Chapter 16: Franklin County

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Household Growth and Projected Needs

Between 2010 and 2020, the number of households living in Franklin County year-round increased at an average rate of 0.7% per year to 19,918. By 2029, a projected 21,843-23,003 households will live in the county.

Figure 16-1 Projected Franklin County year-round household demand, 2025 and 2029

Year-round households	2010	2020	2025 (projected)		2029 (projected)	
			Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Total households	18,513	19,918	21,192	21,667	21,843	23,003
Owner households	13,829	14,858	16,489	16,859	16,389	17,259
Renter households	4,684	5,060	4,703	4,808	5,454	5,744

Source: 2010 and 2010 Decennial Census, 2025 and 2029 projected based on Census Bureau American Community Survey estimates and statewide 2016-2019 average annual growth of 1% ("Lower") and 1.8% in 2019-2022 ("Higher).

Since 2020, demand to live in Vermont has increased while the supply of new homes has not kept pace. To accommodate demand to live in the county and meet other housing market needs such as normalizing the vacancy rate, Franklin County is likely to need a projected 1,383-2,230 additional homes between 2025 and 2029.

Figure 16-2 Projected year-round homes needed by tenure, 2025-2029

Additional homes needed	Pre-pandemic growth (Lower)	Pandemic-era growth (Upper)
Owner homes	409	968
Renter homes	974	1,262
Total additional homes needed	1,383	2,230

Source: VHFA analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data (Building Permits, Housing Completions, American Community Survey estimates, Population and Housing Unit Estimates and Current Population Survey/Housing Vacancy Survey) and the Vermont 2023 Point-In-Time Count of those Experiencing Homelessness. "Pre-pandemic demand" assumes resuming trends that occurred in 2016-2019. "Pandemic-era demand" assumes continuation of trends that occurred in 2019-2022 Assumes a target vacancy rate of 5% for rental and 2% for owner homes and annual housing destruction rate of 0.15%.

Housing Stock

Franklin County's housing stock consists of 22,710 year-round and seasonal homes. The county has a greater proportion of year-round homeowners (67%) than the state (59%) and a lesser proportion of seasonal homes (9%). Franklin County represents 7% of the state's total housing stock.

Figure 16-3 Franklin County housing stock, 2022

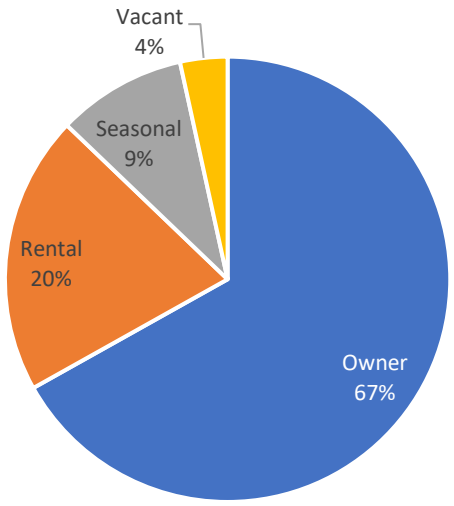


Figure 16-4: Franklin County home types by town

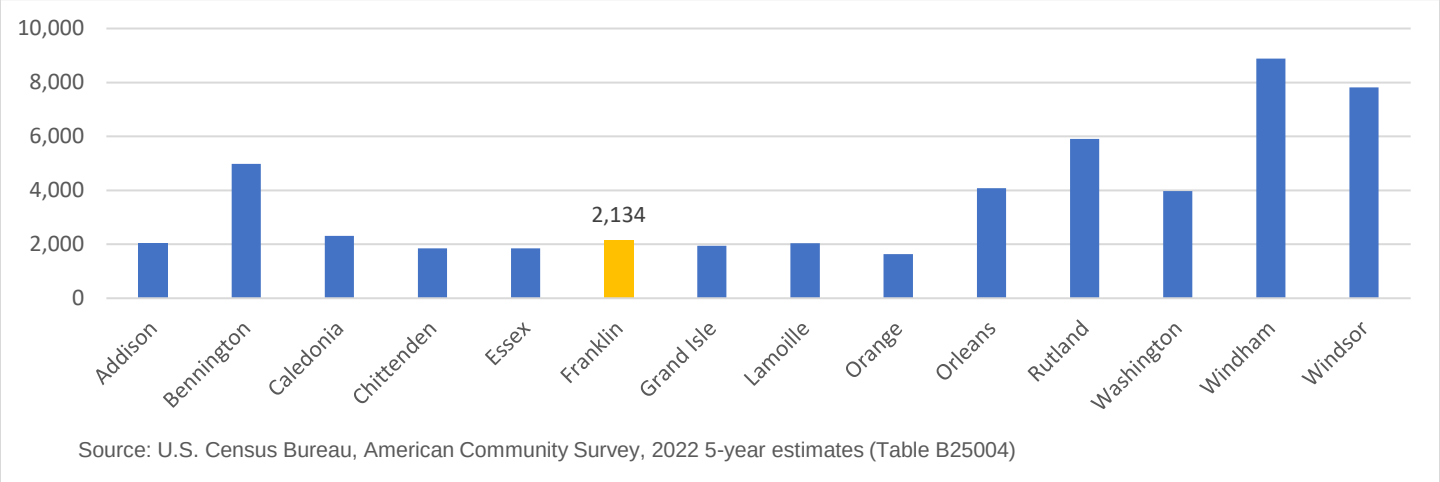
Location	Owner homes	% Owner	Renter homes	% Renter	Seasonal homes	% Seasonal	Vacant homes	% Vacant	Total homes	% of county homes
Franklin County	15,182	67%	4,604	20%	2,134	9%	780	3%	22,700	100%
Bakersfield	459	82%	19	3%	58	10%	21	4%	557	2%
Berkshire	450	70%	124	19%	52	8%	21	3%	647	3%
Enosburgh	830	63%	266	20%	87	7%	130	10%	1,313	6%
Fairfax	1,581	80%	343	17%	0	0%	51	3%	1,975	9%
Fairfield	596	68%	105	12%	122	14%	50	6%	873	4%
Fletcher	476	81%	27	5%	80	14%	4	1%	587	3%
Franklin	464	53%	131	15%	257	29%	26	3%	878	4%
Georgia	1,687	87%	60	3%	154	8%	46	2%	1,947	9%
Highgate	1,232	77%	207	13%	92	6%	75	5%	1,606	7%
Montgomery	406	51%	120	15%	244	31%	30	4%	800	4%
Richford	749	65%	277	24%	62	5%	73	6%	1,161	5%
Sheldon	784	86%	93	10%	17	2%	20	2%	914	4%
St. Albans City	1,535	47%	1,525	47%	0	0%	176	5%	3,236	14%
St. Albans Town	1,916	60%	732	23%	550	17%	0	0%	3,198	14%
Swanton	2,017	67%	575	19%	359	12%	57	2%	3,008	13%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2018-2022 (Table B25003, B25004) from housingdata.org.

Seasonal Homes

The latest estimates show that 15% of Vermont's homes are "seasonal, occasional use, or vacation homes", giving the state the second highest rate in the nation. In 2022, there were an estimated 2,134 seasonal or occasional use homes in Franklin County, making up 9% of all homes in the county.

Figure 16-5 Seasonal homes by county, 2022

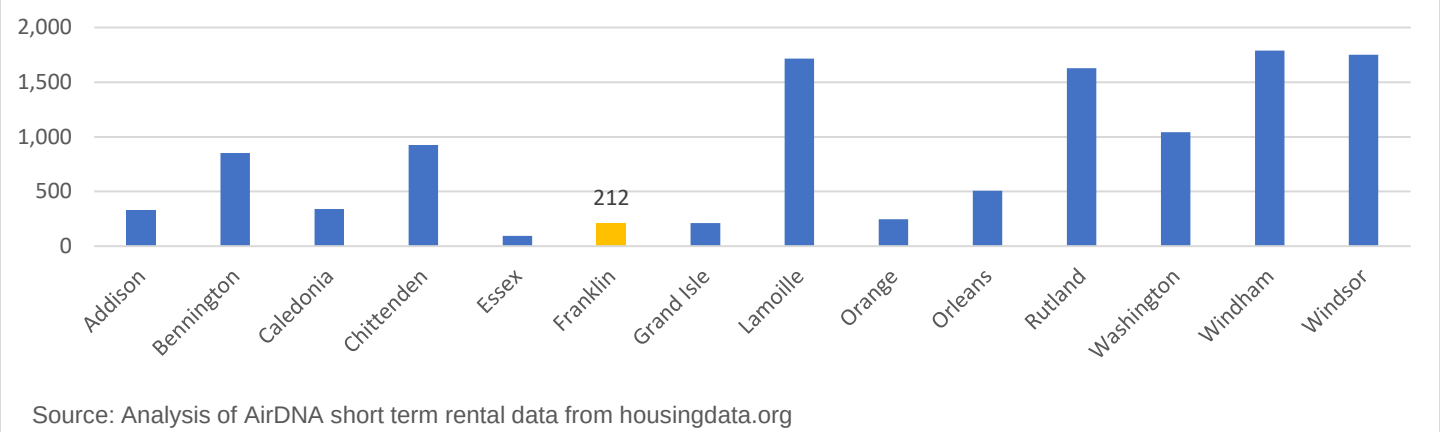


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2022 5-year estimates (Table B25004)

Short-Term Rentals

The number of short-term rentals statewide has risen dramatically in the last ten years. In 2015, fewer than 1,000 homes were listed monthly as short-term rentals; as of September 2023, more than 11,747 homes are being listed. The growth in the short-term rental market has not been equal across the state, however. Counties in southern Vermont or counties that feature one of the state's larger resort towns have the highest share of STRs and have seen the greatest growth.

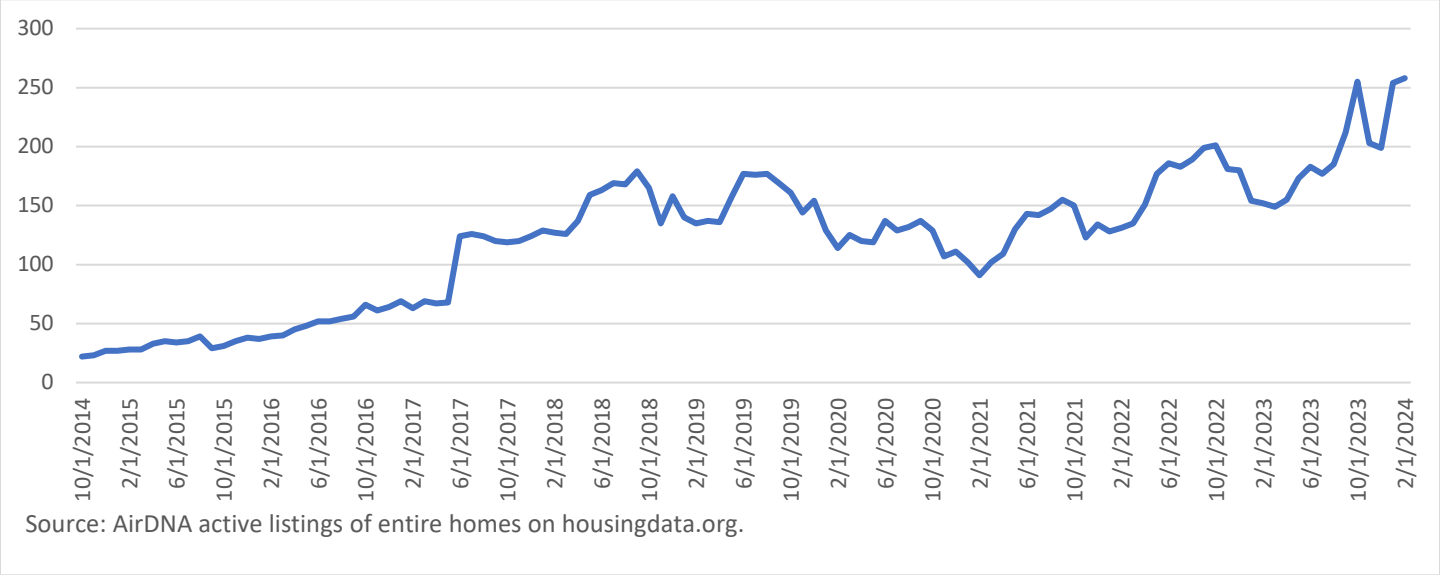
Figure 16-6 Homes used as short-term rentals by county, Oct. 2023



Source: Analysis of AirDNA short term rental data from housingdata.org

Franklin County, however, has seen relatively modest growth in the STR market. In 2023, 212 homes were listed as STRs, representing about 1% of the county's total housing stock, below the statewide rate of 4%.

Figure 16-7: Franklin County short-term rental homes



Source: AirDNA active listings of entire homes on housingdata.org.

Figure 16-8 Seasonal homes and short-term rentals by town

Location	Seasonal homes (2022)	Seasonal homes relative to total housing stock	Short-term rentals (active Oct. 2023)	Short-term rentals relative to total housing stock	Total housing stock
Franklin County	**2,134**	**9%**	**212**	**0.90%**	**22,714**
Bakersfield	58	10%	11	2.00%	557
Berkshire	52	8%	0	0.00%	647
Enosburgh	87	7%	25	1.90%	1,313
Fairfax	0	0%	8	0.40%	1,975
Fairfield	122	14%	1	0.10%	887
Fletcher	80	14%	0	0.00%	587
Franklin	257	29%	7	0.80%	878
Georgia	154	8%	0	0.00%	1,947
Highgate	92	6%	0	0.00%	1,606
Montgomery	244	31%	72	9.00%	800
Richford	62	5%	12	1.00%	1,161
Sheldon	17	2%	2	0.20%	914
St. Albans City	0	0%	38	1.20%	3,236
St. Albans Town	550	17%	0	0.00%	3,198
Swanton	359	12%	36	1.20%	3,008

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018-2022 estimates and AirDNA active listings of entire homes on housingdata.org.

Characteristics of Housing Stock

The types of homes that make up the housing stock in Franklin County are similar to the state as a whole. In particular, Franklin County's stock consists primarily of single-family detached homes. 74% of the occupied housing stock are single-family detached homes, even greater than the proportion statewide (67%).

Figure 16-9: Franklin County owner home types

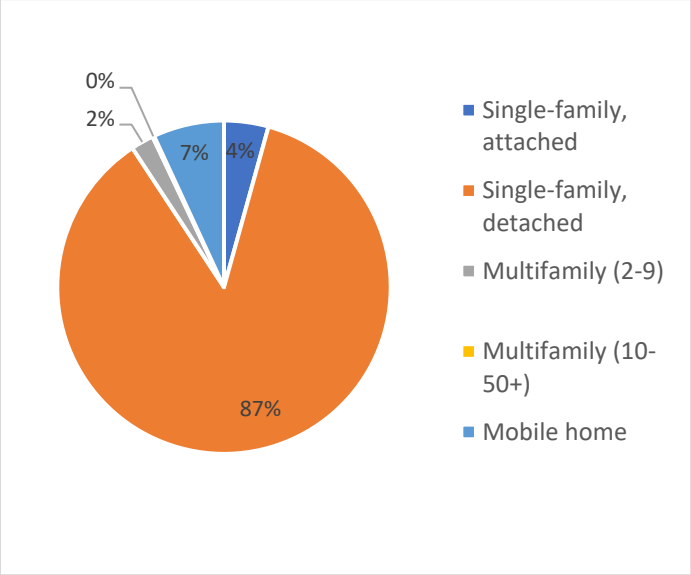
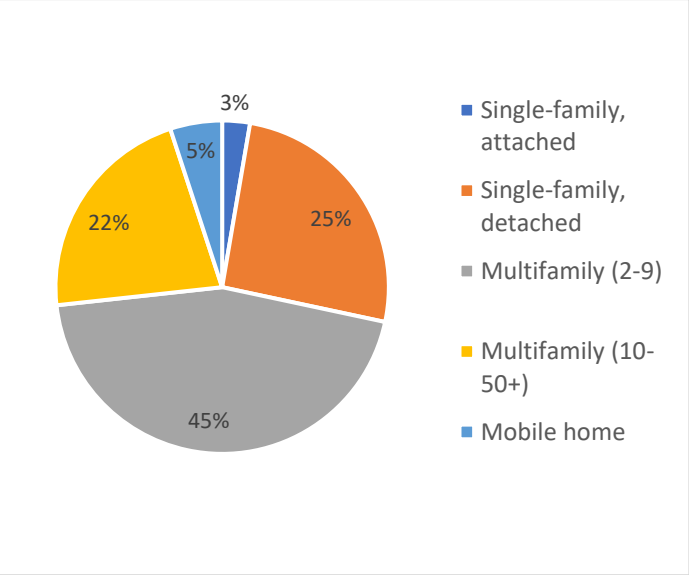


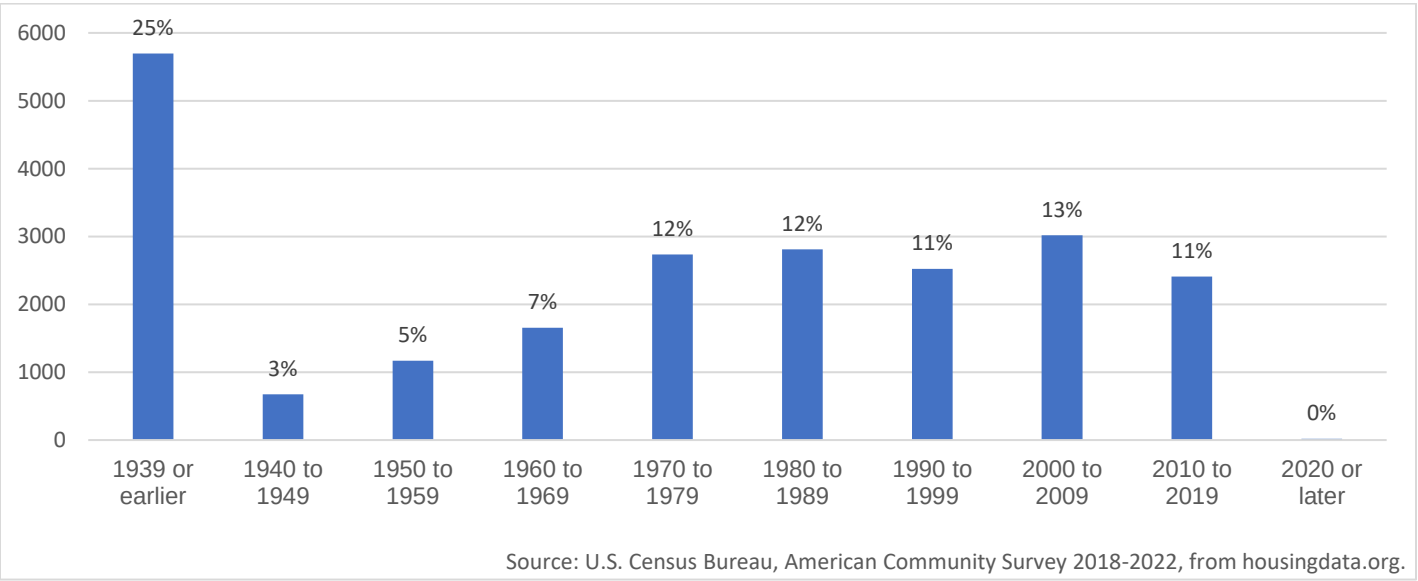
Figure 16-10: Franklin County renter home types



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2022 from housingdata.org.

Of all homes in Franklin County, an estimated 25% were built prior to 1940, directly in line with the statewide average. The median home was built in 1978. Although not necessarily indicative of housing quality problems, an older home is likely to elevate home maintenance and heating costs for its occupant. Notably, 11% of the homes in Franklin County were built since 2010, a greater proportion than the state as a whole.

Figure 16-11: Year built for Franklin County homes



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018-2022, from housingdata.org.

