonia	Hardwick (Evergreen Manor)	Non-profit (Lamoille Housing Partnership)	32	<del>3</del> <u>1</u>	<del>2</del> <u>13</u>	<del>20</del> <u>18</u>
Caledonia	Hardwick (Strong's MHP)	For-profit	3	0	1	2
Caledonia	Lyndon (Maple Ridge MHP)	Non-profit (Rural Edge)	41	<del>3</del> <u>0</u>	0	<del>4</del> <u>38</u>
Caledonia	Lyndon (Northern Hill Estates)	For-profit	29	0	<del>4</del> <u>1</u>	<del>28</del> <u>25</u>
Caledonia	Lyndon (Riverview Estates)	For-profit	33	<del>2</del> <u>1</u>	5	<del>28</del> <u>26</u>
Caledonia	Lyndon (Woodland Heights)	For-profit	34	0	<del>4</del> <u>2</u>	<del>33</del> <u>32</u>
Caledonia	St. Johnsbury (Green Lantern MHP)	For-profit	<del>55</del> <u>51</u>	<del>18</del> <u>14</u>	0	<del>36</del> <u>35</u>
Caledonia	St. Johnsbury (McGill Avenue MHP)	For-profit	10	<del>2</del> <u>1</u>	<del>6</del> <u>7</u>	2
Caledonia	St. Johnsbury (Mt. Pleasant MHP)	For-profit	<del>92</del> <u>93</u>	<del>0</del> <u>1</u>	<del>34</del> <u>27</u>	<del>64</del> <u>64</u>
Caledonia	St. Johnsbury (Oak Street MHP)	For-profit	8	5	0	<del>2</del> <u>3</u>
Essex	Canaan (Canaan MHP)	For-profit	18	0	0	18
Essex	Concord (North Concord Trailer Park)	For-profit	24	3	2	19
Orleans	Barton (Fairview Estates)	For-profit	32	<del>4</del> <u>2</u>	<del>4</del> <u>10</u>	<del>26</del> <u>20</u>
Orleans	Coventry (Nadeau MHP)	For-profit	16	<del>9</del> <u>6</u>	<del>0</del> <u>1</u>	<del>7</del> <u>9</u>
Orleans	Coventry (Nadeau MHP)	For-profit	8	2	1	5
Orleans	<u>Coventry (Poginy's MHP)</u>	<u>For-profit</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
Orleans	Derby (Derby Center Mobile Court)	For-profit	11	0	11	0
Orleans	Derby (Derby MHP)	Non-profit (Housing Foundation)	<del>95</del> <u>6</u>	1	0	<del>94</del> <u>5</u>
Orleans	Derby (Shattuck Hill MHP)	Non-profit (Rural Edge)	<del>47</del> <u>48</u>	1	0	<del>47</del> <u>8</u>
Orleans	Derby ( <del>Tetraut-Grenier</del> MHP)	For-profit	<del>29</del> <u>9</u>	0	<del>09</del> <u>9</u>	<del>20</del> <u>0</u>
Orleans	Irasburg (Piette's MHP)	For-profit	<del>65</del> <u>5</u>	<del>0</del> <u>1</u>	<del>40</del> <u>0</u>	<del>53</del> <u>3</u>
		<b>Total</b>	<del>633</del> <u>648</u>	<del>48</del> <u>50</u>	<del>66</del> <u>66</u>	<del>489</del> <u>479</u>

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Source: Vt. Dept. of Housing and Community Development: Vermont Mobile Home Program ~~2013-2017~~ Registry and Mobile Home Parks Report (Published January 2014)

3 **Multi-unit housing**

4 According to latest American Community Survey 5-year estimates, multi-unit housing stock is largely  
5 concentrated in the Northeast Kingdom's population centers. Jay and Burke also have a high concentration

1 of multi-unit dwellings, but these are generally associated with resort populations. Multi-unit dwellings are  
2 relatively scarce in remaining municipalities, and many have none at all.

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**Table 5.9: Multi-Unit Dwellings (3 or more units in structure) as a % of Total Housing Units, (10% or more)**

Caledonia County		Essex County		Orleans County	
Municipality	%	Municipality	%	Municipality	%
St. Johnsbury	3433%	Brighton	13%	Jay*	3430%
Lyndon	2120%	<del>Canaan</del>	10%	Newport City	2320%
Burke*	1923%				
Hardwick	1012%				

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey [Five Year Estimates, 2012-2016](#) \*Likely associated with resort populations.

## 2 Accessory dwelling units

3 Accessory dwelling units (also called “mother-in-law suites”) are dispersed throughout the region. In 2004 a  
 4 change in [State](#) statute required accessory unit dwellings to be treated as a permitted use of an owner-  
 5 occupied single family dwelling. However, not all towns in the region have zoning, and these developments  
 6 may be inconsistently tracked and reported in lister data. Most recent American Community Survey five-year  
 7 estimates indicate that the majority of “1-unit attached” dwellings are located in Caledonia and Orleans  
 8 County (~~132-182~~ and ~~109-193~~, respectively) and that there are only ~~10-13~~ such units in Essex County.