In Vermont, the average household size has decreased over the past 30 years, down from 2.57 people per household in 1990 to 2.27 people per household in 2020. This decline has created a mismatch between the number of people per household and the number of bedrooms in Vermont homes. This difference is most pronounced in owner-occupied housing where large homes of 3+ bedrooms (74% of owner homes) outnumber of large households of 3+ people (32% of owner households). The difference in household size and number of bedrooms is not as pronounced within the renter housing market.

The mismatch is present in Franklin County as well, where large homes (63% of the county's year-round homes) far outnumber large households (35% of the county's year-round households). Conversely, single person households (27% of the county's year-round households) outnumber small homes of 0-1 bedrooms (10% of the county's year-round homes).

Figure 16-12 Household size, 2022

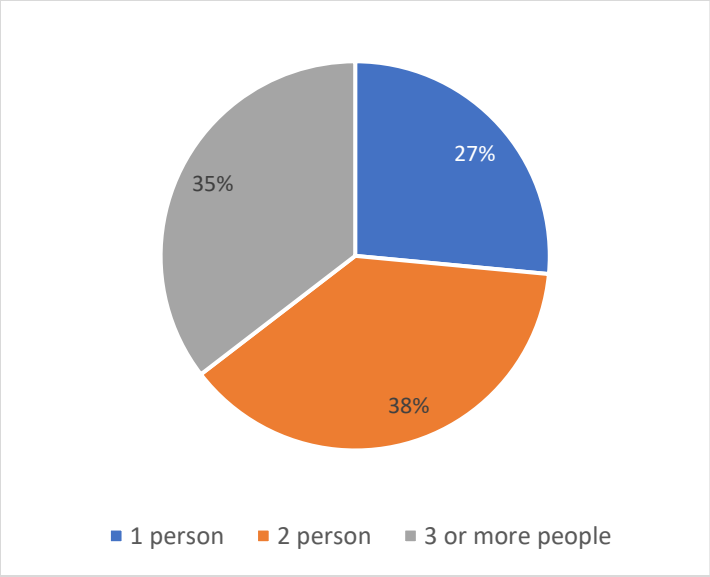
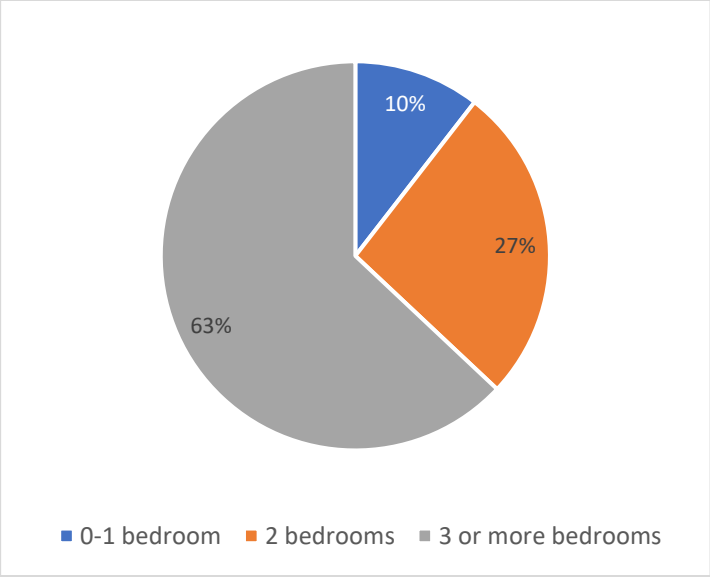


Figure 16-13 Home size (number of bedrooms), 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2022 from housingdata.org.

Manufactured Homes and Mobile Home Parks

There are approximately 1,356 manufactured homes in Franklin County. These include homes used by year-round homeowners and renters as well as homes used seasonally or occasionally and vacant. Manufactured homes make up 6% of the county housing stock, somewhat more than the state average rate of 5%, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018-2022 American Community Survey.

Some manufactured homes in Franklin County are located in manufactured home communities, also known as mobile home parks. Franklin County has 26 mobile home parks with 461 lots. As of November 2023, there were 10 vacant lots in the county, resulting in a 2.2% park vacancy rate.

Franklin County has one mobile home park in the 100-year floodplain and one park in the 500-year floodplain

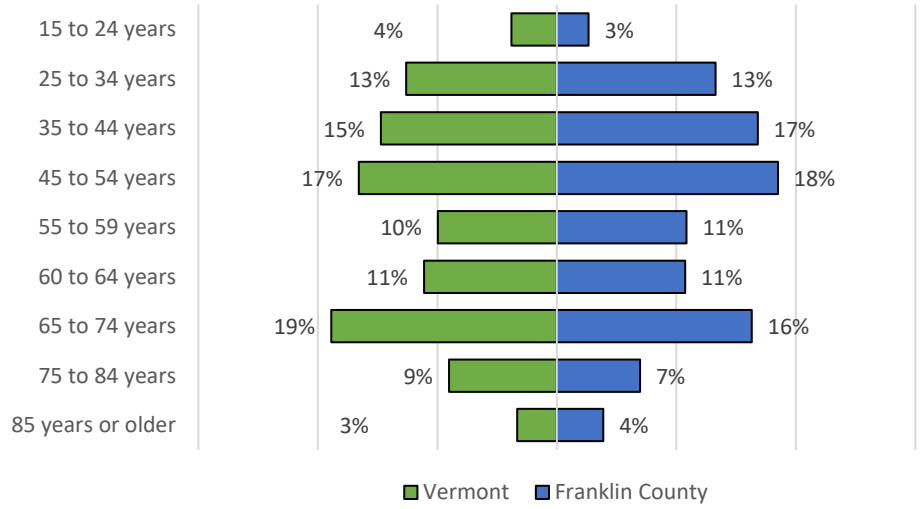
Figure 16-14 Franklin County mobile home parks

Park Ownership type	Parks	Lots
For Profit	19	352
Non-profit	3	58
Cooperative	2	39
All Rental (for profit)	3	17
Total	27	466
Median lot rent		$385
Source: Vermont Mobile Home Park Registry		

Household Demographics

Fewer Franklin County households are headed by someone 65 and older (27% of household heads) compared to the statewide average rate of 31%. An estimated 16% of the households in the county are led by someone aged 34 and younger.

Figure 16-15 Households by age of householder, 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, 2018-2022

Age range	Households
15 to 24 years	512
25 to 34 years	2553
35 to 44 years	3234
45 to 54 years	3557
55 to 59 years	2088
60 to 64 years	2064
65 to 74 years	3138
75 to 84 years	1338
85 years or older	749
Total	19,233

The vast majority of household heads living in the county identify as white alone, but the number of household heads identifying as Asian alone, Black or African American alone, two or more races and white alone all increased in Franklin County between 2010 and 2020.

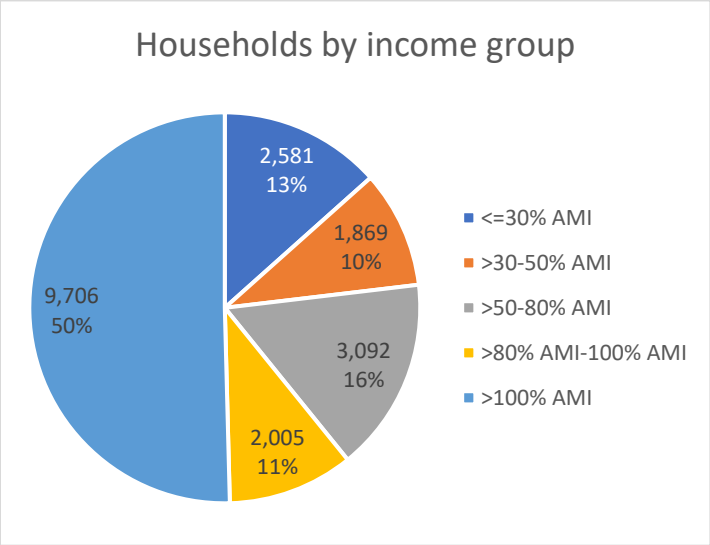
Figure 16-16 Households by race and tenure, 2010-2022

Franklin County	All households			Owner households			Renter households		
	2010	**2020**	**2022***	**2010**	**2020**	**2022***	**2010**	**2020**	**2022***
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	204	206	n/a	126	116	n/a	78	90	n/a
Asian alone	56	85	n/a	35	57	n/a	21	28	n/a
Black or African American alone	51	88	n/a	22	39	n/a	29	49	n/a
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	7	7	n/a	3	2	n/a	4	5	n/a
Some Other Race alone	32	89	n/a	12	49	n/a	20	40	n/a
Two or More Races	311	1,000	639	192	663	444	119	337	195
White alone	17,852	18,443	18,323	13,439	13,932	14,309	4,413	4,511	4,014
Grand Total	18,513	19,918	19,233	13,829	14,858	14,965	4,684	5,060	4,268

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census and American Community Survey 2018-2022 (Table B25003A-G) from housingdata.org. *Note: Estimates for small groups are not available ("n/a") for 2022 because they are based on samples with large margins of error.

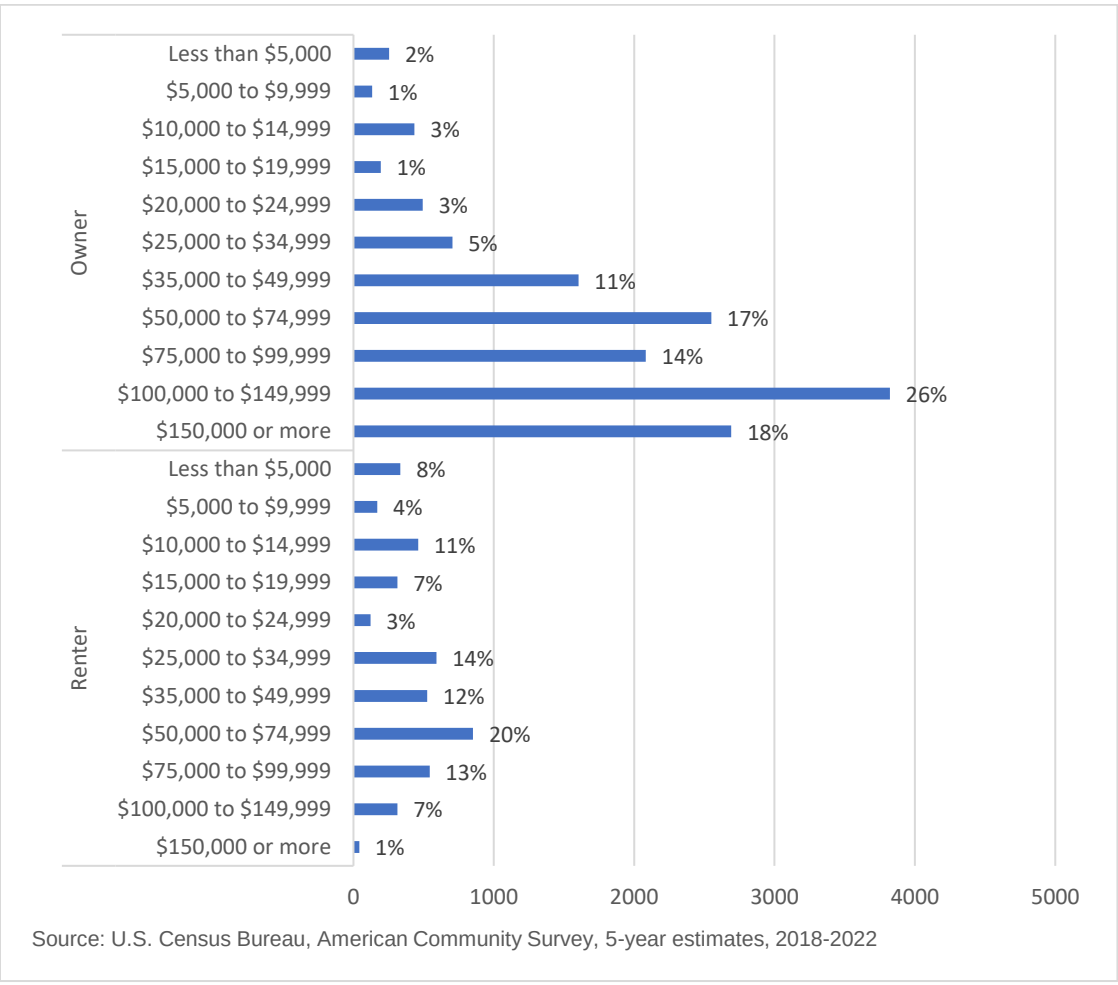
The median household income in Franklin County was $73,633 in 2022. About 23% of the households in Franklin County have very low incomes of less than 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

Figure 16-17 Household income relative to Area Median Income (AMI)



County income group threshold	
30% AMI	$22,090
50% AMI	$36,817
80% AMI	$58,906
Area Median Income (100%)	$73,633
Owner household median	$91,403
Renter household median	$40,389
Source: Based on U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018-2022 from housingdata.org	

Figure 16-18 Number of households by income by tenure, 2022

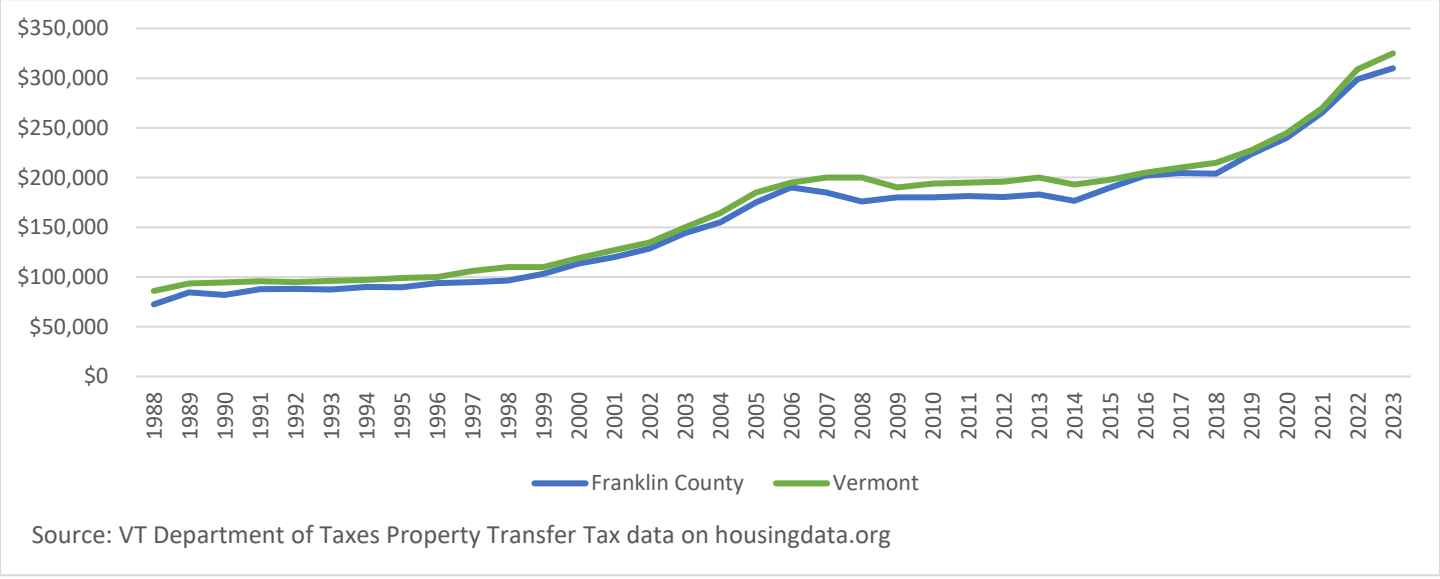


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, 2018-2022

Homeownership Market

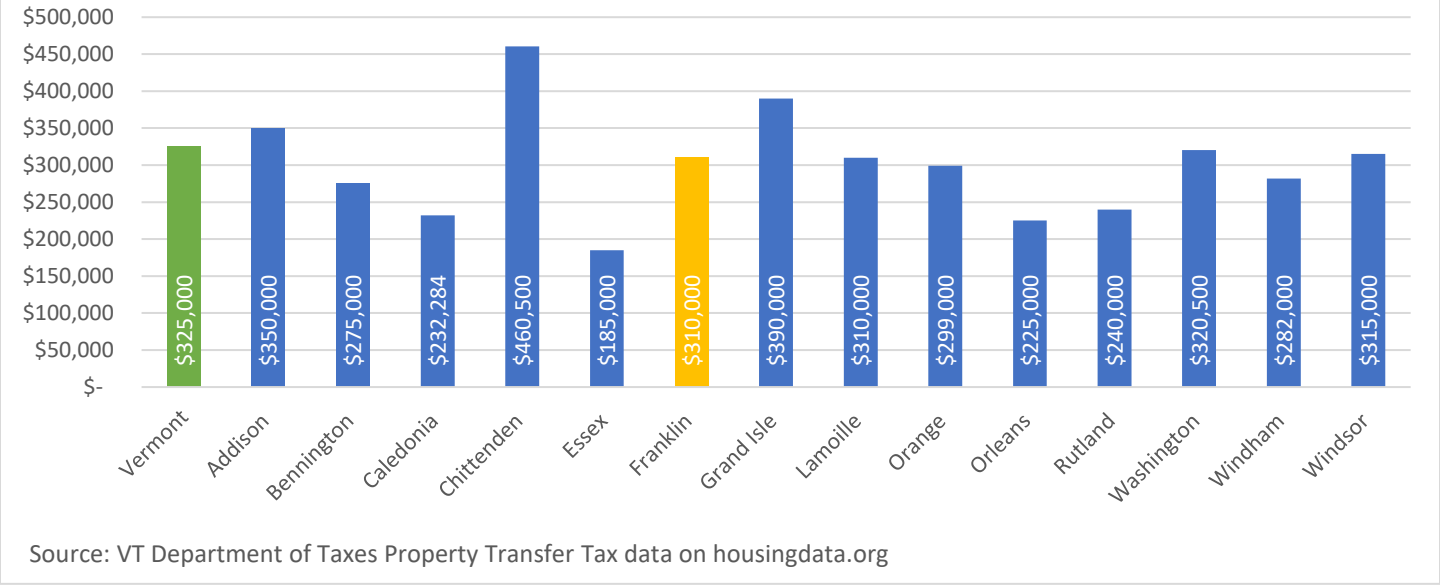
Approximately 15,000 households own their homes in Franklin County. An estimated 78% of all county households are homeowners compared with 73% statewide. The median home price in the county in 2023 was $310,000, while the state median was $325,000. This continues a trend in which no county in Vermont has seen a decline in annual median home sale price since 2019.

Figure 16-19: Median home prices



Source: VT Department of Taxes Property Transfer Tax data on housingdata.org

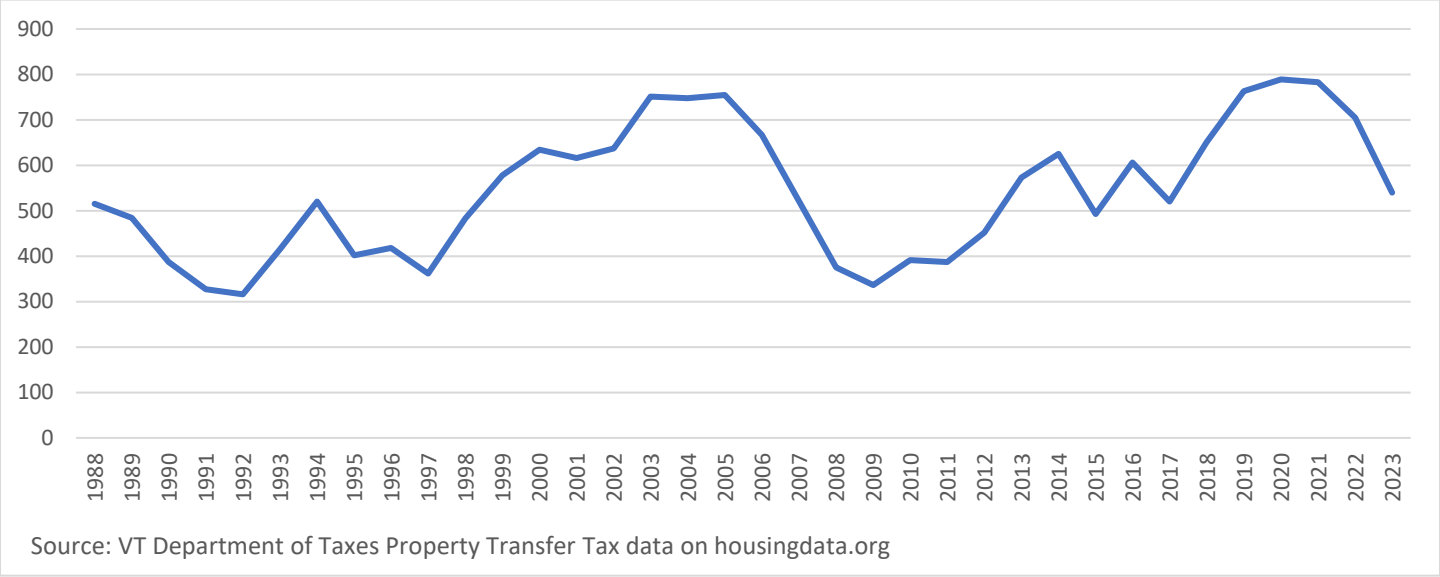
Figure 16-20 Median primary home sale price by county, 2023



Source: VT Department of Taxes Property Transfer Tax data on housingdata.org

In 2023, there were 540 primary homes sales in Franklin County. The annual total number of homes sold in the county peaked in 2020 when 789 homes were sold. This reflects the statewide increase in primary home sales experienced in 2020 and 2021. The decline in sales in 2022 and then again in 2023 suggests that rising prices and interest rates, as well as constrained supply of for sale homes, may be slowing down the home sale market.

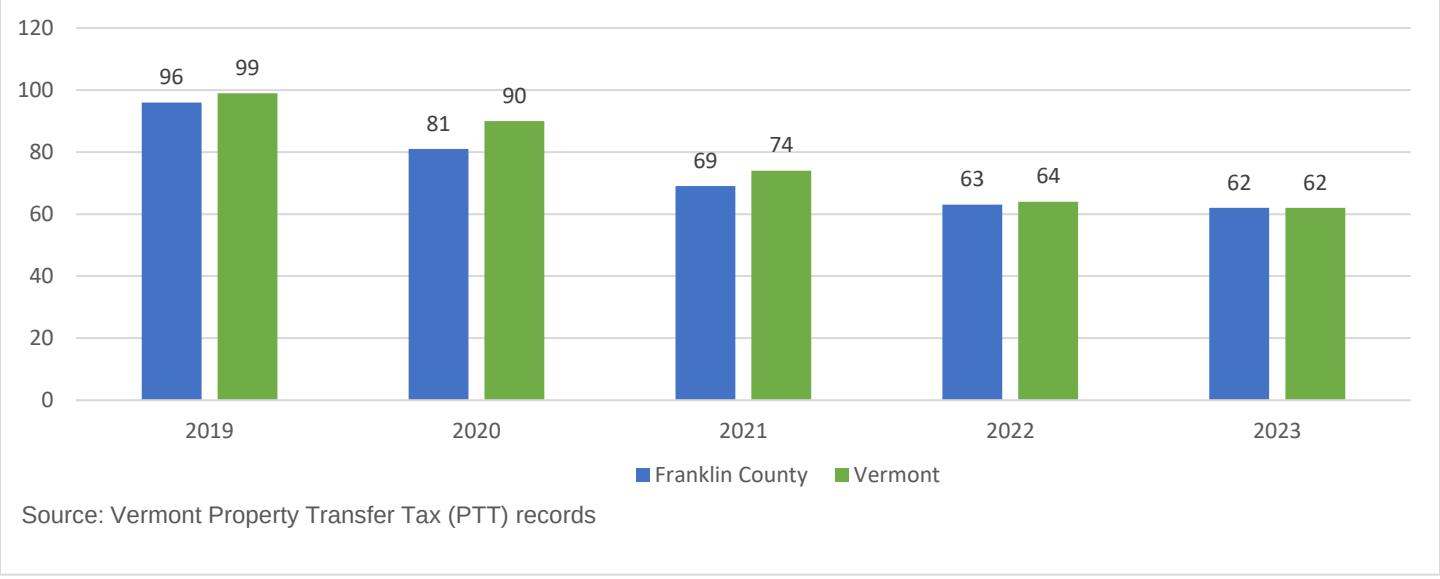
Figure 16-21 Number of primary home sales in Franklin County, 1988-2023



Source: VT Department of Taxes Property Transfer Tax data on housingdata.org

The median days on the market for a Franklin County home dropped to 62 days in 2023 from 96 days in 2019. Homes in the county stay on the market about the same number of days as the statewide average. Homes are on the market for approximately a month less than they were in 2019. The short time on the market is an all-time low in Vermont and another indication of the high demand for homes.

Figure 16-22: Median days on market

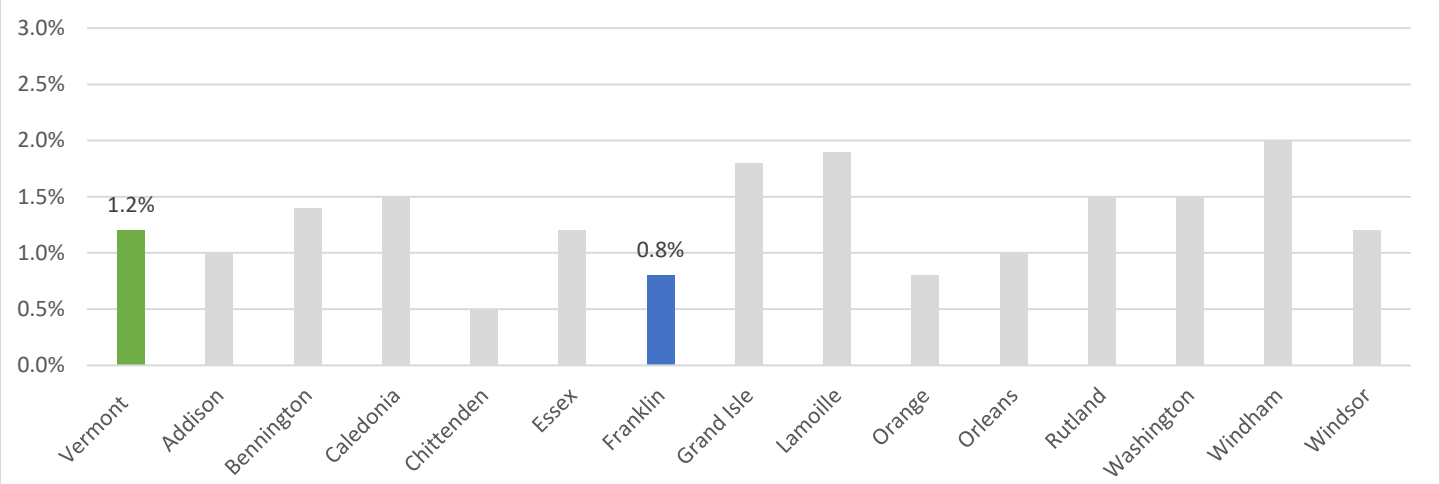


Source: Vermont Property Transfer Tax (PTT) records

The homeowner vacancy rate is the number of homes on the market compared to the total number of homes used or intended for homeowner households. Vermont's homeowner vacancy rate is estimated at 1.2%, below the 2.0% rate considered indicative of a healthy housing market. When the vacancy rate falls below the healthy rate, it can be difficult for homebuyers to find homes to purchase due to limited availability and puts upward pressure on sales prices.

Vacancy rates vary between Vermont counties, with some counties falling in the healthy market range and others far below. The homeowner vacancy rate in Franklin County (0.8%) is lower than both the healthy market range and the statewide vacancy rate.

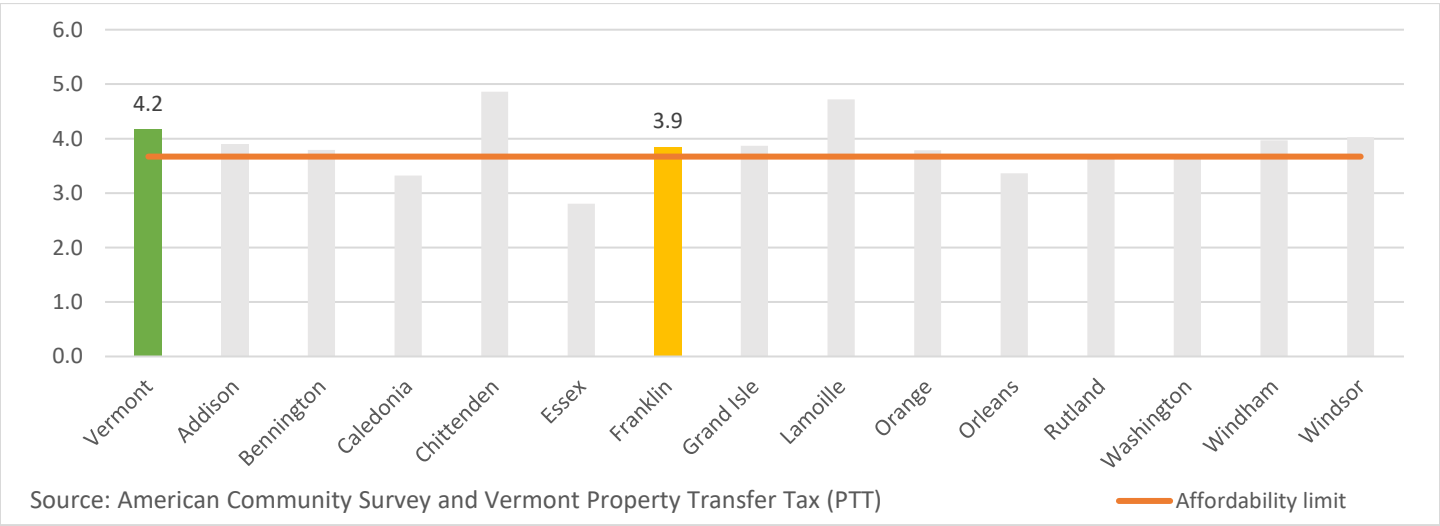
Figure 16-23: Homeowner vacancy rates



Source: VHFA analysis of estimates of U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2018-2022 from housingdata.org

As with most Vermont counties, home affordability is a concern in Franklin County. In 2022, the ratio of county home prices to median county household income is 3.9. When exceeding a factor of 3.67, households on average are paying more than 30% of their annual income towards housing costs and are thus considered cost burdened. 24% of owner-occupied households in Franklin County are cost-burdened.

Figure 16-24 Ratio of median home sale price to county median household income, 2022

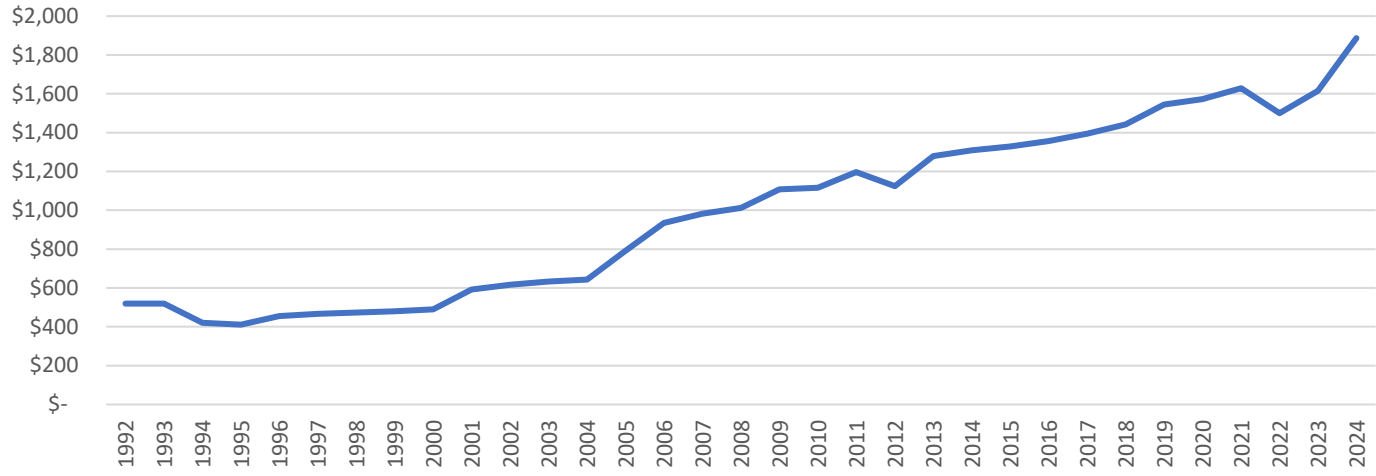


Source: American Community Survey and Vermont Property Transfer Tax (PTT)

Rental Housing Market

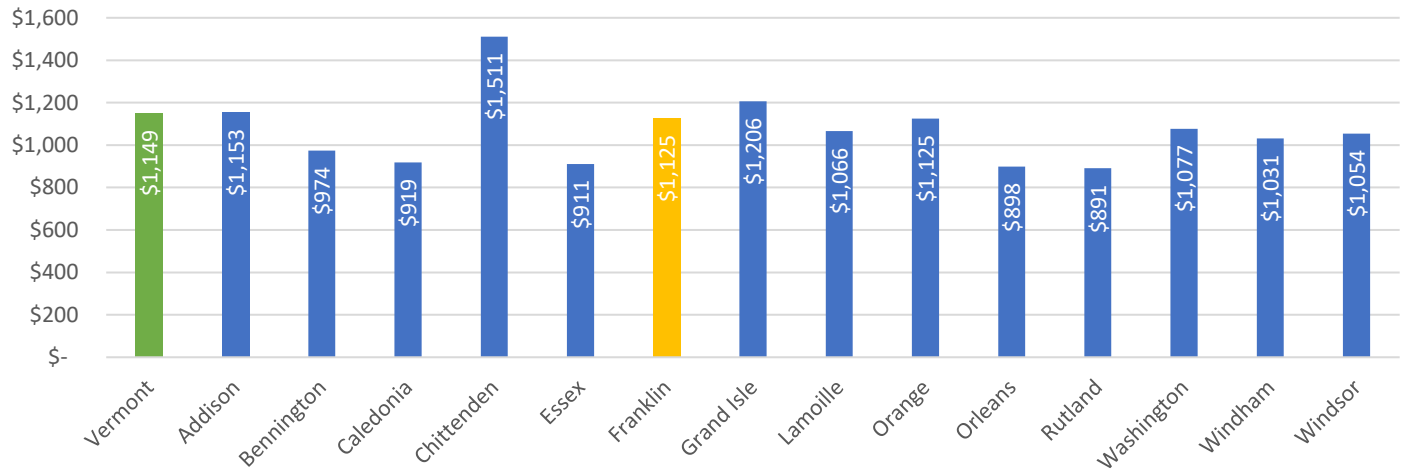
According to HUD, monthly rent for a safe, decent apartment in Vermont counties in 2024 is 25-35% higher than it was 5 years ago.[8] The fair market rent for a 2-bedroom apartment in Franklin County was set at $1,887 in 2024. The median rent in Franklin County of $1,125 was very similar to the statewide median in 2022.

Figure 16-25: Fair market rent for a 2-bedroom apartment



Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development estimated 40th percentile rent for a decent quality apartment on housingdata.org

Figure 16-26: Median gross rent by county, 2022

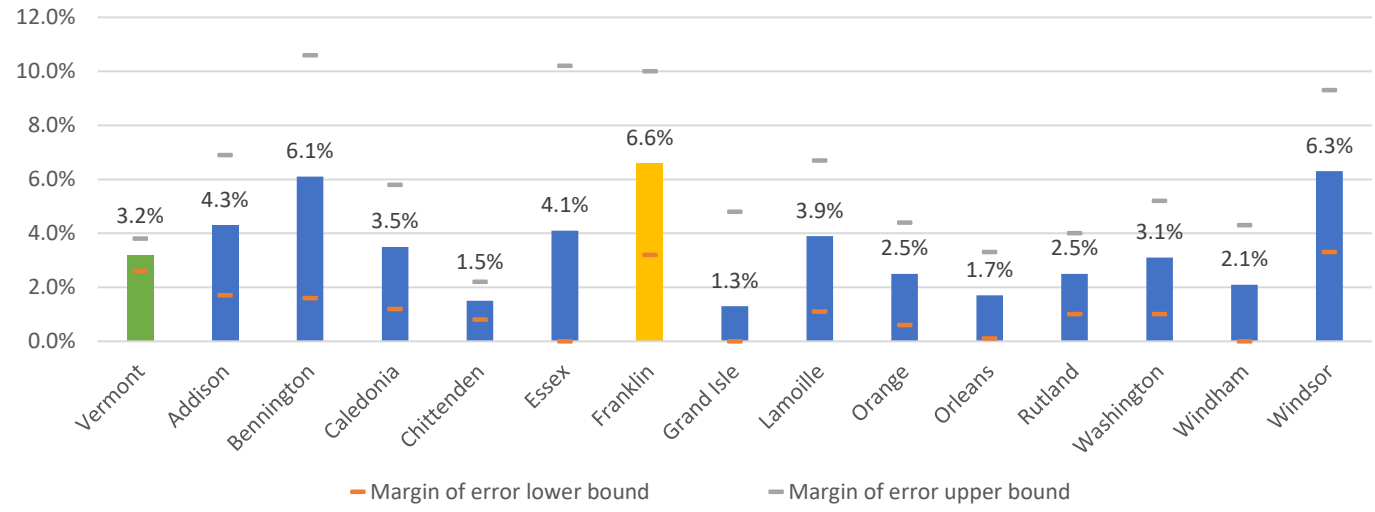


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, 2018-2022

[8] U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, HUD Fair Market and 50th Percentile Rents. 2024

The renter vacancy rate is the number of homes for rent compared to the total number of homes used or intended for renter households. According to the most recent estimates available, Vermont's rental vacancy rate is 3.2%. This is somewhat lower than what experts consider to be a healthy vacancy rate, which is typically around 4 to 6%. Below that rate, renters can have difficulty finding an affordable home, putting upward pressure on prices. Franklin County had a rental vacancy rate of 6.6% in 2022 – greater than the statewide rate, but a larger margin of error. Both state and county vacancy rates have declined in the last ten years.

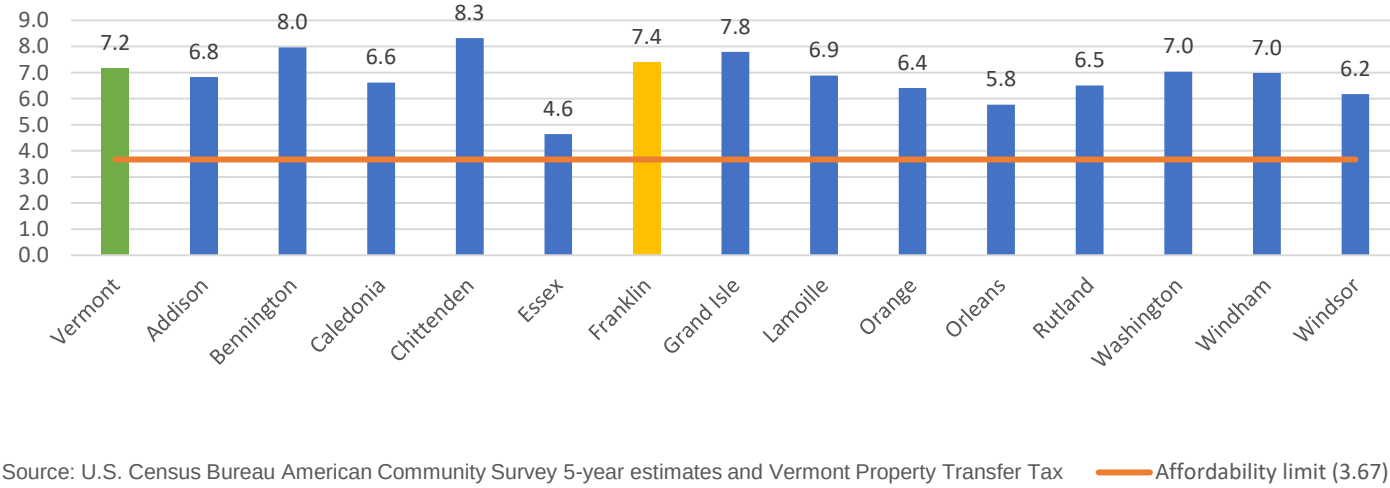
Figure 16-27: Rental vacancy rates, 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, 2018-2022

Across the state, the median home sale price was 7.2 times the median renter household income in 2022. For housing to be considered affordable, housing costs should not exceed a factor of 3.67, where only 30% of income is dedicated to housing costs. Given the mismatch in this ratio, the median renter household would have difficulty affording a median primary home statewide and in Franklin County.