## 9 Subsidized housing

10 The term **subsidized housing** refers to government-sponsored economic assistance to help alleviate the cost  
 11 of housing (usually rental) for people with low to moderate incomes. Funding typically originates from the  
 12 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and follows one of two models:

- 13 1. **Project-based assistance:** Where the subsidy is assigned to a specific housing unit built, developed,  
 14 and/or managed specifically for the purpose of accepting low-income tenants.
- 15 2. **Tenant-based assistance:** Where the recipient receives financial assistance, [usually in the form of a](#)  
 16 [Housing Choice Voucher \(HCV\) \(usually called a voucher\)](#) to help cover the costs of any qualified  
 17 housing unit. The housing unit may be privately developed and it does not have to have been  
 18 specifically developed for housing low-income tenants. Because vouchers provide low-income  
 19 recipients with a range of housing choices, they may, in theory, support efforts to integrate  
 20 disadvantaged families into mixed-income communities. This mobility may help to break the cycle of  
 21 poverty for future generations. A recent study has indicated that young children (about 8 years old)  
 22 whose families had been given housing [choice vouchers to move to a “high opportunity”](#)  
 23 [neighborhood](#) increased the child’s total lifetime earnings by about \$302,000.<sup>4</sup> Private landlords may  
 24 refuse to accept vouchers, but landlords who have received low-income housing tax credits (see  
 25 below) are required to accept them. How tax credits are allocated may ultimately determine (or  
 26 restrict) housing choices for voucher recipients.

27 [Table 5.10 includes properties listed in the VHA’s database of Affordable Housing, as well as the number of](#)  
 28 [housing choice vouchers utilized in the region. These housing developments have been created through a](#)  
 29 [variety of subsidy programs, most of which require that a percentage of the units be restricted to low and](#)  
 30 [moderate-income tenants for a set period of time. Most of the units listed in the table below are income-](#)  
 31 [restricted. It is noted that the regional centers of St. Johnsbury and Newport City have many additional](#)  
 32 [multi-family units that are not subsidized but have rents as low, or even lower, than the subsidized units.](#)  
 33

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<sup>4</sup> Chetty, Hendren, and Katz: “The Effects of Exposure to Better Neighborhoods on Children: New Evidence from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment,” Harvard University, May 2015

1 Unfortunately, the quality of these rental units are often poor, as noted in the St. Johnsbury Housing Study  
2 and Needs Assessment completed in 2017.

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Caledonia-County				Essex-County				Orleans-County			
	Family	Senior-Only	Vouchers±		Family	Senior-Only	Vouchers±		Family	Senior-Only	Vouchers±
Barnet	0	0	1	Brighton	23	32	19	Albany	0	0	1
Burke	0	15	3	Canaan	0	12	1	Barton	24	52	12
Danville	0	12	4	Concord	0	10	2	Coventry	0	7	0
Groton	18	9	2	East Haven	0	0	1	Craftsbury	0	24	1
Hardwick	29	30	20	Guildhall	0	0	1	Derby	23	11	29
Lyndon	41	61	19					Glover	0	12	2
Newark	0	0	1					Greensboro	0	10	1
Peacham	0	6	2					Wrasburg	0	10	0
Ryegate	7	0	2					Newport City	55	76	61
St. Johnsbury	195	114	134					Newport Town	0	0	2
Waterford	0	1	0					Troy	0	14	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>116</b>

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Source: Vermont Housing Data (www.housingdata.org), accessed May 2015; ±Vermont State Housing Authority, April 2015

## 1 Workforce Housing

2 **Workforce housing** is a term that has been used increasingly by planners, governments, and organizations  
 3 that advocate for housing policy. It is typically used to describe housing for those who are gainfully employed  
 4 in occupations that are essential to a community, such as teachers, healthcare workers, first responders, as  
 5 well as occupations that may pay relatively lower incomes, such as food services, retail, hospitality and  
 6 tourism. Workforce housing typically does NOT include age-restricted developments. Rather, it is:

- 7 • affordable to the local workforce (with or without a subsidy);
- 8 • sited in or reasonably near the place of employment; and
- 9 • usually available to households that earn up to 120 percent of the area median income.

10 Most HUD programs are limited to low-income recipients (up to 80% of the area median income) and most  
 11 subsidized rental housing in the region is restricted to households with incomes of no higher than 60% of  
 12 area median income. While these subsidized units serve a segment of the workforce, including those with  
 13 seasonal or part-time jobs, it does not serve working households earning over these thresholds, meaning that  
 14 other funding sources, including private investment, is needed to create workforce housing for these  
 15 households, which precludes opportunities for funding workforce housing.

## 16 Affordable Housing Partners

17 The Northeast Kingdom is served by two non-profit housing development corporations. Rural Edge  
 18 (formerly known as Gilman Housing) serves all three counties and currently manages about 500 flat rate and  
 19 income-based housing units throughout the region. Its Homebuyer Education Program provides financial  
 20 literacy counseling to about 200 individuals a year. Lamoille Housing Partnership also develops and  
 21 rehabilitates properties for rent or purchase by low- to moderate-income residents. Based in Morrisville they  
 22 also serve Hardwick. Both non-profits manage mobile home parks in the region.