Figure 16-28 Median home sale price to median renter income ratio, 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year estimates and Vermont Property Transfer Tax

Subsidized Rental Housing

Vermont has 14,670 rental apartments in 541 apartment complexes that were built through federal and state government programs. Together, these homes comprise 19% of the state's rental homes.

Affordable housing is generally defined as housing where the occupant is paying less than 30% of their income towards housing costs. To create affordable housing, the federal government directs funding through various channels, including state governments, non-profit or private housing developers, Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) or other housing agencies. Public subsidies for affordable housing largely fall in two categories; (1) funding for the construction and rehabilitation of housing, or (2) funding to provide rental assistance to tenants. Often, apartments created with public development funding are paired with rental assistance funding to ensure affordability for low-income tenants

Figure 16-29 Rental housing with project-based assistance in Vermont by county, 2024

County	Total occupied rental homes	Apartments in buildings developed with public funding	% of all rental homes	Apartments with monthly project based rental assistance	% of all rental homes
Addison County	3,183	507	16%	279	9%
Bennington County	4,222	836	20%	400	9%
Caledonia County	3,056	528	17%	231	8%
Chittenden County	26,034	5,302	20%	1,929	7%
Essex County	468	100	21%	70	15%
Franklin County	4,604	787	17%	498	11%
Grand Isle County	315	99	31%	37	12%
Lamoille County	3,150	396	13%	189	6%
Orange County	2,317	430	19%	223	10%
Orleans County	2,398	335	14%	187	8%
Rutland County	7,304	1,371	19%	880	12%
Washington County	7,247	1,311	18%	903	12%
Windham County	5,655	1,417	25%	707	13%
Windsor County	6,309	1,251	20%	749	12%
Statewide	76,262	14,670	19%	7,282	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates and Directory of Affordable Rental Housing on housingdata.org

In Franklin County, there are 787 apartments in buildings that were built with public development subsidies. These apartments account for 17% of the county rental housing stock. Among those apartments, 498 are connected to a source of project based rental assistance, such that tenants pay no more than 30% of their gross income towards housing costs, with the rental assistance administrating agency covering the remaining rent balance directly.

Households With Housing Problems

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) receives custom tabulations from the Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS). These data, known as the "CHAS" data (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy), demonstrate the extent of housing problems and housing needs, particularly for low income households. The CHAS identifies four housing problems:

1. Home lacks complete plumbing,

2. Home lacks complete kitchen,

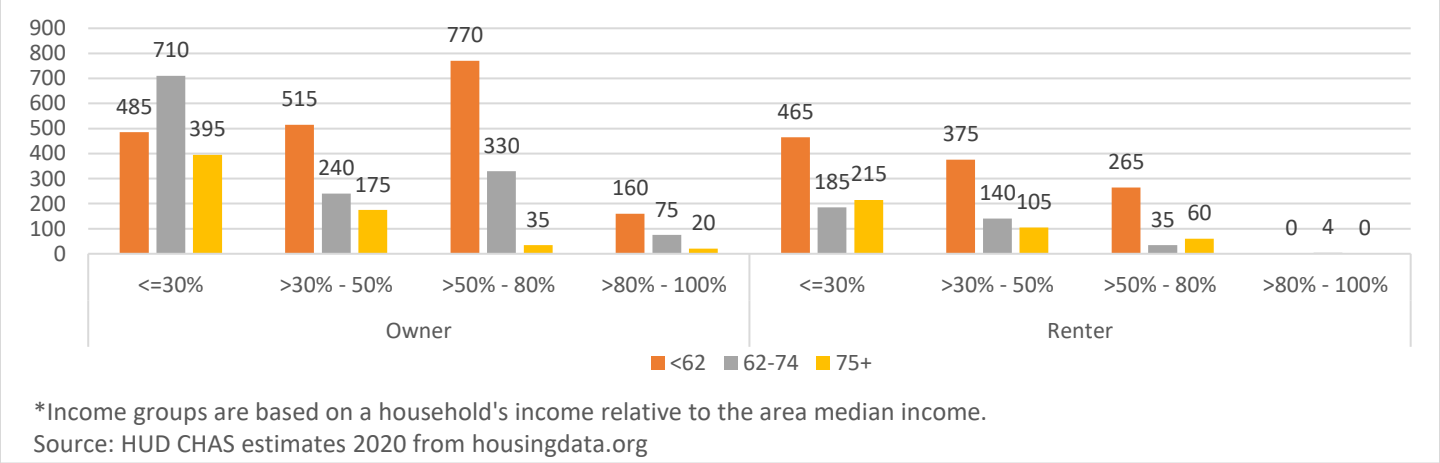
3. Household is overcrowded, or

4. Household is cost burdened (paying more than 30% of income towards housing)

An estimated 83,180 households in Vermont (about 33% of the households in the state) have at least 1 housing problem. Among these potential issues, cost burden is the most prevalent, accounting for at least 95% of the households with one or more housing problem.

The single largest demographic group in Franklin County experiencing housing problems is homeowners with household incomes of 50-80% of the area median who are younger than 62. According to HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy estimates, 770 of these households had at least one of the following housing problems: housing costs of 30% or more of income, lack of kitchen or plumbing facilities, and overcrowding.

Figure 16-30: Franklin County households with housing problems, by income group*



*Income groups are based on a household's income relative to the area median income.
Source: HUD CHAS estimates 2020 from housingdata.org

Potential Housing Quality Issues

The Census Bureau offers only minimal estimates of the extent to which Vermont's housing stock conforms to basic quality standards:

- 2,321 occupied housing units, or 0.6% of Vermont's housing stock lack complete kitchen facilities.
- 1,322 occupied housing units, or 0.4% of Vermont's housing stock lack complete plumbing facilities.
- 498 occupied housing units, or 0.3% of Vermont's housing stock are unheated and 510 use coal as a main heating source.
- 4,230 occupied homes, or 2% of the housing stock, are overcrowded
- 4,600 occupied mobile homes were built before 1979 when federal quality standards were enacted

However, the Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) for the American Community Survey (ACS) allows for multi-factor analysis, making it possible to review combined criteria that signal possible housing quality issues. Households were flagged with potential quality issues if they had any of the following criteria:

- The heating fuel type was coal, or the home lacked a heat source.
- The housing unit lacked complete kitchen facilities.
- The housing unit lacked complete plumbing facilities.
- The housing unit was a mobile home built before 1979.
- The housing unit was a rental unit built before 1939 with rent less than $500 per month.
- The housing unit was an owner home with an estimated property value of $75,000 or less (excluding mobile homes or RVs/vans/boats).

Based on analysis of Census Bureau PUMS 2022 data, there are at least 19,637 Vermont households living in homes with potentially serious housing quality issues. This accounts for about 7% of the occupied housing stock. This estimate almost certainly undercounts the total number of households with housing problems because many issues such as poor sanitary conditions, inadequate weatherization and poor interior air quality would not necessarily be reflected in the criteria above.

PUMS data is not available at the county level, instead grouping counties geographically. Franklin County is classified as part of the Northern Vermont PUMs region and represents 29% of the housing stock in the region. If the distribution of housing quality issues is equal across the region, there are likely approximately 1,494 owner occupied and 276 renter occupied homes in County with these indicators.

Figure 16-31 Occupied households with potential housing quality issues, 2022

Region	Owner households	Renter households	Occupied without payment of rent	Total households
Northern Vermont (Caledonia, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille & Orleans Counties)	5,151	953	526	6,630
Statewide	14,101	4,517	1,055	19,673
Source: U.S. Census Bureau Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS), 5-year estimates, 2018-2022				

This analysis does not account for vacant units – an additional 780 homes in the county are considered “other vacant” by the U.S. Census Bureau. Homes can fall into this category for many reasons, including homes that are under renovation or homes held vacant for personal reasons by the owner. However, since this category can also include foreclosed or abandoned homes, it is often used as an indicator of area housing stock decline.

Overcrowding

About 4,200 (or 2%) of Vermont households live in overcrowded homes. Such homes are defined as those with fewer rooms than household members. For example, a one-bedroom home with a living room and kitchen has 3 rooms. Thus, it would be considered overcrowded if the household had 4 members. Studies have reported a direct association between crowding and adverse health outcomes, such as infectious disease and mental health problems.

In Vermont, renter households experience overcrowding at over three times the rate of homeowners, with 3.4% of renter households overcrowded versus just under 1% of owner households.

There are an estimated 188 households in Franklin County that are considered overcrowded. Of those households, 105 are owner-occupied and 83 are renter-occupied. Among all overcrowding in Franklin County, an estimated 21 households are considered severely overcrowded.

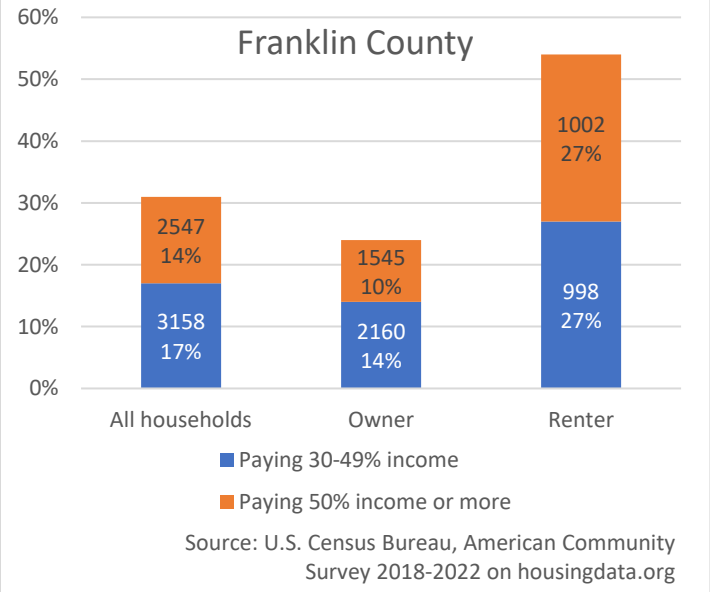
Cost Burden

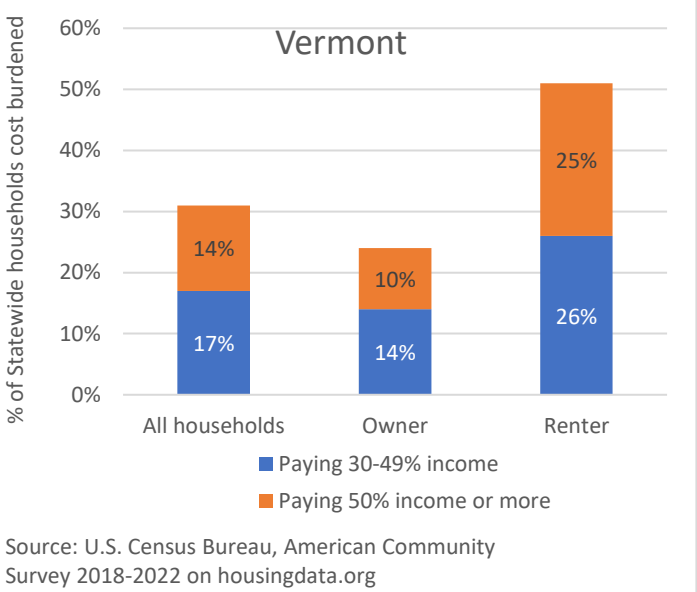
When a household's housing expenses consume less than 30% of their monthly income, their housing is considered "affordable" because there is likely to be enough income remaining to afford other necessities. When housing costs consume more than 30% of household income, the household is considered "cost burdened." When cost burdened, households are less likely to have enough income remaining for other living expenses which can lead to housing instability. When housing costs exceed 50% of household income, the household is considered to be "severely cost burdened."

Approximately 31% of all households in Vermont are cost burdened (about 82,000 households), of which 36,000 households, 14% of all households, are severely cost burdened. In Vermont, the total number of cost burdened owner-occupied households (about 48,000) is greater than the number of cost burdened renter households (about 34,000 households), but the percentage of all owner households that are cost burdened (24% of owner households) is significantly lower than the percentage of renter households cost burdened (51% of renter households). 10% of Vermont's homeowners (about 20,000 households) and 26% of Vermont's renter households (about 17,000 households) are "severely cost burdened."

The proportion of owner households that are cost-burdened in Franklin County is in line with the state, but renter cost burden is greater than the state (54%). Approximately 2547 households are severely cost-burdened in Franklin County and may be at risk of housing instability.

Figure 16-32: Cost burden among Franklin County households compared to statewide cost burden

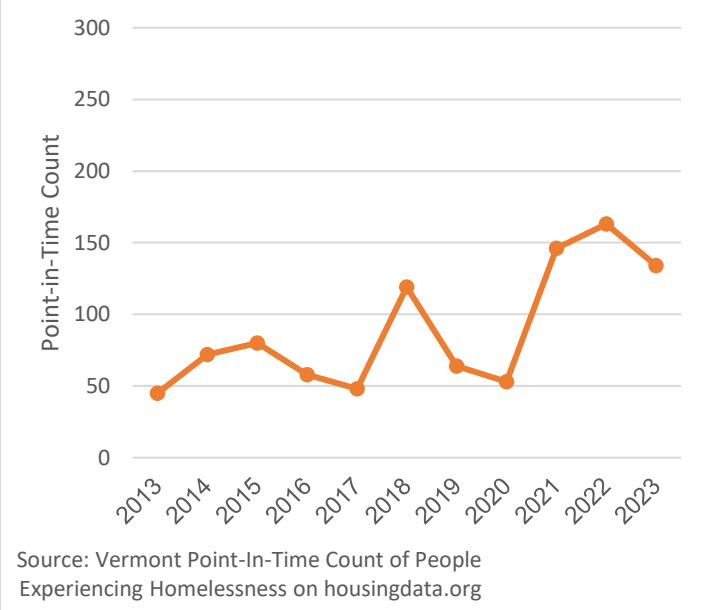




Homelessness

Homelessness services in Franklin County and Grand Isle County are provided by the combined Franklin-Grand Isle Continuum of Care. During the most recent 2023 Point-In-Time count, 134 people in 103 households were experiencing homelessness in the Franklin/Grand Isle CoC. This represents a decline from 2022, which featured the highest total in the CoC since the PIT count began. Vermont's Coordinated Entry Dashboard provides the number of individuals experiencing homelessness on a weekly basis who are accessing services from Vermont's housing support agencies. During the last week in January 2024, 242 people in the Franklin/Grand Isle CoC area received support through this area's continuum of care.

Figure 16-33: Number of people experiencing homelessness served by the Franklin/Grand Isle Continua of Care



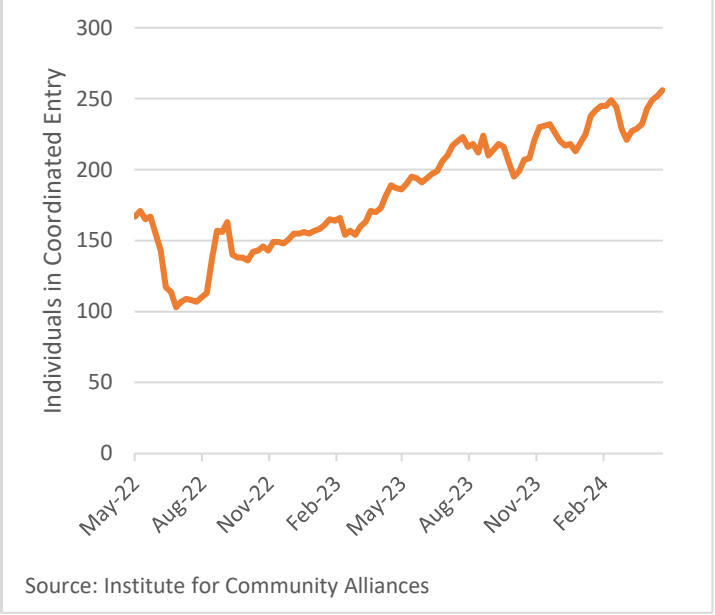


Figure 16-34: Number of people experiencing homelessness by the local Continua of Care (CoCs)

Local Housing Coalition (CoC)	Number of individuals experiencing homelessness during Point-in-Time 2023	Number of individuals served by CoC during week of Jan. 29, 2024
Addison CoC	78	118
Bennington CoC	312	244
Caledonia & Essex CoC	175	255
Chittenden CoC	758	826
Franklin & Grand Isle CoC	134	242
Lamoille CoC	74	223
Orange & Windsor N CoC	188	347
Orleans CoC	48	112
Rutland CoC	654	502
Washington CoC	446	963
Windham S CoC	329	412
Windsor S & Windham N CoC	99	276
Vermont	3,295	4,408
Source: Vermont Point-in-Time Count 2023 and Vermont Coordinated Entry Dashboard		

Figure 16-35 Households experiencing homelessness and shelter availability

Local Housing Coalition (CoC)	Total Households (Point-in-Time 2023)	Households with at least one adult and child (Point-in-Time 2023)	Emergency shelter household capacity	Permanent Units with supportive services
Addison CoC	59	9	62	8
Bennington CoC	201	43	30	3
Caledonia & Essex CoC	98	26	31	29
Chittenden CoC	553	82	178	264
Franklin & Grand Isle CoC	103	9	23	6
Lamoille CoC	53	6	19	7
Orange & Windsor North CoC	132	13	0	4
Orleans CoC	25	6	4	3
Rutland CoC	425	80	19	26
Washington CoC	320	43	92	27
Windham South CoC	229	34	46	27
Windsor South & Windham North CoC	58	15	35	20
Vermont	2,256	366	539	424

Source: Vermont Point-in-Time Count, Vermont Dept. for Children and Families "GA Emergency Housing and Shelters" Presentation to the VT House Human Services and General & Housing Committees, Feb. 8, 2024 and Vermont Housing Data Website https://www.housingdata.org/profile/housing-programs/features-eligibility

Aside from the General Assistance program, emergency housing is provided by the 19-bed Samaritan House in St. Albans. It is likely that many people experiencing homelessness in the northwest go to Burlington to seek assistance. The majority of Vermonters experiencing homelessness in 2021-2023 have been housed in temporary motel rooms through the General Assistance Emergency Housing program.

Recent Studies

In 2022, the Northwest Regional Planning Commission published a 2022 Northwest Vermont Region Housing Needs Assessment that identifies socioeconomic and housing market conditions in Franklin and Grand Isle counties. The key findings of the Housing Needs Assessment are:

- The level of unmet housing need in the two-county region is so substantial that 'catching up' will require a sustained, long-term commitment. The need to 'catch up' and improve affordability and quality of life for residents already living in the region is much more significant than the need to provide housing for new residents in the future.
- The region's housing stock has become less diverse over the past 20 years. The small supply of 'missing middle' units has shrunk even further. New construction is almost entirely detached, single-unit homes. Other unit types well-suited to small households, young adults, seniors and people with disabilities are limited both in number and location leaving these residents little choice in housing.
- Residents under age 40 are having a very different housing experience than residents over age 60. Age group is equally if not more determinative of housing experience than income group. Younger adults across the income distribution have and continue to face far more difficulty securing and paying for housing in the region.
- There are currently few options for older residents who want to stay in their community other than remaining in their current homes. The number of residents 'aging in place' in their homes across the region will continue to grow until peaking around 2040. The location, design and maintenance requirements of many homes in the region will pose challenges to elderly residents.
- An increasing number of people in the region are living alone. The number of single-person households is anticipated to increase in future years. Single-person households struggle to find housing that meets their needs and budget across the income distribution. Much of the region's stock requires that a household have two-wage earners for it to be affordable.
- There are unmet housing needs throughout the region, but most housing creation has occurred in only a few communities in recent years. The targeted location of new units, when combined with the limited range of unit types being built, leads to housing that may only meet the needs and budgets of a small slice of the region's households.
- The major recommendation of the Housing Needs Assessment is to set an annual target for housing 'interventions' distributed across all communities so that the region can 'catch up' and eliminate unmet housing needs in Franklin and Grand Isle counties.