23 Additionally, Northeast Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA) provides assistance with locating emergency  
 24 housing, electrical disconnect, and crisis fuel assistance throughout the NEK in Newport, St. Johnsbury,  
 25 Canaan, and Island Pond.

**Housing Tax Credits Funding Sources**

Housing Tax Credits, also known as federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), have produced most of Vermont's affordable rental housing developed since the program's inception in 1987. Credits reduce federal tax liability for a 10-year period. Qualified recipients must agree to certain operating restrictions and reporting and monitoring requirements for at least 15 years. Vermont's allocation of federal credit for 2017 was capped at \$2,682.71 million. Vermont also has state affordable housing tax credits which can be used in tandem with the federal Housing Tax Credit to assist in the creation and preservation of, and \$400,000 is available annually for affordable rental housing projects. Both federal and state tax credits can be sold in order to create equity. Investors purchase the "present value" of ten years' worth of credits. For this reason, the equity raised from syndicating tax credits can be substantial. Tax credits are awarded through a highly competitive process administered by the Vermont Housing Finance Authority Agency. Funding rounds are consistently oversubscribed. Allocation is based on the annual Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP), which establishes priorities for awarding credits. In the 2018 QAP, there are five "top tier" priorities, and nine "second tier" priorities. Additionally, in an effort to affirmatively further fair housing as required under Federal housing rules, the 2018 QAP states that VHFA prioritizes geographic targeting towards communities with no affordable housing.

Federal Bond Credits are similar to Allocated Credits, but provide a lower level of credits and therefore lower equity investment to the project. Since 2004 nearly \$4.52 million in State and Federal tax credits and tax-exempt bonds have been awarded to projects in the Northeast Kingdom to acquire, develop, or rehabilitate 487 234 housing units, in St. Johnsbury, Hardwick, Lyndonville, Newport, Glover, and Groton. Local partners and sponsors have been Rural Edge, Lamoille Housing Partnership, NCIC and Housing Vermont.

**Table 5.11: Federal (F) and State (S) Housing Tax Credits and Tax-Exempt (TE) Bonds in the Northeast Kingdom, 2004 to Present**

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Year	Project	Local Partner/Sponsor	Location	Type	Credits	Amount	# Units
2004	Moose River Housing	Gilman Housing Trust*/Housing Vermont	St. Johnsbury	Acquisition, Rehabilitation	28	\$163,594 (TE Bonds)	28
2006	Groton Redevelopment	Gilman Housing Trust*/Housing Vermont	Groton	Rehabilitation	18	\$44,000 (S) \$125,845 (TE Bonds)	18
2007	Passumpsic North & South	Housing Vermont	St. Johnsbury	Acquisition, Rehabilitation	28	\$95,000 (TE Bonds)	28
2007	Hardwick Family Housing	Lamoille Housing Partnership/Housing Vermont	Hardwick	Rehabilitation	8	\$39,065 (TE Bonds)	8
2007	Bemis Block	Lamoille Housing Partnership/Housing Vermont	Hardwick	Rehabilitation	14	\$98,000 (F)	14
2007	Glover Senior Housing	Gilman Housing Trust*	Glover	New Construction, Rehabilitation	12	\$75,755 (TE Bonds)	12
2009	Newport Senior Housing	Gilman Housing Trust*	Newport	Acquisition, Rehabilitation	13	\$95,665 (TE Bonds)	13
2011	Newport Family Housing	Gilman Housing Trust*/Housing Vermont	Newport	New Construction, Acquisition, Rehabilitation	21	\$390,000 (F)	21
2012	St. Johnsbury Historic Green Rehab	Gilman Housing Trust*/Housing Vermont	St. Johnsbury	Rehabilitation	29	\$350,000 (F)	29

2013 - 2014	Maple Street Senior Apartments	Housing Vermont	Hardwick	Acquisition, Rehabilitation	16	\$54,200 (TE Bonds) \$61,199 (TE Bonds) \$25,000 (S)	16
2014	Maple Street Senior Apartments	Housing Vermont	Hardwick	Acquisition, Rehabilitation	16	\$61,199	16
2014	Maple Street Senior Apartments	Housing Vermont	Hardwick	Acquisition, Rehabilitation	16	\$25,000	16
2016	Darling Inn	Gilman Housing Trust*	Lyndonville	Rehabilitation		\$52,600 (S)	28
2017	Hardwick Housing	NCIC	Hardwick	New Construction		\$250,000 (F)	7
2017	Parkview Apartments	Gilman Housing Trust*	Newport	Rehabilitation		83,000 (S) \$107,000 (TE Bonds)	12

Source: Vermont Housing Finance Authority Agency, Allocations and Reservations (website accessed January 2018) (

\*Now called Rural Edge)

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Applications for credits are evaluated according to a two-tiered weighting process. Top-tier priorities are rehabilitation or infill new construction where vacancy rates are 3.5% or less; family housing, location in a designated downtown or village center; and removal of blight. Mixed-income housing development is considered a second-tier priority.

### III. CHALLENGES TO AFFORDABILITY

Affordability in the region is measured through American Community Survey, and through housing wages determined by the National Low-Income Housing Coalition. HUD also provides a methodology that factors in the cost of commuting. By any measure, the region's supply of affordable and workforce housing is inadequate to meet the needs of the region. Lagging incomes, scarcity of higher-paying jobs, and aging housing stock are contributing factors. Additional challenges are identified below.

According to most recent American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, more than a third of homeowners in the Northeast Kingdom pay more than 30% or more of their income on costs for properties with a mortgage, and at least 20% pay more than 30% or more on a properties that are owned free and clear. Housing costs include utilities and fuels, which can be quite high during Vermont winters especially if the house is poorly insulated. More than half of renters in the region Caledonia and Orleans counties pay more than 30% or more of income on housing. Compared to statewide averages, housing in Orleans County is more likely to be unaffordable, and rental housing throughout the region in Caledonia and Orleans is more likely to be unaffordable.

Table 5.12: % of Housing Units with costs at or greater than That Exceed 30% of Household Income

	Selected Monthly Owner Costs* as a % of Household Income		Gross Rent**
	Housing Units w/ Mortgage	Housing Units w/o Mortgage	Occupied Units Paying Rent
Caledonia	35.0 34.6%	20.4 21.5 %	60.2 54.2%
Essex	32.2 37.4%	21.4 22.4 %	59.6 41.1%
Orleans	37.2 40.3%	27.6 24.8%	54.9 52.4%
Vermont	34.6 37.0%	22.9 23.2%	52.4 51.0%

Source: US Census Bureau: American Community Survey 5-Year Averages, Estimates, 2012-2016, Table DP04\_2009-2013



\* Selected monthly owner costs are the sum of payments for mortgages, deeds, contracts to purchase, or similar debts on the property. It also include property taxes, insurance, utilities, fuels, and where appropriate condominium and association fees or mobile home costs.

\*\* Gross rent includes the estimated average monthly cost of utilities and fuel.

In the Caledonia County towns of Lyndon, Hardwick and St. Johnsbury, ~~Median~~ median household incomes for renters ~~allow for a one-bedroom apartment, but~~ fall short of ~~the~~ housing wage ~~needed for a two-bedroom apartment at HUD's Fair Market Rate (FMR), as indicated by the Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA),~~ the income needed to afford an apartment at HUD's Fair Market Rate (FMR). HUD's FMRs are published annually by bedroom size and are for a modest apartment, costing about 10% less than the area median rents. ~~In the towns of Newport City and Brighton, the median household income of renters is less than the housing wage needed for both one and two-bedroom apartments.~~ Note: Figure 5.14 includes only communities where multi-unit structures account for at least 10% of housing stock and excludes Jay and Burke, where multi-unit housing

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2012-2016; [www.housingdata.org](http://www.housingdata.org)

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Figure 5.13: Rental Housing Affordability

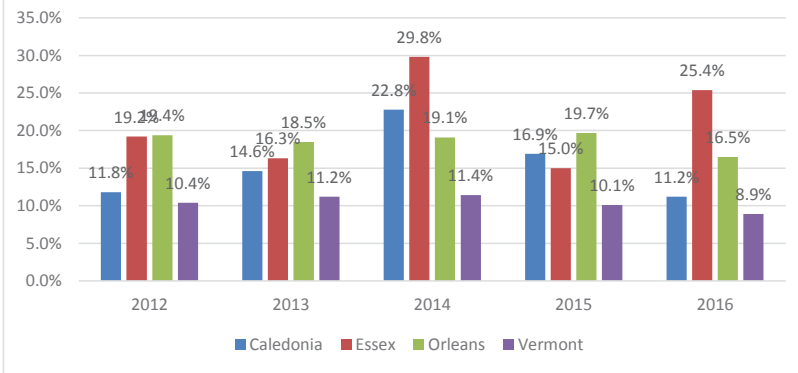


more likely to be related to resort development.

**Credit Access:** Homebuyers – particularly first-time ones – may face considerable barriers, ~~to get out of the rental cycle.~~ To afford a home costing ~~the median price in Caledonia of \$147,000, \$130,000,~~ the average homebuyer would need a household income of ~~\$38,470, \$43,013~~ and ~~\$41,279, \$42,950~~ cash on hand at closing.<sup>5</sup> Lending programs vary, but in general, a 20% down payment is required to avoid private mortgage insurance, and debt-to-income ratios are capped at 43%. Manufactured housing can be harder to finance because they depreciate faster. Loan terms for a used manufactured unit, for example, will be limited to 10 to 15 years. According to five years of data from the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act, prospective home buyers in the

<sup>5</sup> Home Mortgage Calculator, [www.housingdata.org](http://www.housingdata.org).

Figure 5.14: Loan Denials for Home Purchase, Owner-Occupied as a Primary Dwelling



Northeast Kingdom are more likely to be denied a mortgage when compared to the rest of the State. The most cited reason was debt-to-income ratio.