Chapter 17: Grand Isle County

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Household Growth and Projected Needs

Between 2010 and 2020, the number of households living in Grand Isle County year-round increased at an average rate of 0.9% each year to 3,170. By 2029, a projected 3,438-3,620 households will live in the county.

Figure 17-1 Projected Grand Isle County year-round household demand, 2025 and 2029

Year-round households	2010	2020	2025 (projected)		2029 (projected)	
			Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
Total households	2,902	3,170	3,252	3,325	3,438	3,620
Owner households	2,358	2,641	2,921	2,987	2,915	3,070
Renter households	544	529	331	338	523	550

Source: 2010 and 2010 Decennial Census, 2025 and 2029 projected based on Census Bureau American Community Survey estimates and statewide 2016-2019 average annual growth of 1% ("Lower") and 1.8% in 2019-2022 ("Higher).

Since 2020, demand to live in Vermont has increased while the supply of new homes has not kept pace. To accommodate demand to live in the county and meet other housing market needs such as normalizing the vacancy rate, Grand Isle County is likely to need a projected 300-435 additional homes between 2025 and 2029.

Figure 17-2 Projected year-round homes needed by tenure, 2025-2029

Additional homes needed	Pre-pandemic growth (Lower)	Pandemic-era growth (Upper)
Owner homes	58	184
Renter homes	242	251
Total additional homes needed	300	435

Source: VHFA analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data (Building Permits, Housing Completions, American Community Survey estimates, Population and Housing Unit Estimates and Current Population Survey/Housing Vacancy Survey) and the Vermont 2023 Point-In-Time Count of those Experiencing Homelessness. "Pre-pandemic demand" assumes resuming trends that occurred in 2016-2019. "Pandemic-era demand" assumes continuation of trends that occurred in 2019-2022 Assumes a target vacancy rate of 5% for rental and 2% for owner homes and annual housing destruction rate of 0.15%.

Housing Stock

Grand Isle County's housing stock consists of 5,264 year-round and seasonal homes. The county has a greater proportion of seasonal homes (37%) than the state (15%) and a much lesser proportion of year-round rental homes (6%). Grand Isle is the second smallest county in Vermont and represents 2% of the state's total housing stock.

Figure 17-3 Grand Isle County housing stock, 2022

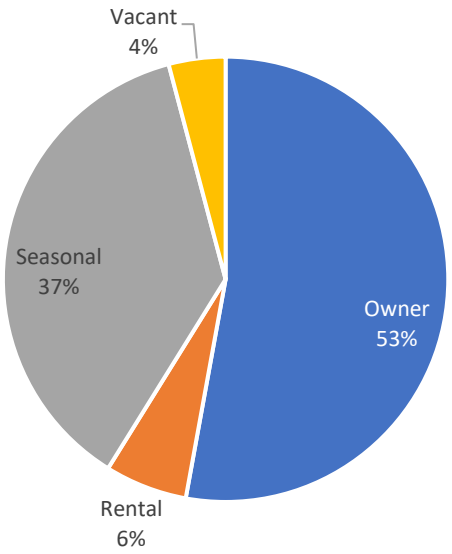


Figure 17-4: Grand Isle County home types by town

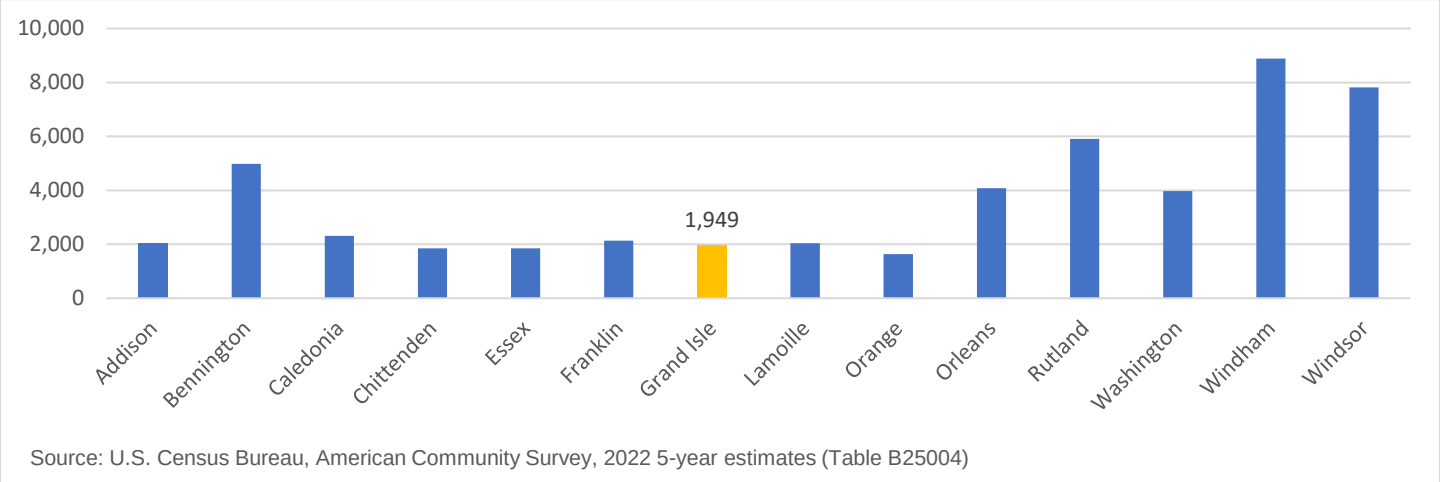
Location	Owner homes	% Owner	Renter homes	% Renter	Seasonal homes	% Seasonal	Vacant homes	% Vacant	Total homes	% of county homes
Grand Isle County	2,783	53%	315	6%	1,949	37%	217	4%	5,264	100%
Alburgh	727	48%	121	8%	566	38%	95	6%	1,509	29%
Grand Isle	796	68%	102	9%	209	18%	60	5%	1,167	22%
Isle La Motte	205	42%	16	3%	263	54%	7	1%	491	9%
North Hero	514	48%	9	1%	553	51%	6	1%	1,082	21%
South Hero	541	53%	67	7%	358	35%	49	5%	1,015	19%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2018-2022 (Table B25003, B25004) from housingdata.org.

Seasonal Homes

The latest estimates show that 15% of Vermont's homes are "seasonal, occasional use, or vacation homes", giving the state the second highest rate in the nation. In 2022, there were an estimated 1,949 seasonal or occasional use homes in Grand Isle County, making up 37% of all homes in the county.

Figure 17-5 Seasonal homes by county, 2022

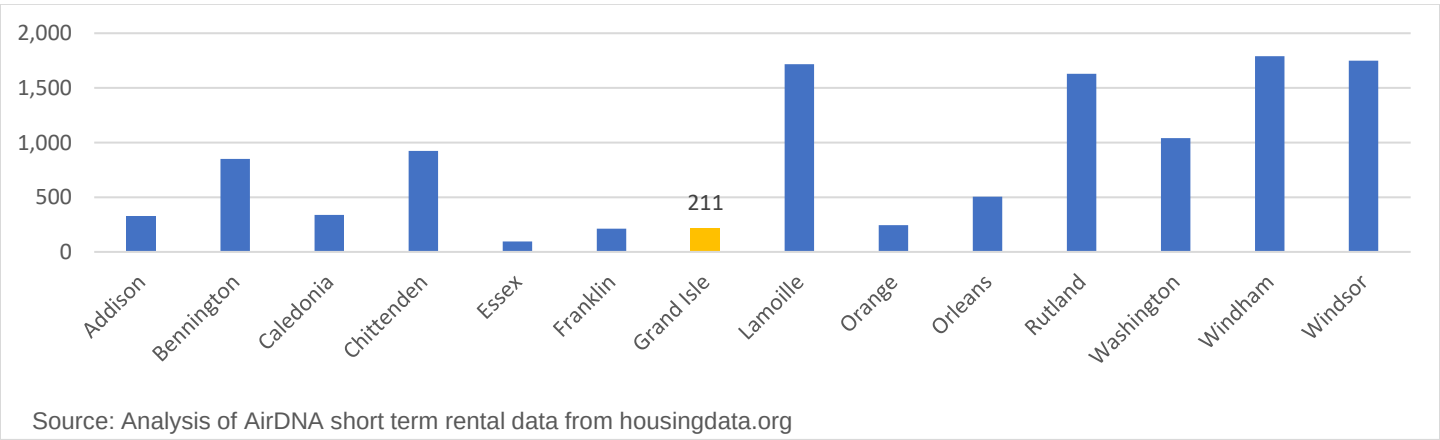


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2022 5-year estimates (Table B25004)

Short-Term Rentals

The number of short-term rentals statewide has risen dramatically in the last ten years. In 2015, fewer than 1,000 homes were listed monthly as short-term rentals; as of September 2023, more than 11,747 homes are being listed. The growth in the short-term rental market has not been equal across the state, however. Counties in southern Vermont or counties that feature one of the state's larger resort towns have the highest share of STRs and have seen the greatest growth.

Figure 17-6 Homes used as short-term rentals by county, Oct. 2023

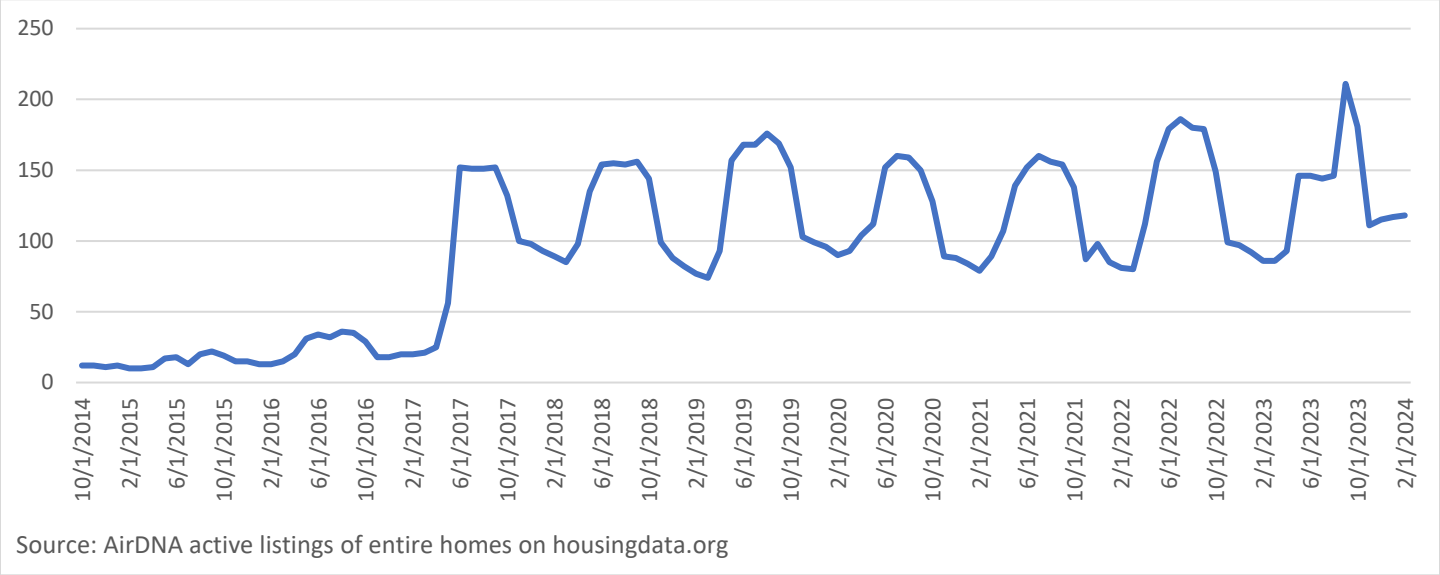


Source: Analysis of AirDNA short term rental data from housingdata.org

Grand Isle County has a highly seasonal STR market that has only expanded marginally since 2017. In 2023, 211 homes were listed as STRs, representing 4% of the county's total housing stock, about the same as the statewide rate of 4%.

Grand Isle County's seasonal home market far exceeds the state level, with 37% of the housing stock dedicated to seasonal homes.

Figure 17-7: Grand Isle County short-term rental homes



Source: AirDNA active listings of entire homes on housingdata.org

Figure 17-8 Seasonal homes and short-term rentals by town

Location	Seasonal homes (2022)	Seasonal homes relative to total housing stock	Short-term rentals (active Oct. 2023)	Short-term rental relative to total housing stock	Total housing stock
Grand Isle County	**1,949**	**37%**	**211**	**4.00%**	**5,264**
Alburgh	566	38%	55	3.60%	1,509
Grand Isle	209	18%	37	3.20%	1,167
Isle La Motte	263	54%	18	3.70%	491
North Hero	553	51%	52	4.80%	1,082
South Hero	358	35%	49	4.80%	1,015

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018-2022 estimates and AirDNA active listings of entire homes on housingdata.org.

Characteristics of Housing Stock

The types of homes that make up the housing stock in Grand Isle County are similar to the state as a whole. Grand Isle County's stock consists primarily of single-family detached homes. 83% of the combined year-round owner and renter housing stock are single-family detached homes, even greater than the proportion statewide (67%). There are almost no units in large multi-family buildings in Grand Isle County.

Figure 17-9: Grand Isle County owner homes types

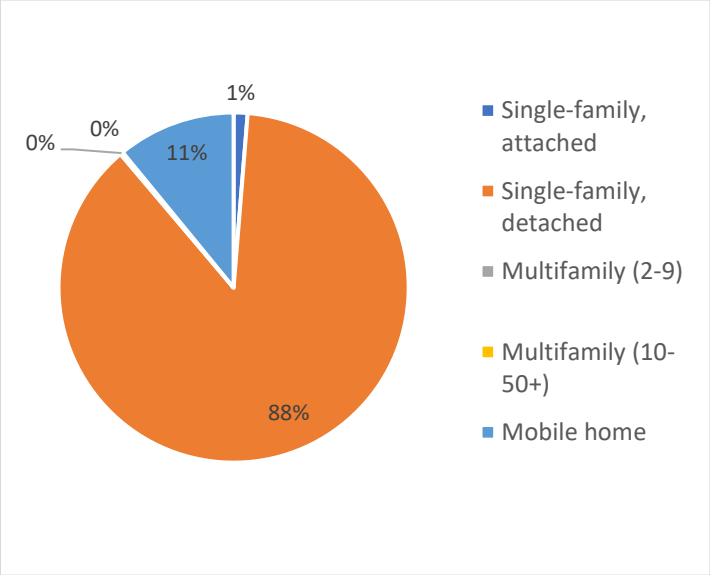
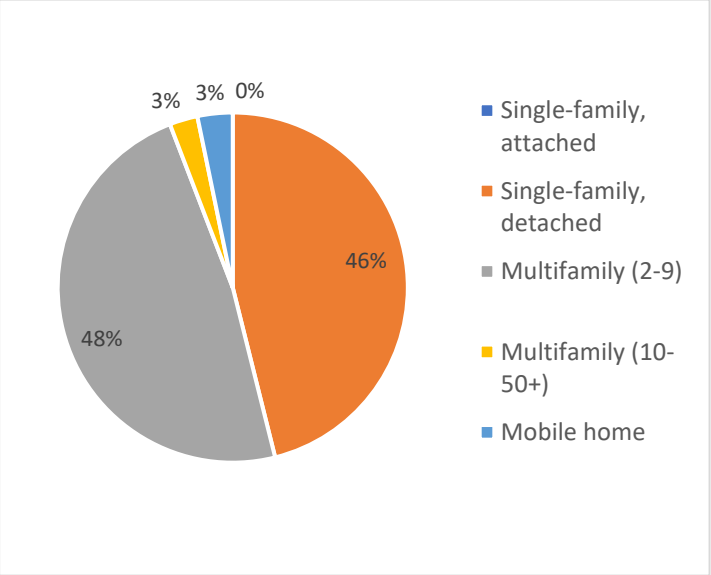


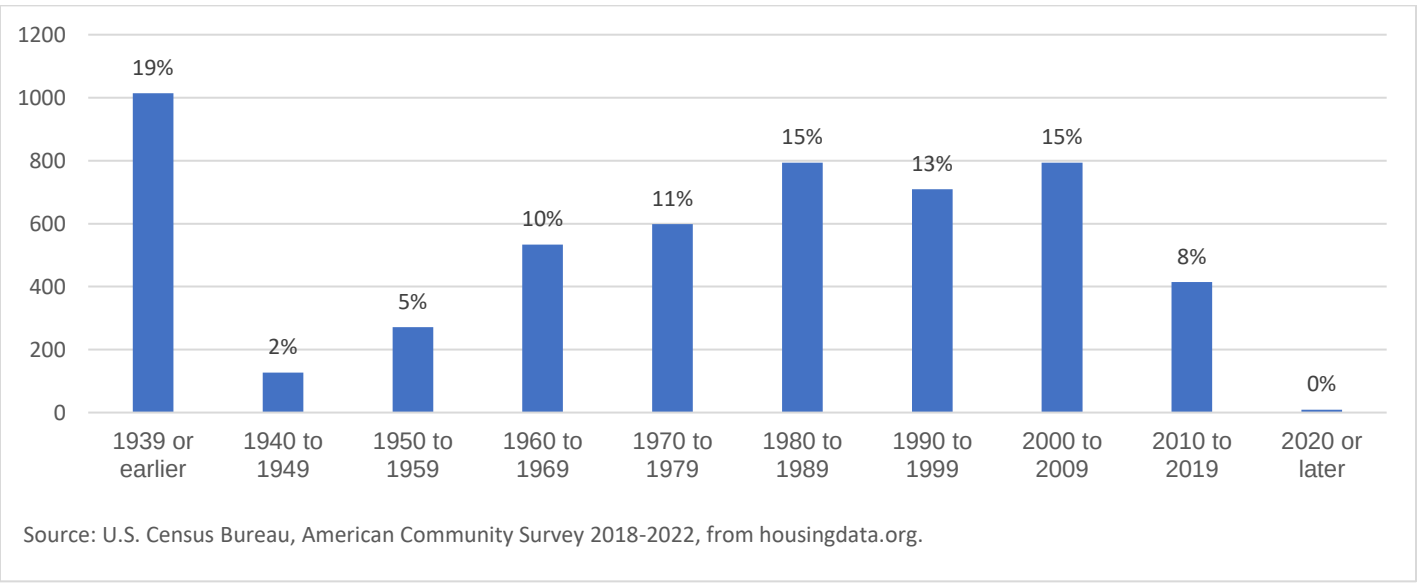
Figure 17-10: Grand Isle County renter homes types



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2022 from housingdata.org.

Of all homes in Grand Isle County, an estimated 19% were built prior to 1940, less than the statewide average of 25%. The median home in the county was built in 1981. Although not necessarily indicative of housing quality problems, an older home is likely to elevate home maintenance and heating costs for its occupant. Notably, a larger portion of the homes in Grand Isle County were built after 2000 (23%) than the state as a whole (16%).

Figure 17-11: Year built for Grand Isle County homes



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018-2022, from housingdata.org.

In Vermont, the average household size has decreased over the past 30 years, down from 2.57 people per household in 1990 to 2.27 people per household in 2020. This decline has created a mismatch between the number of people per household and the number of bedrooms in Vermont homes. This difference is most pronounced in owner-occupied housing where large homes of 3+ bedrooms (74% of owner homes) outnumber of large households of 3+ people (32% of owner households). The difference in household size and number of bedrooms is not as pronounced within the renter housing market.

The mismatch is present in Grand Isle County as well, where large homes (56% of the county's year-round homes) far outnumber large households (28% of the county's year-round households). Conversely, single person households (27% of the county's year-round households) outnumber small homes of 0-1 bedrooms (10% of the county's year-round homes).

Figure 17-12 Household size, 2022

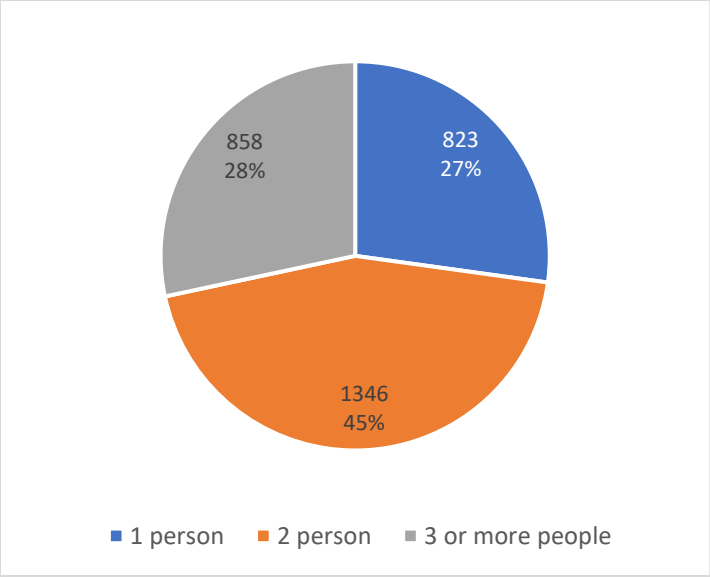
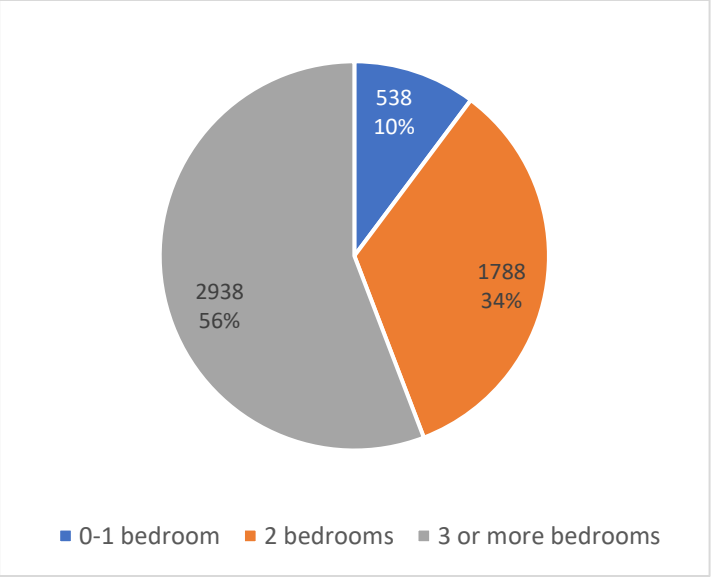


Figure 17-13 Homes by number of bedrooms, 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2022 from housingdata.org.

Manufactured Homes and Mobile Home Parks

There are approximately 629 manufactured homes in Grand Isle County. These include homes used by year-round homeowners and renters as well as homes used seasonally or occasionally and vacant. Manufactured homes make up 12% of the county housing stock, far more the state average rate of 5%, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018-2022 American Community Survey.

A small number of manufactured homes in Grand Isle County are located in manufactured home communities, also known as mobile home parks. Grand Isle County has 2 mobile home parks with 32 lots. As of November 2023, there were 3 vacant lots in the county, resulting in a 0.9% park vacancy rate.

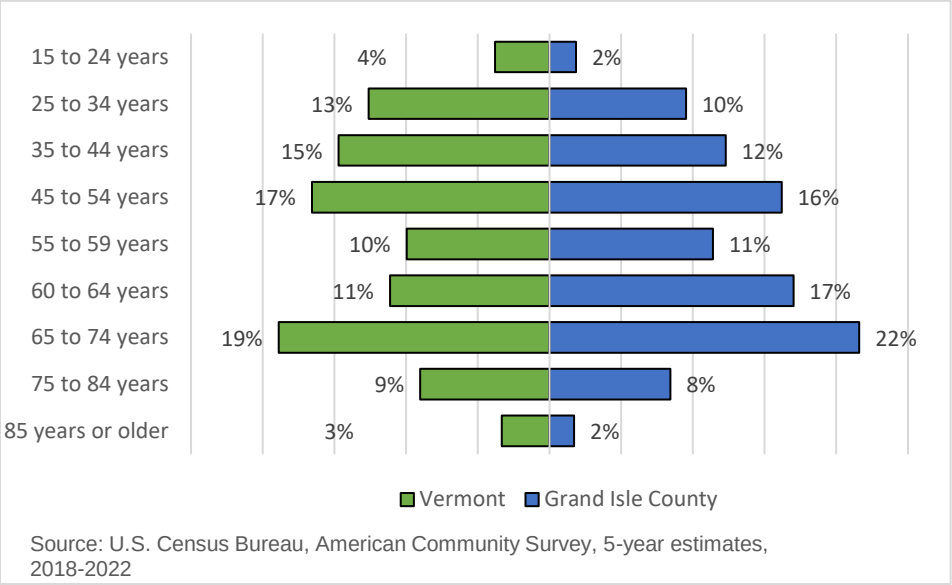
Figure 17-14Grand Isle County mobile home parks

Park Ownership type	Parks	Lots
For Profit	1	8
Non-profit	1	24
Cooperative	0	0
All Rental (for profit)	0	0
Total	2	32
Median lot rent		$389
Source: Vermont Mobile Home Park Registry		

Household Demographics

An estimated 32% of Grand Isle County households are headed by someone 65 and older, about the same as the statewide average rate. An estimated 12% of the households in the county are led by someone aged 34 and younger which is fewer than the statewide rate of 17%.

Figure 17-15 Households by age of householder, 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, 2018-2022

Age range	Households
15 to 24 years	56
25 to 34 years	288
35 to 44 years	372
45 to 54 years	490
55 to 59 years	345
60 to 64 years	515
65 to 74 years	654
75 to 84 years	255
85 years or older	52
Total	3,027

The vast majority of household heads living in the county identify as white alone, but the number of household heads identifying as people of color also increased slightly between 2010 and 2020.

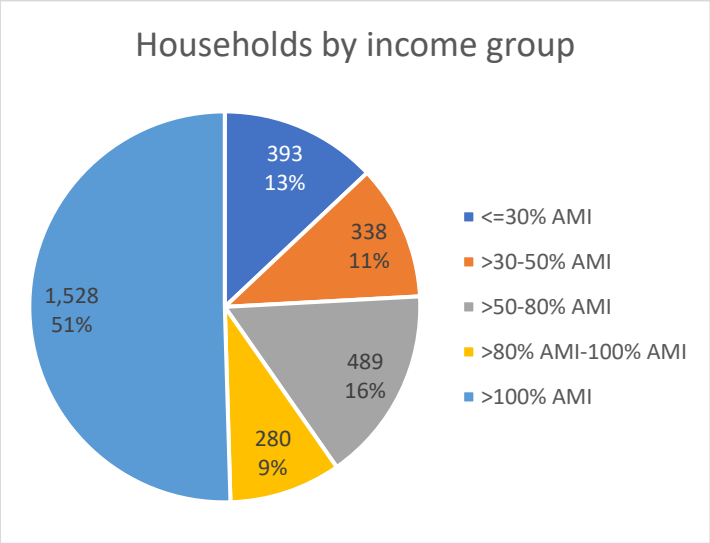
Figure 17-16 Households by race and tenure, 2010-2022

Grand Isle County	All households			Owner households			Renter households		
	2010	**2020**	**2022***	**2010**	**2020**	**2022***	**2010**	**2020**	**2022***
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	22	18	n/a	19	14	n/a	3	4	n/a
Asian alone	4	9	n/a	4	8	n/a	-	1	n/a
Black or African American alone	6	14	n/a	6	11	n/a	-	3	n/a
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	2	4	n/a	2	2	n/a	-	2	n/a
Some Other Race alone	5	19	n/a	3	12	n/a	2	7	n/a
Two or More Races	63	149	129	42	109	112	21	40	17
White alone	2,800	2,957	2,744	2,282	2,485	2,469	518	472	275
Grand Total	2,902	3,170	3,027	2,358	2,641	2,719	544	529	308

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census and American Community Survey 2018-2022 estimates (Table B25003A-G) from housingdata.org. *Note: Estimates for small groups are not available ("n/a") for 2022 because they are based on samples with large margins of error.

The estimated median household income in Grand Isle County was $86,639 in 2022. About 24% of county households have very low incomes of 50% of Area Median Income (AMI) or less.

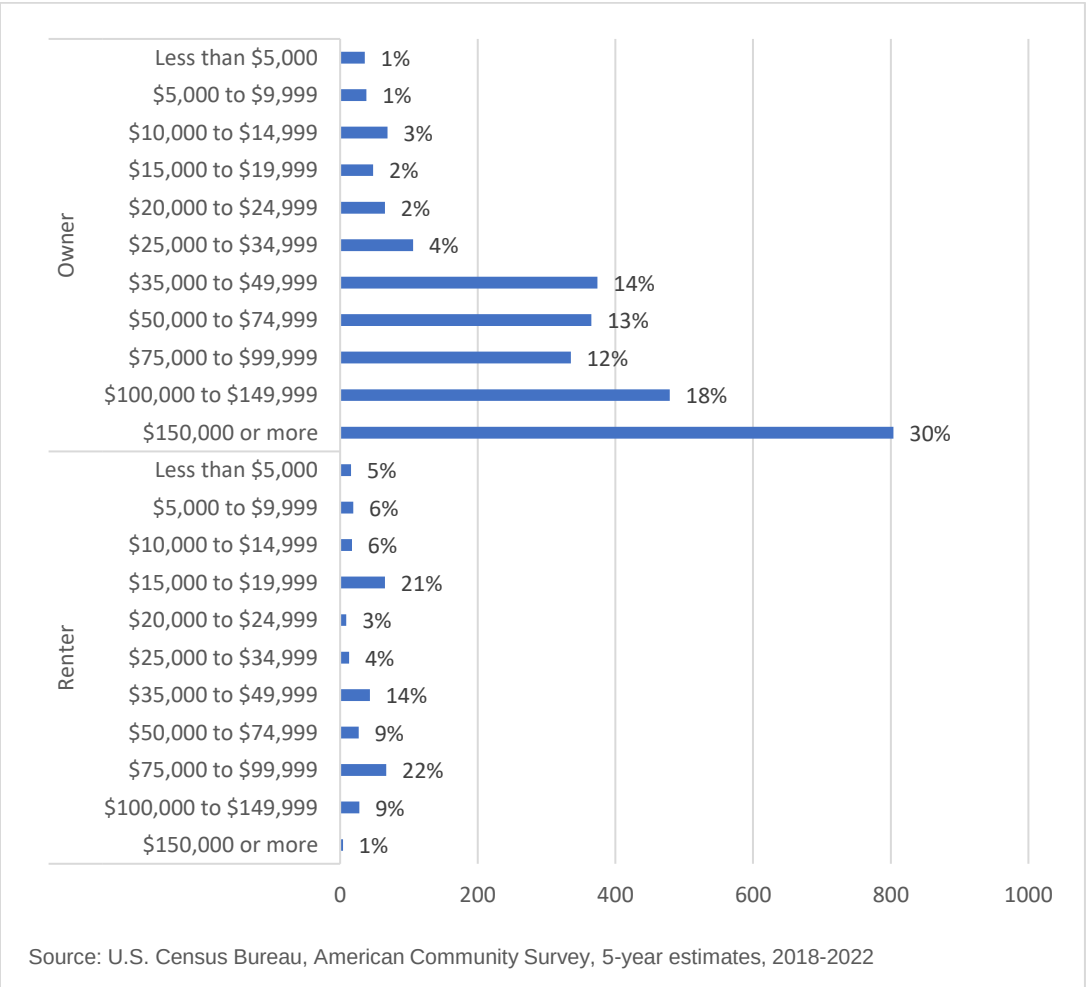
Figure 17-17 Household income relative to Area Median Income (AMI)



Income group threshold	Income
30% AMI	$25,992
50% AMI	$43,320
80% AMI	$69,311
Area Median Income (100%)	$86,639
Owner household median	$94,617
Renter household median	$43,000

Source: Based on U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2018-2022 from housingdata.org

Figure 17-18 Number of households by income by tenure, 2022

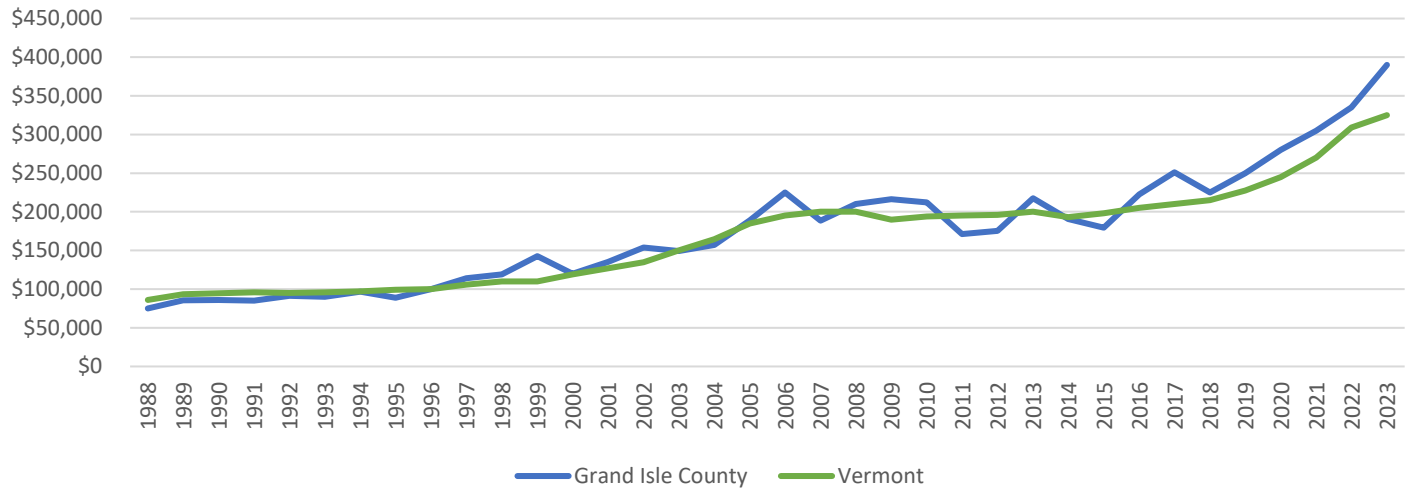


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, 2018-2022

Homeownership Market

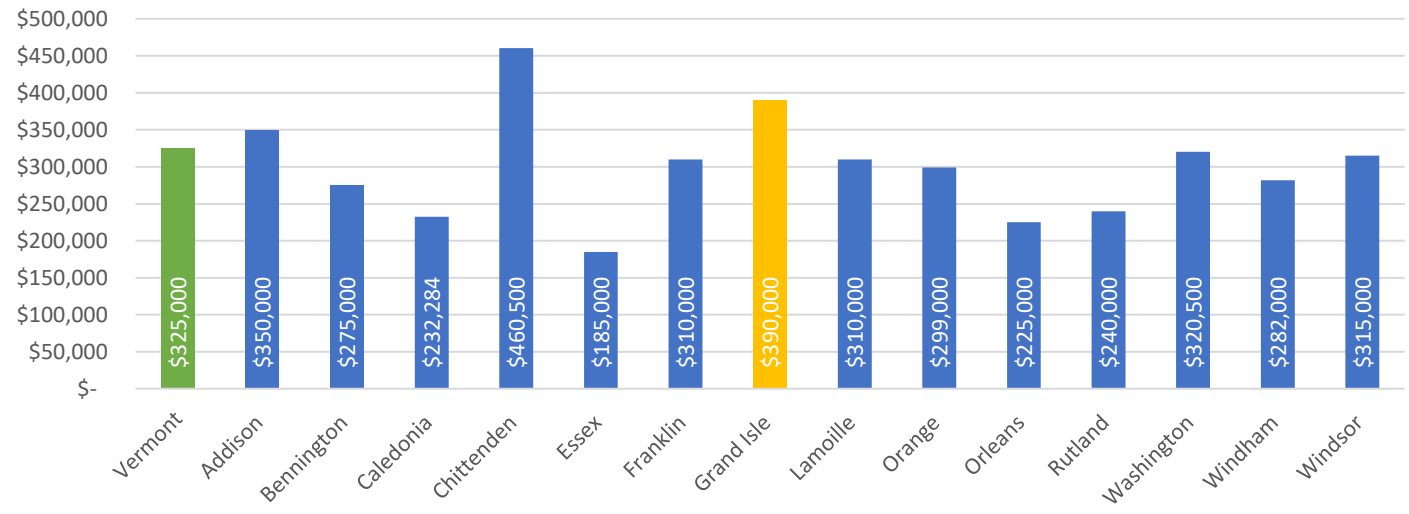
Approximately 3,000 households own their homes in Grand Isle County. An estimated 90% of all county households are homeowners compared with 73% statewide. The median home price in the county in 2023 was $390,000, while the state median was $325,000. This continues a trend in which no county in Vermont has seen a decline in annual median home sale price since 2019.

Figure 17-19: Median home prices



Source: VT Department of Taxes Property Transfer Tax data on housingdata.org

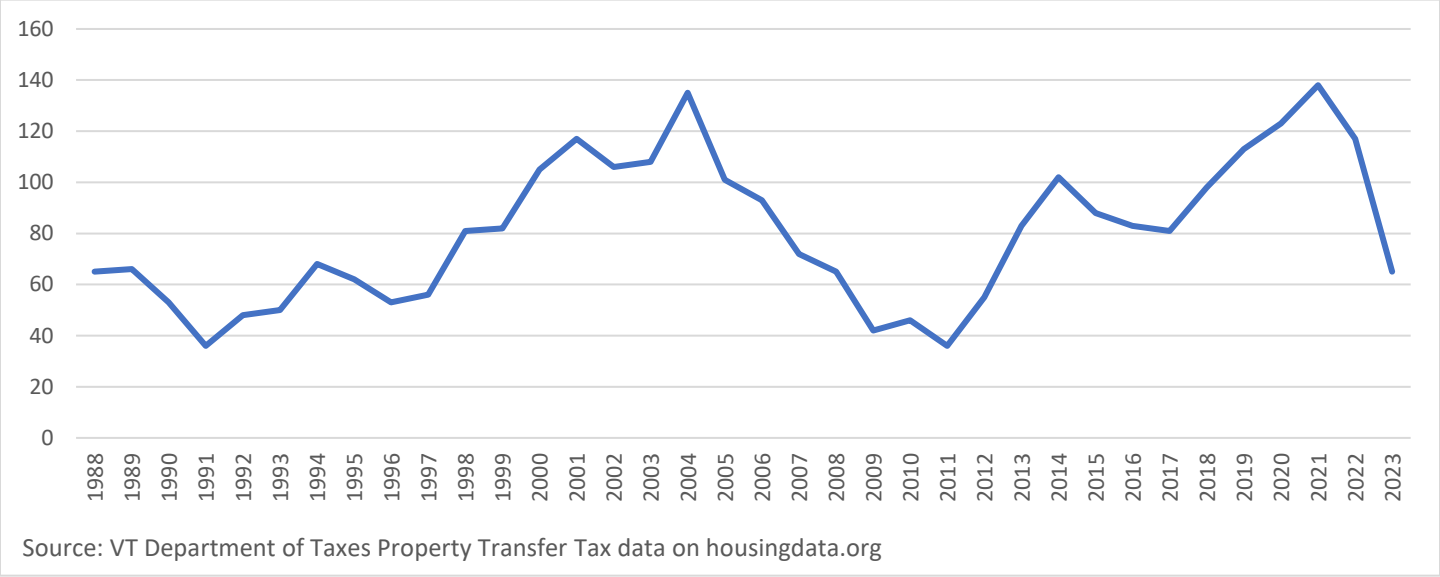
Figure 17-20 Median primary home sale price by county, 2023



Source: VT Department of Taxes Property Transfer Tax data on housingdata.org

In 2023, there were 65 primary homes sales in Grand Isle County. The annual total number of homes sold in the county peaked in 2021 when 138 homes were sold. This reflects the statewide increase in primary home sales experienced in 2020 and 2021. The decline in sales in 2022 and then again in 2023 suggests that rising prices and interest rates, as well as constrained supply of for sale homes, may be slowing down the home sale market.