Source: Home Mortgage Disclosure Act

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1 **The Hidden Cost of Rural Living:** Travel is another cost driver for housing in the Northeast Kingdom.  
 2 Travel from households to destinations (like work) varies on the location of the home, and is considered  
 3 affordable when it accounts for 15% of household income or less. Combined, housing and transportation  
 4 costs are considered unaffordable when they account for more than 45% of household income. According  
 5 the HUD Location Affordability Index, transportation accounts for about a third of household income in the  
 6 region. Even in St. Johnsbury/Lyndon and Newport City – the regional urban center – transportation  
 7 accounts for 28% and 32% of household income respectively.

**Table 5.13: HUD Location Affordability by County (for Renters and Owners)**

County	Annual Income for Median-Income Family (4 people, 2 commuters)	Average Cost of Housing as a % of Income	Avg. Cost of Transportation as a % of Income	Location Affordability
Caledonia	\$44,435	26% -- \$11,553	32% -- \$14,219	58% -- \$25,772
Essex	\$40,842	25% -- \$10,214	37% -- \$15,116	62% -- \$25,330
Orleans	\$41,618	26% -- \$10,821	35% -- \$14,566	61% -- \$25,387

Source: HUD Location Affordability Portal, Version 2 (<http://locationaffordability.info/>)

8  
 9 **Mismatched housing supply:** The region’s housing stock is mainly single-family with 3 bedrooms or more,  
 10 with more than a third sited on large lots. It falls short of the needs of financially strained first-time buyers  
 11 and aging baby boomers, who may be looking for smaller homes located near jobs, services, and amenities.  
 12 The region’s downtowns and village centers could provide opportunities for more dense development and  
 13 lower land costs, but most of the region’s village centers lack off-site water and sewer to support dense  
 14 development. Non-profit housing developers have had success creating income-restricted rental housing in  
 15 downtowns and village centers served by public water and sewer infrastructure, but market-rate housing has  
 16 continued to consist mainly of single-family detached homes located outside of established centers. Denser  
 17 forms of market-rate housing, such as townhouses, have not yet materialized in the region’s established  
 18 centers.

19 **Perceptions about affordable-subsidized housing:** One of the most common objections to affordable  
 20 subsidized housing development is that it will decrease values of surrounding properties. For the most part  
 21 these concerns are unfounded. The Center for Housing Policy has reviewed numerous studies on the impact  
 22 of affordable-such housing on property values. Developments that are well managed and maintained and  
 23 attractively designed to blend with surrounding neighborhood properties are more likely to have no effect or  
 24 even a positive effect on nearby properties. Rehabilitation of distressed properties for affordable housing may  
 25 positively impact property values as well. However, large concentrations of affordable-income-restricted  
 26 housing should be avoided. Several researchers have found that concentrated affordable-income-restricted  
 27 housing developments were more likely to have a negative impact on neighboring properties. *As long as it is*  
 28 *not overly concentrated, siting affordable-low and moderate-income housing developments in strong*  
 29 *neighborhoods with high-stable home values and low poverty rates is unlikely to have adverse effects on*  
 30 *neighboring property values.*

1 These findings affirm the trend toward mixed income housing and communities.<sup>6</sup> Mixed-income housing is  
2 central to any smart growth strategy because it can support a more diverse population and achieve a more  
3 equitable distribution of households of all income levels.<sup>7</sup>

4 NVDA supports the development of affordable housing that is well managed and maintained and is context-  
5 sensitive to existing concentrations of poverty and surrounding property values. Mixed-income housing offers  
6 numerous social and economic benefits to a community by preventing residential economic segregation and  
7 promoting vitality of urban and village centers. The vast majority of residential development in the Northeast  
8 Kingdom has occurred outside of established development centers over the past decade, running counter to  
9 the long-range planning goal of maintaining the historic settlement pattern of compact village and urban  
10 centers separated by rural countryside. Reversing this trend will require a sustained effort that supports a  
11 range of attractive housing opportunities and choices – for all income levels and age groups -- both in and  
12 immediately adjacent to our region's downtowns and village centers. NVDA supports housing policies and  
13 programs that incentivize mixed-income housing development, avoids concentrations of poverty, and  
14 supports vibrant and livable neighborhoods that are near existing services, amenities and employment  
15 opportunities.

#### 17 IV. TAKING ACTION: TOOLS FOR MUNICIPALITIES TO PROMOTE AFFORDABLE AND 18 WORKFORCE HOUSING HOUSING FOR ALL

19 **Affirmatively furthering fair housing:** The federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination based on race,  
20 color, religion, gender, family status, or disability in the sale, rental, or advertisement of housing. Vermont  
21 statute extends this prohibition to include discrimination based on age, marital status, sexual orientation, or  
22 reception of public assistance. 24 V.S.A., Chapter 117, the statute that regulates planning and zoning, contains  
23 requirements and provisions to protect and promote affordable housing. For example:

- 24 • Single- and two-family homes cannot be subjected to site plan review.
- 25 • It is illegal to prohibit mobile homes or mobile home parks from a municipality.
- 26 • Municipalities must designate appropriate districts for multi-unit and multi-family dwellings.
- 27 • Residential care and group homes serving up to eight individuals must be considered a single-family  
28 residential use of property unless it is located within 1,000 feet of another such home.
- 29 • Accessory dwelling units (one-bedroom apartments or efficiencies) subordinate to a single-family  
30 dwelling must be considered a permitted use.
- 31 • Duly adopted municipal plans must include recommendations for addressing the housing needs of  
32 low- and moderate-income individuals and should account for accessory dwelling units as a form of  
33 affordable housing.

34 **Promoting density:** Enabling dense, compact development near downtowns and village centers may reduce  
35 land costs for new housing. Although density may be limited by lack of off-site water and sewer,  
36 municipalities with zoning should not require minimum lot sizes larger than what is necessary to  
37 accommodate on-site water and septic systems in areas in village centers. Traditional opposition to dense  
38 residential development is often based on preconceived notions of crowded, monotonous development with  
39 little or no privacy. These objections can be overcome with attractive, context sensitive site designs that fit  
40 with a rural setting. Design charrettes and buildout analyses might help residents better visualize appropriate  
41 housing development.

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<sup>6</sup> The Center for Housing Policy. "Don't Put it Here!" Does Affordable Housing Cause Nearby Property Values to Decline?"  
Insights from Housing Policy Research (Policy Brief Series published between 2008 and 2011.)

<sup>7</sup> Smart Growth Online (<http://smartgrowth.org/smart-growth-principles/>)

1 **Regulatory incentives and inclusionary zoning:** Planned unit development is authorized in Vermont  
2 statute to provide for compact, pedestrian-oriented development especially in and adjacent to downtowns and  
3 village centers. It is also a popular regulatory tool for promoting affordable housing, provided a strong  
4 housing market exists. Provisions for planned unit development may include “density bonuses” to encourage  
5 affordable and mixed-income projects. Municipalities also may provide bonuses to homes with smaller  
6 footprints (e.g. 1,500 feet or less) or universal access design. A number of communities in the region provide  
7 for planned unit development or some form of residential clustering with density incentives. There is no  
8 statutory limit to density bonuses, but experience has shown that a minimum of at least 50% density bonus  
9 may be needed to incentivize developers. In more urban settings, other zoning incentives may include waiver  
10 of parking requirements and permitting fees. Unlike density bonuses, **inclusionary zoning** is mandatory, and  
11 developers are required to build a percentage of affordable units in developments of a certain scale. As with  
12 impact fees, inclusionary zoning should be based on clearly stated local housing policies and well documented  
13 housing needs.

14 **Vermont Community Development Program Grants:** Municipalities with duly adopted plans may apply  
15 for Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) grants to support affordable low and moderate-  
16 income housing, which is one of the program’s top priorities for funding. Because municipalities in the  
17 Northeast Kingdom lack the administrative and fiscal resources to develop and affordable such housing, they  
18 often subgrant to qualified housing partners to develop and rehabilitate affordable housing stock.  
19 Municipalities that receive VCDP grants must complete fair housing trainings that are offered throughout the  
20 year. Recent VCDP recipients include the Town of Hardwick (Maple Street Senior Apartments, 16 units) and  
21 the Town of Lyndon (Northeast Kingdom Revolving Loan Fund, 38 units).

22 **Local incentives:** In addition to low-interest loans (such as a revolving loan fund capitalized by the VCDP  
23 grant), municipalities may be able to encourage housing investments through tax stabilization or abatement  
24 programs (e.g. hold the tax rate for a rehabilitated property to its pre-construction value for five years or  
25 more).

26 **Downtown and Village Center Designation:** Qualifying municipalities may pursue downtown or village  
27 center designation. Once conferred, the designation is valid for five years. The primary benefit of the program  
28 is eligibility for state tax credits for historic rehabilitations, façade improvements, and code improvements  
29 (including installation of elevators and sprinkler systems). Income-producing properties (including mixed-use  
30 and multi-family structures) can be eligible, and are not required to be income-restricted to qualify for the tax  
31 credit. Unlike federal tax credits, state tax credits are relatively accessible to private property owners because  
32 they are easy to administer and sell. To date, the Northeast Kingdom has received nearly \$3.1 million in tax  
33 credits for 16 projects that included some form of housing, including market-rate housing units. Although tax  
34 credits are awarded annually, the Northeast Kingdom has been under-represented in some funding rounds. It  
35 is possible that property owners are still not aware of the benefits of Downtown and Village Center  
36 designation. Additional benefits of designation include priority consideration for grant program (such as  
37 VCDP funds) and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits. (For a map of existing designated Downtowns and  
38 Village Centers, see Future Land Use in the Land Use Section.)

39 **Sales Tax Reallocation:** Municipalities and developers of qualified projects in designated downtowns may  
40 jointly apply for a reallocation of sales taxes on construction materials. If awarded, reallocated funds must be  
41 used by the municipality to support the project (e.g. sidewalks, stormwater management, streetscape  
42 improvements, etc).