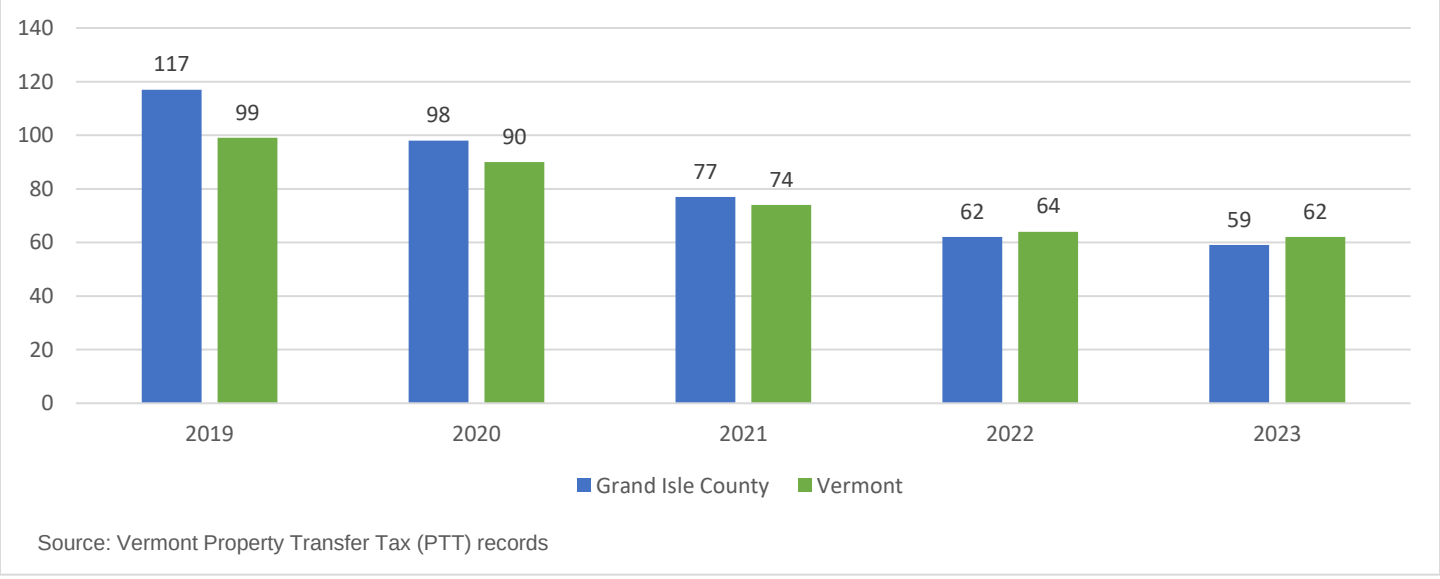
Figure 17-21 Number of primary home sales in Grand Isle County, 1988-2023



Source: VT Department of Taxes Property Transfer Tax data on housingdata.org

The median days on the market for a Grand Isle County home dropped to 59 days in 2023 from 117 days in 2019. Homes in the county stay on the market about the same number of days as the statewide average. Homes are on the market for about a month less than they were in 2019. The short time on the market is an all-time low in Vermont and another indication of the high demand for homes.

Figure 17-22: Median days on market

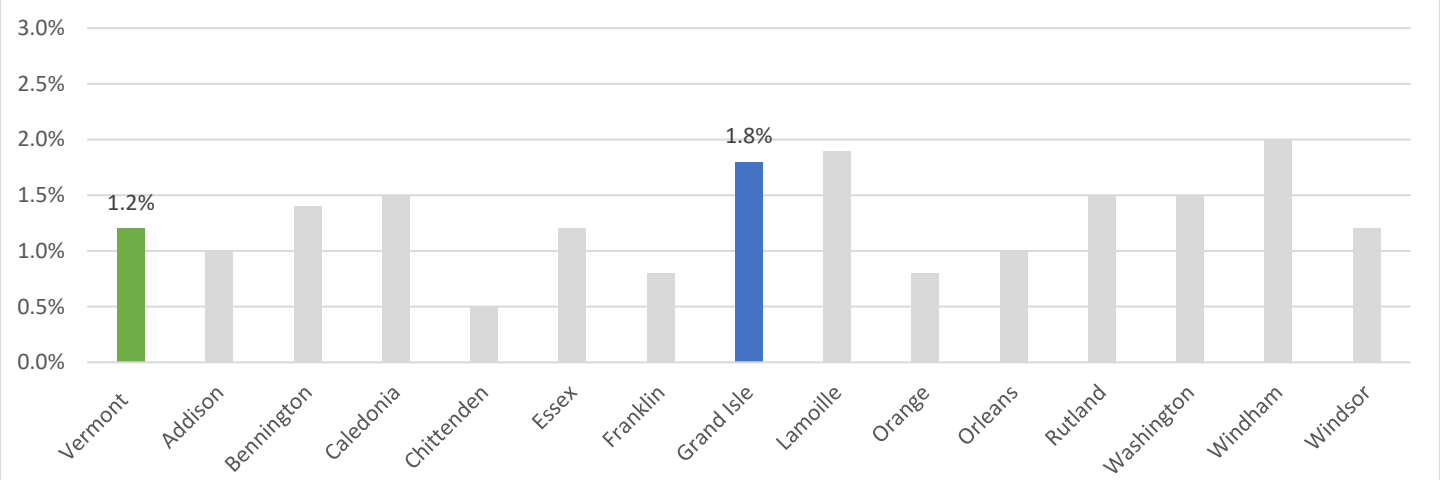


Source: Vermont Property Transfer Tax (PTT) records

The homeowner vacancy rate is the number of homes on the market compared to the total number of homes used or intended for homeowner households. Vermont's homeowner vacancy rate is estimated at 1.2%, below the 2.0% rate considered indicative of a healthy housing market. When the vacancy rate falls below the healthy rate, it can be difficult for homebuyers to find homes to purchase due to limited availability and puts upward pressure on sales prices.

Vacancy rates vary between Vermont counties, with some counties falling in the healthy market range and others far below. The homeowner vacancy rate in Grand Isle County (1.8%) is higher than the statewide rate but lower than the healthy market range.

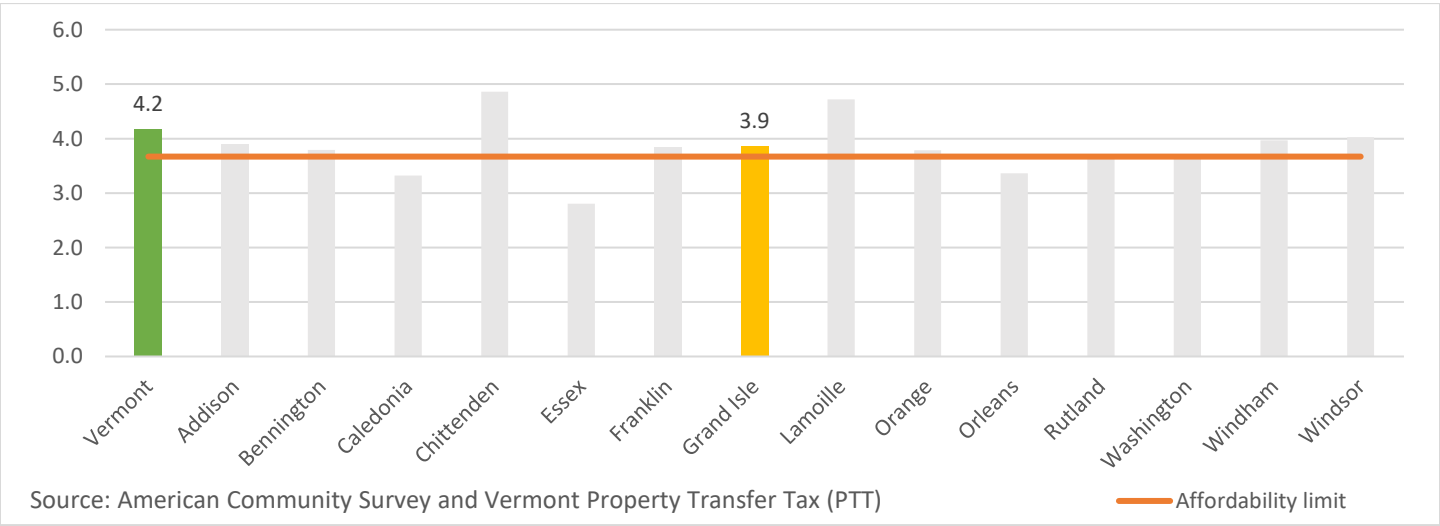
Figure 17-23: Homeowner vacancy rates



Source: VHFA analysis of estimates of U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 5-year estimates, 2018-2022 from housingdata.org

As with most Vermont counties, home affordability is a concern in Grand Isle County. In 2022, the ratio of county home prices to median county household income is 3.9. When exceeding a factor of 3.67, households on average are paying more than 30% of their annual income towards housing costs and are thus considered cost burdened. An estimated 28% of owner-occupied households in Grand Isle County are cost-burdened.

Figure 17-24 Ratio of median home sale price to county median household income, 2022

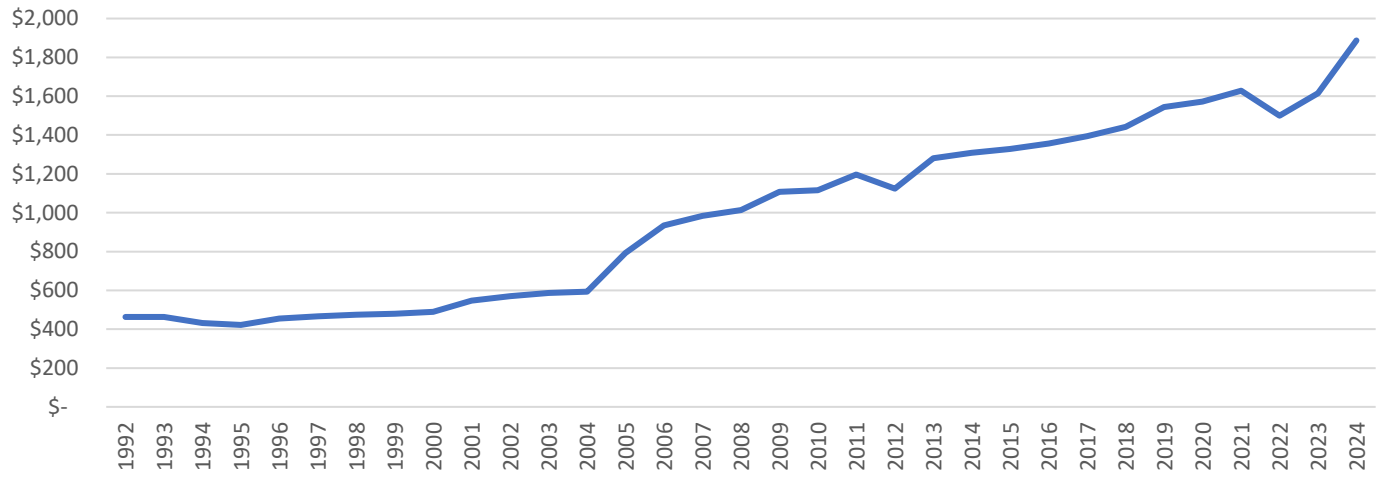


Source: American Community Survey and Vermont Property Transfer Tax (PTT)

Rental Housing Market

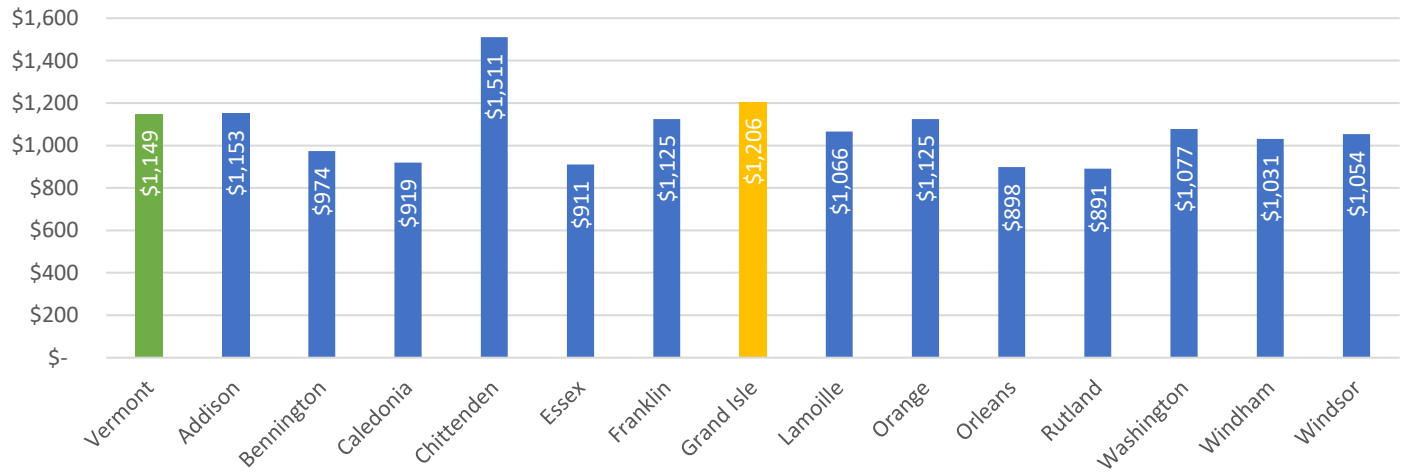
According to HUD, monthly rent for a safe, decent apartment in Vermont counties in 2024 is 25-35% higher than it was 5 years ago.[9] The fair market rent for a 2-bedroom apartment in Grand Isle County was set at $1,887 in 2024. The median rent in Grand Isle County of $1,206 was very similar to the statewide median in 2022.

Figure 17-25: Fair market rent for a 2-Bedroom Apartment



Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development estimated 40th percentile rent for a decent quality apartment on housingdata.org.

Figure 17-26: Median gross rent by county, 2022

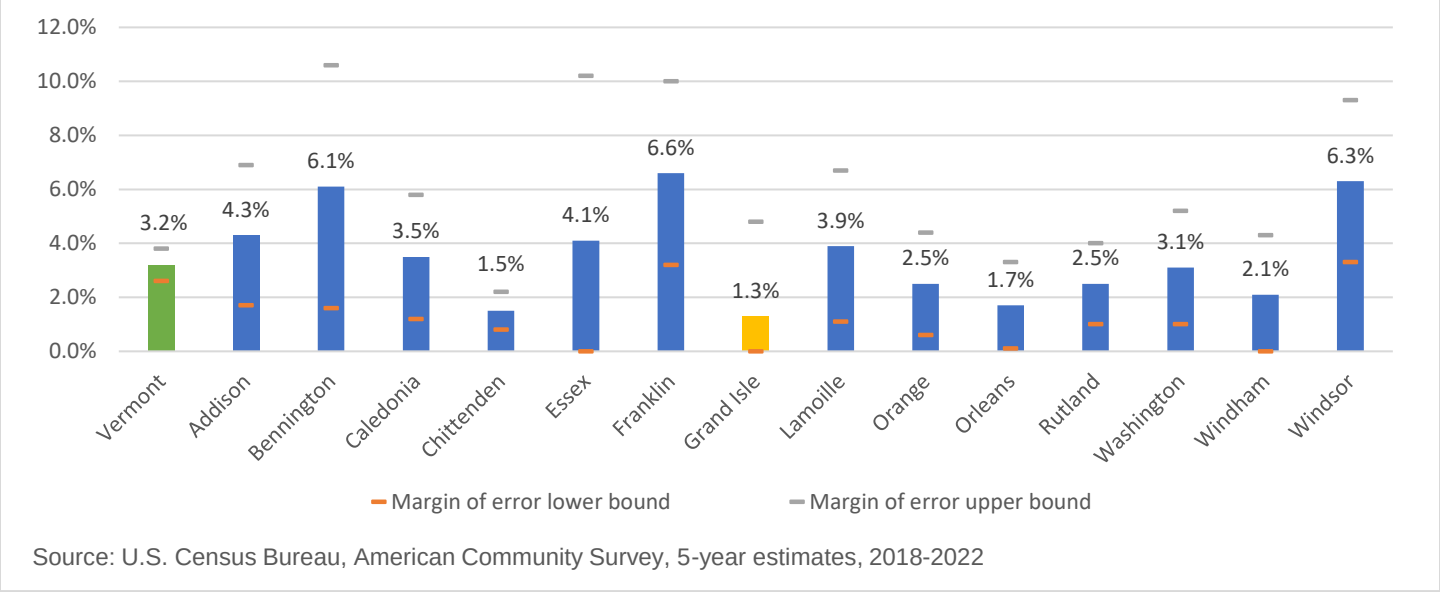


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, 2018-2022

[9] U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, HUD Fair Market and 50th Percentile Rents. 2024

The renter vacancy rate is the number of homes for rent compared to the total number of homes used or intended for renter households. According to the most recent estimates available, Vermont's rental vacancy rate is 3.2%. This is somewhat lower than what experts consider to be a healthy vacancy rate, which is typically around 4 to 6%. Below that rate, renters can have difficulty finding an affordable home, putting upward pressure on prices. Grand Isle County had a rental vacancy rate of 1.3% in 2022 – less than the statewide rate, but with a larger margin of error. Both state and county vacancy rates have declined in the last ten years.

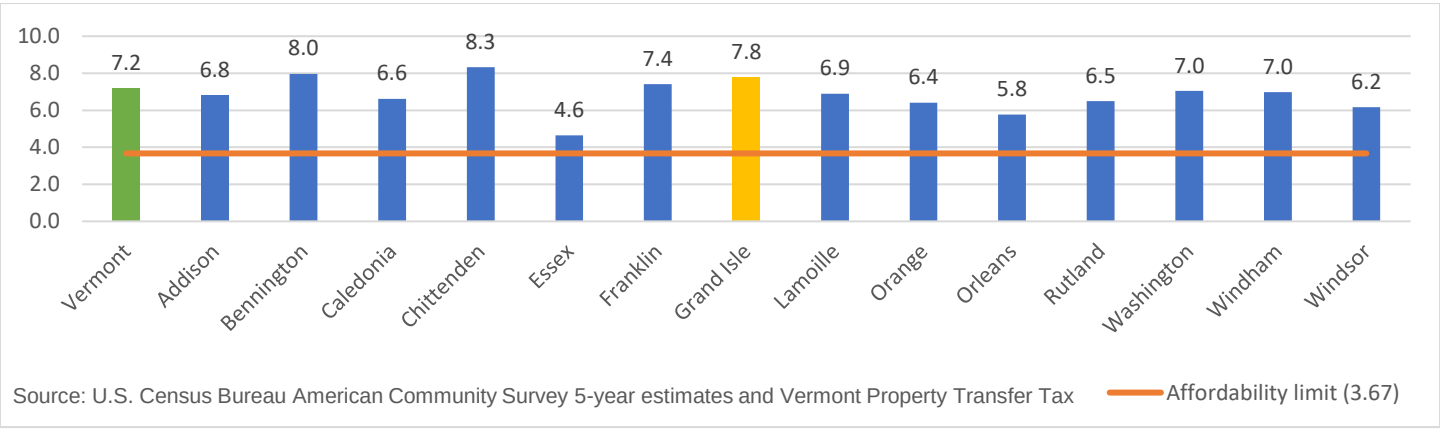
Figure 17-27: Rental vacancy rates, 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, 2018-2022

Across the state, the median home sale price was 7.2 times the median renter household income in 2022. For housing to be considered affordable, housing costs should not exceed a factor of 3.67, where only 30% of income is dedicated to housing costs. Given the mismatch in this ratio, the median renter household would have difficulty affording a median primary home statewide and in Grand Isle County.