43 **Neighborhood Development Area Designation:** This adjunct to the Downtown and Village Center  
44 designation encourages municipalities and developers to plan for new infill housing in pedestrian-oriented  
45 neighborhoods within walking distance from the designation areas (1/2 mile from downtown and ¼ mile  
46 from village center). Incentives and benefits include exemption from Act 250 for qualified “mixed-income”  
47 projects, and for projects that don’t qualify for a full exemption, a 50% discount on application fees. Waste  
48 water review from the Agency of Natural Resources can be capped at \$50.00, and projects can be exempt

1 from land gains tax. “Mixed-income” housing is defined ~~as in State statute at 10 VSA Section 6001, and can~~  
2 ~~include both owner-occupied and rental housing.~~

3 ~~• **Owner-occupied:** At least 15% of the housing units have an initial price that is equal to or less than~~  
4 ~~the Vermont Housing Finance Authority price limit (\$300,000 for a one-unit property, \$350,000 for a~~  
5 ~~two-unit), OR at least 20% of the housing units have an initial price that is equal to or less than the~~  
6 ~~VHFA limit.~~

7 ~~• **Rental Housing:** At least 20% of the units are affordable (i.e. not costing for than 30% of gross~~  
8 ~~household annual income) to households not earning more than 80% of the county median income.~~  
9 ~~Affordability is secured for at least 20 years.~~

10 To qualify for a neighborhood development area designation, the municipality has to incorporate pedestrian  
11 design into local planning and zoning (i.e. “complete streets”) and allow for a density of at least four detached  
12 single family dwelling units per acre. Newport and St. Johnsbury officials have explored the feasibility of new  
13 neighborhood designation. NVDA supports further exploration of this program in order to incent the  
14 establishment of pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods that offer a full array of housing choices – affordable,  
15 workforce, and market rate.

16 **Reducing local permitting restrictions:** Revisiting zoning regulations and waiving restrictions such as  
17 parking requirements and height of structures may be an inexpensive way for a community to encourage  
18 housing in appropriate areas. Permit fees may be reduced or eliminated in some cases. In some communities,  
19 where zoning permit fees are not very expensive, eliminating permitting requirements for single- or two-  
20 family homes may be appropriate for areas where dense development is encouraged.

21 **Housing Studies:** Municipalities with duly adopted plans are required to include a “recommended program  
22 for addressing low and moderate income persons' housing needs as identified by the regional planning  
23 commission.” Local planning commissions can gain greater insight into housing needs through studies that  
24 quantify local housing needs, determine capacities for greater densities (through GIS-based buildouts) and  
25 examine potential impacts of housing policies on property values. Studies may also identify appropriate areas  
26 for rehabilitation and new infill housing development, such as brownfields or abandoned, derelict, or  
27 underutilized properties.

28 **Local Housing Commissions:** Municipalities are authorized by statute to create advisory commissions  
29 composed of individuals with expertise or interest in specific areas such as historic preservation, design, and  
30 housing. Such commissions can assist and advise the planning commission and other officials on housing  
31 studies, as well as policies and programs to further affordable housing and improve housing stock.

32 **Local Rental Codes and Local Enforcement:** State rental housing codes help to promote safe and healthy  
33 living conditions. Communities may take this further by enacting local codes and create local registries, or  
34 they may enforce state codes locally.

35 **Derelict/Abandoned Buildings Ordinances:** Local enforcement can help to protect neighborhoods from  
36 blight. ~~Some communities have established regulations requiring owners of vacant properties to register them.~~  
37 ~~(<http://www.dekalbcountyga.gov/vacant-property-registry/index.html>). Springfield, Vermont recently~~  
38 ~~passed an ordinance that establishes a fund and allows the municipality to tear down properties that are either~~  
39 ~~abandoned or deteriorated if the property owners has failed to take action. The Town of St. Johnsbury~~  
40 ~~recently established a rental registry in an effort to identify properties that pose unsafe or blighted conditions,~~  
41 ~~and to better enforce the local housing standards currently on the books.~~

42 **Charrettes/Master Planning:** Downtown master plans ~~(like in Barre and St. Albans)~~ may help to inspire  
43 and attract private investors to new housing opportunities. Newport City’s Regional/Urban Design  
44 Assistance Team set off an intense two-day envisioning process that ultimately led to the implementation of  
45 form-based codes and removed barriers to vertical and infill development. Although planning at this level can  
46 be expensive, grant programs are available to cover the cost. (See below.)

1 **USDA Loans and Grants:** US Department of Agriculture offers home purchase and repair assistance.  
 2 ~~Individuals who earn up to \$32,500 a year (or for a family of four, up to \$52,700)~~Households with incomes  
 3 ~~under a certain threshold~~ may be eligible for the USDA Direct Home Ownership program. Loan terms can  
 4 be as long as 33 years, and interest rates vary from 1 percent to 3.65 percent. No down payment is required.  
 5 A ~~family of four making up to \$77,200 a year~~household that earns too much to qualify for the direct loan  
 6 ~~program~~ may qualify for a USDA guarantee on a bank loan, which enables a prospective homeowner to  
 7 purchase a home at a low interest with no money down. USDA also offers home repair loans to make homes  
 8 safer and more accessible (e.g. wiring, roof, energy efficiency, ramps and other accessibility modifications).  
 9 Home repair loans are only 1 percent with a 20 year term. Seniors and very low-income individuals may even  
 10 qualify a direct grant of up to \$7,500 to improve livability. USDA grants and loans are made directly to  
 11 qualifying individuals; however, municipalities, local planning commissions, local housing commissions, and  
 12 NVDA can help to raise awareness of this underutilized resource.

13 **Other Grant Programs:** Municipal Planning Grants are available annually to communities with a confirmed  
 14 planning process. Eligible activities include zoning bylaw updates, planning for downtown and village center  
 15 revitalization and redevelopment. ~~(A Municipal Planning Grant helped to cover the cost of the Newport~~  
 16 ~~R/UDAT)~~VTTrans also offers grant opportunities (Strong Communities Better Connection) to help  
 17 communities integrate transportation with land use to create safe, convenient and more walkable  
 18 communities. Downtown Transportation Fund provides grant funds for public capital improvements in  
 19 Designated Downtowns, including sidewalks and streetscape improvements.

20

21 **GOALS AND STRATEGIES FOR HOUSING**

22 **HOUSING GOALS**

- 23 • An adequate supply of safe, attractive, and energy-efficient housing will be available to the region’s  
 24 residents in a proportionate balance of affordable, workforce, and market rate housing.
- 25 • Existing housing stock – particularly that located in downtowns, village centers, and older  
 26 neighborhoods in existing centers of development – will be preserved.
- 27 • Overall quality, safety, and energy efficiency of existing housing stock in the region will improve.
- 28 • Housing will be available in a variety of types that meet the needs of all income groups and ages, and  
 29 will be located near employment, services, commercial, civic, and recreational uses.
- 30 • Partnerships with regional housing and human service providers will be strengthened, allowing for  
 31 more effective service provision.
- 32 • New housing development in downtowns and villages will conform to existing traditional patterns.
- 33 • Municipalities will be supported in determining local housing needs.

34 **HOUSING POLICIES**

- 35 • Support the efforts of local and regional housing providers and organizations, government agencies,  
 36 private lenders, and developers in identifying and meeting housing needs of the region.
- 37 • Encourage innovative strategies that reverse the long-term trend of disinvestment in established  
 38 development centers. Development resources should be strengthened and directed toward existing  
 39 neighborhoods.
- 40 • Community revitalization and economic development plans should include the needs of all age and  
 41 income groups.

- 1 • Ensure that existing housing programs and incentives promote a proportionate balance of affordable,  
2 workforce, and market-rate housing.
- 3 • Encourage the development of rental housing on a scale and design compatible with existing  
4 neighborhoods.
- 5 • Support and sustain livable communities that offer comprehensive mobility options (including  
6 alternatives to driving).
- 7 • Promote and support zoning that allows for greater densities for the purpose of providing a full  
8 range of housing choices (affordable, workforce, market-rate) in a manner that preserves the  
9 character of older neighborhoods in downtowns, village center, and other established centers of  
10 development.
- 11 • Locate affordable and special needs housing in areas with access to appropriate services.
- 12 • Support home ownership and property upkeep efforts of citizens and municipalities.

### 13 HOUSING STRATEGIES

- 14 • Work with regional housing and human service providers, including Rural Edge, NEK Enterprise  
15 Collaborative, Lamoille Housing Partnership and NEK Community Action to identify housing needs  
16 and support economically integrated communities.
- 17 • Review and comment on proposed plans and policies that will impact future affordable housing  
18 development (e.g. downtown designation, Qualified Allocation Plan).
- 19 • Assist towns to create housing policies that address the affordable housing needs of low-income  
20 residents.
- 21 • Identify incentives for the development and rehabilitation of work-force and market-rate housing in  
22 established centers.
- 23 • Assist communities interested in adopting local building codes.
- 24 • Assist communities interested in adopting and enforcing “junkyard ordinances.”
- 25 • Assist communities applying for designation under the Vermont Downtown Program, Village Center  
26 Designation Program, and where appropriate, the ~~New~~-Neighborhood [Development Area](#)  
27 Designation Program.
- 28 • Provide outreach and education to property owners of old or substandard housing units in  
29 Designated Downtowns and Village Centers.
- 30 • Encourage the use of innovative incentives, including density bonuses or tax stabilization for mixed-  
31 income developments, universal access design, and small footprint housing.
- 32 • Help communities evaluate needs through housing studies and build-out analyses.
- 33 • Provide outreach and education on housing programs that improve housing stock and promote  
34 home ownership.
- 35 • Facilitate fair housing trainings for municipal officials and other interested groups.
- 36 • Ensure that NVDA member communities remain eligible for VCDP funds and Municipal Planning  
37 Grants