Figure 17-28 Median home sale price to median renter income ratio, 2022



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-year estimates and Vermont Property Transfer Tax

Subsidized Rental Housing

Vermont has 14,670 rental apartments in 541 apartment complexes that were built through federal and state government programs. Together, these homes comprise 19% of the state's rental homes.

Affordable housing is generally defined as housing where the occupant is paying less than 30% of their income towards housing costs. To create affordable housing, the federal government directs funding through various channels, including state governments, non-profit or private housing developers, Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) or other housing agencies. Public subsidies for affordable housing largely fall in two categories; (1) funding for the construction and rehabilitation of housing, or (2) funding to provide rental assistance to tenants. Often, apartments created with public development funding are paired with rental assistance funding to ensure affordability for low-income tenants

Figure 17-29 Rental housing with project-based assistance in Vermont by county, 2024

County	Total occupied rental homes	Apartments in buildings developed with public funding	% of all rental homes	Apartments with monthly project based rental assistance	% of all rental homes
Addison County	3,183	507	16%	279	9%
Bennington County	4,222	836	20%	400	9%
Caledonia County	3,056	528	17%	231	8%
Chittenden County	26,034	5,302	20%	1,929	7%
Essex County	468	100	21%	70	15%
Franklin County	4,604	787	17%	498	11%
Grand Isle County	315	99	31%	37	12%
Lamoille County	3,150	396	13%	189	6%
Orange County	2,317	430	19%	223	10%
Orleans County	2,398	335	14%	187	8%
Rutland County	7,304	1,371	19%	880	12%
Washington County	7,247	1,311	18%	903	12%
Windham County	5,655	1,417	25%	707	13%
Windsor County	6,309	1,251	20%	749	12%
Statewide	76,262	14,670	19%	7,282	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates and Directory of Affordable Rental Housing on housingdata.org

In Grand Isle County, there are 99 apartments in buildings that were built with public development subsidies. These apartments account for 31% of the county rental housing stock. Among those apartments, 37 are connected to a source of project based rental assistance, such that tenants pay no more than 30% of their gross income towards housing costs, with the rental assistance administrating agency covering the remaining rent balance directly.

Households With Housing Problems

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) receives custom tabulations from the Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS). These data, known as the "CHAS" data (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy), demonstrate the extent of housing problems and housing needs, particularly for low income households. The CHAS identifies four housing problems:

1. Home lacks complete plumbing,

2. Home lacks complete kitchen,

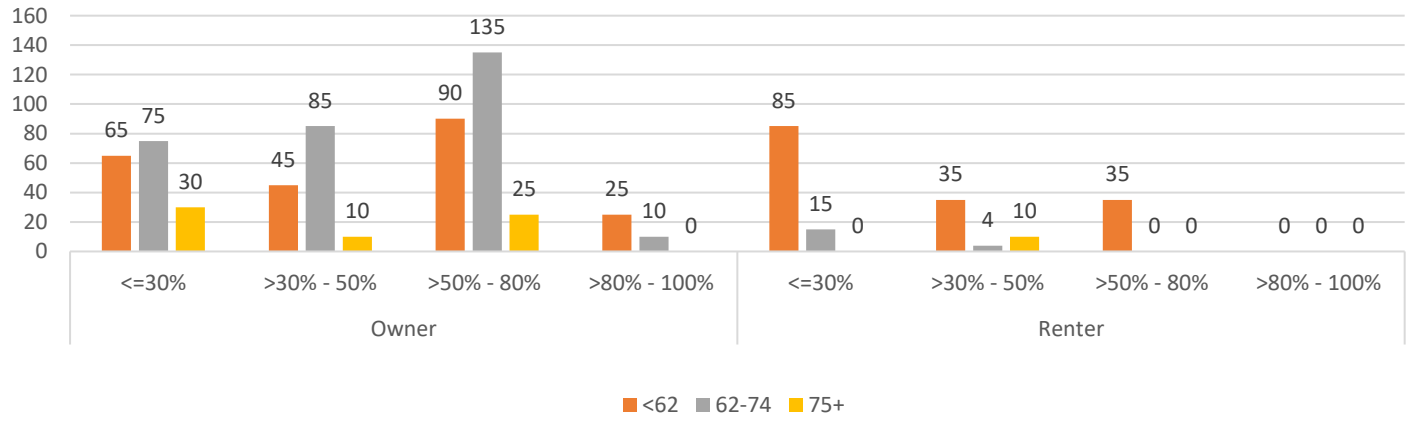
3. Household is overcrowded, or

4. Household is cost burdened (paying more than 30% of income towards housing)

An estimated 83,180 households in Vermont (about 33% of the households in the state) have at least 1 housing problem. Among these potential issues, cost burden is the most prevalent, accounting for at least 95% of the households with one or more housing problem.

The single largest demographic group in Grand Isle County experiencing housing problems is homeowners with household incomes of 50-80% of the area median who are aged 62-74. According to HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy estimates, 135 of these households had at least one of the following housing problems: housing costs of 30% or more of income, lack of kitchen or plumbing facilities, and overcrowding.

Figure 17-30: *Grand Isle County households with housing problems, by income group**



*Income groups are based on a household's income relative to the area median income.
Source: HUD CHAS estimates 2020 from housingdata.org

Potential Housing Quality Issues

The Census Bureau offers only minimal estimates of the extent to which Vermont's housing stock conforms to basic quality standards:

- 2,321 occupied housing units, or 0.6% of Vermont's housing stock lack complete kitchen facilities.
- 1,322 occupied housing units, or 0.4% of Vermont's housing stock lack complete plumbing facilities.
- 498 occupied housing units, or 0.3% of Vermont's housing stock are unheated and 510 use coal as a main heating source.
- 4,230 occupied homes, or 2% of the housing stock, are overcrowded
- 4,600 occupied mobile homes were built before 1979 when federal quality standards were enacted

However, the Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) for the American Community Survey (ACS) allows for multi-factor analysis, making it possible to review combined criteria that signal possible housing quality issues. Households were flagged with potential quality issues if they had any of the following criteria:

- The heating fuel type was coal, or the home lacked a heat source.
- The housing unit lacked complete kitchen facilities.
- The housing unit lacked complete plumbing facilities.
- The housing unit was a mobile home built before 1979.
- The housing unit was a rental unit built before 1939 with rent less than $500 per month.
- The housing unit was an owner home with an estimated property value of $75,000 or less (excluding mobile homes or RVs/vans/boats).

Based on analysis of Census Bureau PUMS 2022 data, there are at least 19,637 Vermont households living in homes with potentially serious housing quality issues. This accounts for about 7% of the occupied housing stock. This estimate almost certainly undercounts the total number of households with housing problems because many issues such as poor sanitary conditions, inadequate weatherization and poor interior air quality would not necessarily be reflected in the criteria above.

PUMS data is not available at the county level, instead grouping counties geographically. Grand Isle County is classified as part of the Northern Vermont PUMs region and represents 7% of the housing stock in the region. If the distribution of housing quality issues is equal across the region, there are likely approximately 361 owner occupied and 67 renter occupied homes in County with these indicators.

Figure 17-31 Occupied households with potential housing quality issues, 2022

Region	Owner households	Renter households	Occupied without payment of rent	Total households
Northern Vermont (Caledonia, Essex, Franklin, Grand Isle, Lamoille & Orleans Counties)	5,151	953	526	6,630
Statewide	14,101	4,517	1,055	19,673
Source: U.S. Census Bureau Public Use Microdata Samples (PUMS), 5-year estimates, 2018-2022				

This analysis does not account for vacant units – an additional 217 homes in the county are considered “other vacant” by the U.S. Census Bureau. Homes can fall into this category for many reasons, including homes that are under renovation or homes held vacant for personal reasons by the owner. However, since this category can also include foreclosed or abandoned homes, it is often used as an indicator of area housing stock decline.

Overcrowding

About 4,200 (or 2%) of Vermont households live in overcrowded homes. Such homes are defined as those with fewer rooms than household members. For example, a one-bedroom home with a living room and kitchen has 3 rooms. Thus, it would be considered overcrowded if the household had 4 members. Studies have reported a direct association between crowding and adverse health outcomes, such as infectious disease and mental health problems.

In Vermont, renter households experience overcrowding at over three times the rate of homeowners, with 3.4% of renter households overcrowded versus just under 1% of owner households.

There are an estimated 12 households in Grand Isle County that are considered overcrowded. Of those households, 0 are owner-occupied and 12 are renter-occupied. Among all overcrowding in Grand Isle County, an estimated 6 households are considered severely overcrowded.

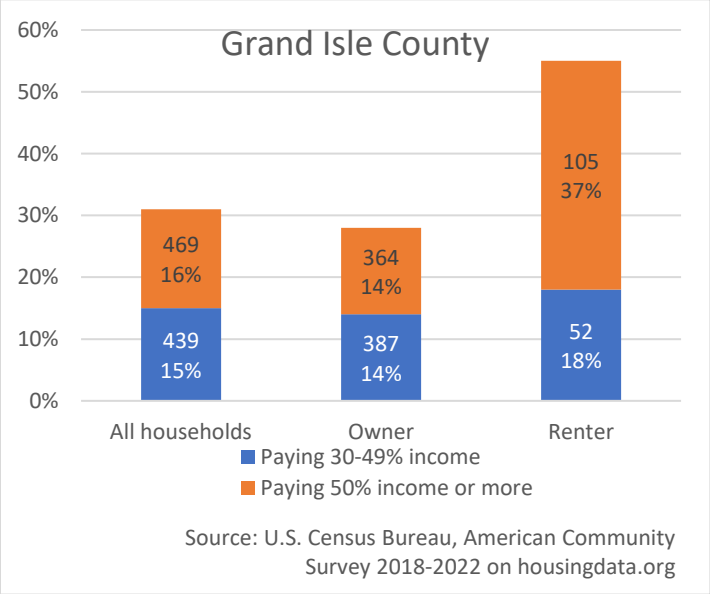
Cost Burden

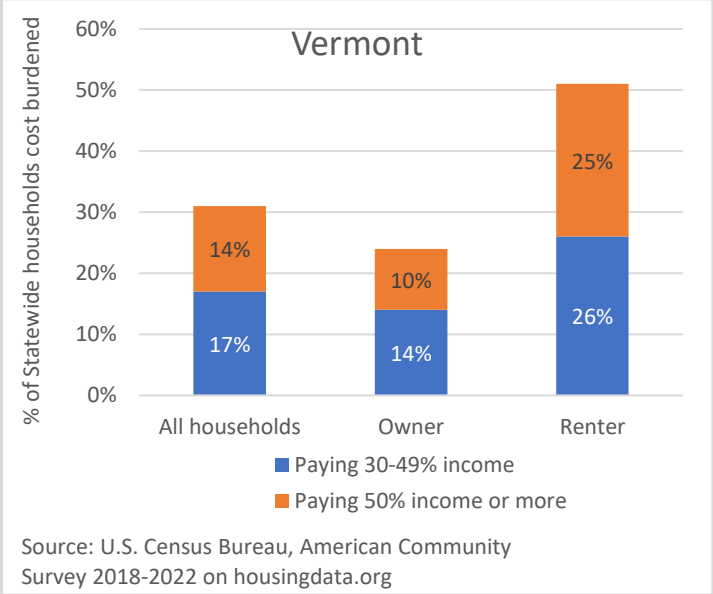
When a household's housing expenses consume less than 30% of their monthly income, their housing is considered "affordable" because there is likely to be enough income remaining to afford other necessities. When housing costs consume more than 30% of household income, the household is considered "cost burdened." When cost burdened, households are less likely to have enough income remaining for other living expenses which can lead to housing instability. When housing costs exceed 50% of household income, the household is considered to be "severely cost burdened."

Approximately 31% of all households in Vermont are cost burdened (about 82,000 households), of which 36,000 households, 14% of all households, are severely cost burdened. In Vermont, the total number of cost burdened owner-occupied households (about 48,000) is greater than the number of cost burdened renter households (about 34,000 households), but the percentage of all owner households that are cost burdened (24% of owner households) is significantly lower than the percentage of renter households cost burdened (51% of renter households). 10% of Vermont's homeowners (about 20,000 households) and 26% of Vermont's renter households (about 17,000 households) are "severely cost burdened."

The proportion of owner (28%) and renter (54%) households that are cost burdened is greater in Grand Isle County than the state as a whole. Approximately 469 households are severely cost-burdened in Grand Isle County and may be at risk of housing instability.

Figure 17-32: Cost burden among Grand Isle County households compared to statewide cost burden

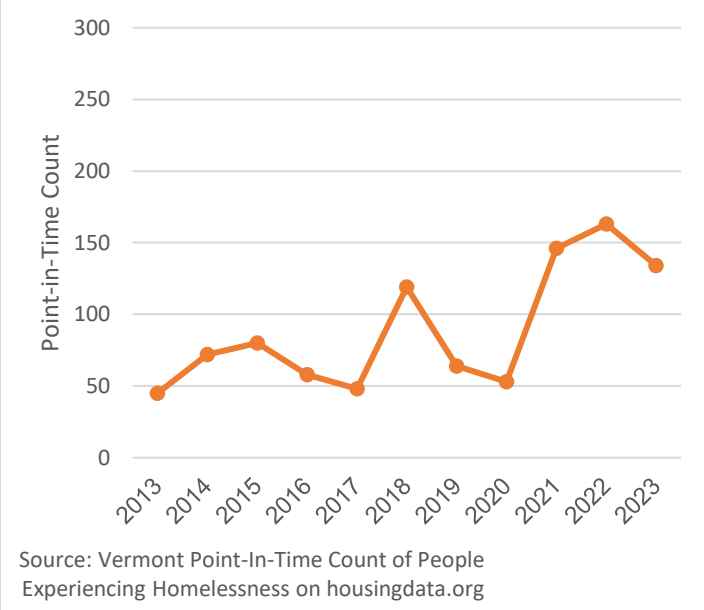




Homelessness

Homelessness services in Franklin County and Grand Isle County are provided by the combined Franklin-Grand Isle Continuum of Care. During the most recent 2023 Point-In-Time count, 134 people in 103 households were experiencing homelessness in the Franklin/Grand Isle CoC. This represents a decline from 2022, which featured the highest total in the CoC since the PIT count began. Vermont's Coordinated Entry Dashboard provides the number of individuals experiencing homelessness on a weekly basis who are accessing services from Vermont's housing support agencies. During the last week in January 2024, 242 people in the Franklin/Grand Isle CoC area received support through this area's continuum of care.

Figure 17-33: Number of people experiencing homelessness served by the Franklin/Grand Isle CoC



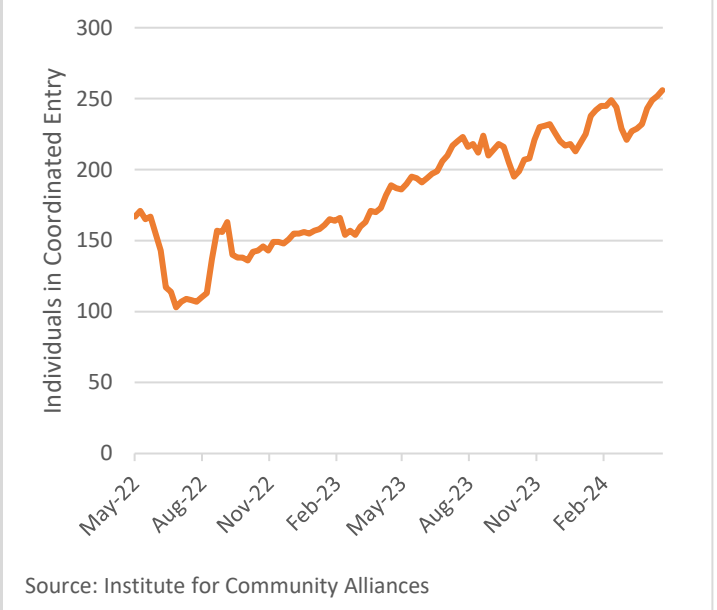


Figure 17-34: Number of people experiencing homelessness by the local Continua of Care (CoCs)

Local Housing Coalition (CoC)	Number of individuals experiencing homelessness during Point-in-Time 2023	Number of individuals served by CoC during week of Jan. 29, 2024
Addison CoC	78	118
Bennington CoC	312	244
Caledonia & Essex CoC	175	255
Chittenden CoC	758	826
Franklin & Grand Isle CoC	134	242
Lamoille CoC	74	223
Orange & Windsor N CoC	188	347
Orleans CoC	48	112
Rutland CoC	654	502
Washington CoC	446	963
Windham S CoC	329	412
Windsor S & Windham N CoC	99	276
Vermont	3,295	4,408
Source: Vermont Point-in-Time Count 2023 and Vermont Coordinated Entry Dashboard		

Figure 17-35 Households experiencing homelessness and shelter availability

Local Housing Coalition (CoC)	Total Households (Point-in-Time 2023)	Households with at least one adult and child (Point-in-Time 2023)	Emergency shelter household capacity	Permanent Units with supportive services
Addison CoC	59	9	62	8
Bennington CoC	201	43	30	3
Caledonia & Essex CoC	98	26	31	29
Chittenden CoC	553	82	178	264
Franklin & Grand Isle CoC	103	9	23	6
Lamoille CoC	53	6	19	7
Orange & Windsor North CoC	132	13	0	4
Orleans CoC	25	6	4	3
Rutland CoC	425	80	19	26
Washington CoC	320	43	92	27
Windham South CoC	229	34	46	27
Windsor South & Windham North CoC	58	15	35	20
Vermont	2,256	366	539	424

Source: Vermont Point-in-Time Count, Vermont Dept. for Children and Families "GA Emergency Housing and Shelters" Presentation to the VT House Human Services and General & Housing Committees, Feb. 8, 2024 and Vermont Housing Data Website https://www.housingdata.org/profile/housing-programs/features-eligibility

The majority of Vermonters experiencing homelessness in 2021-2023 have been housed in temporary motel rooms through the General Assistance Emergency Housing program.

Recent Studies

In 2022, the Northwest Regional Planning Commission published a 2022 Northwest Vermont Region Housing Needs Assessment that identifies socioeconomic and housing market conditions in Franklin and Grand Isle counties. The key findings of the Housing Needs Assessment are:

- The level of unmet housing need in the two-county region is so substantial that 'catching up' will require a sustained, long-term commitment. The need to 'catch up' and improve affordability and quality of life for residents already living in the region is much more significant than the need to provide housing for new residents in the future.
- The region's housing stock has become less diverse over the past 20 years. The small supply of 'missing middle' units has shrunk even further. New construction is almost entirely detached, single-unit homes. Other unit types well-suited to small households, young adults, seniors and people with disabilities are limited both in number and location leaving these residents little choice in housing.
- Residents under age 40 are having a very different housing experience than residents over age 60. Age group is equally if not more determinative of housing experience than income group. Younger adults across the income distribution have and continue to face far more difficulty securing and paying for housing in the region.
- There are currently few options for older residents who want to stay in their community other than remaining in their current homes. The number of residents 'aging in place' in their homes across the region will continue to grow until peaking around 2040. The location, design and maintenance requirements of many homes in the region will pose challenges to elderly residents.
- An increasing number of people in the region are living alone. The number of single-person households is anticipated to increase in future years. Single-person households struggle to find housing that meets their needs and budget across the income distribution. Much of the region's stock requires that a household have two-wage earners for it to be affordable.
- There are unmet housing needs throughout the region, but most housing creation has occurred in only a few communities in recent years. The targeted location of new units, when combined with the limited range of unit types being built, leads to housing that may only meet the needs and budgets of a small slice of the region's households.
- The major recommendation of the Housing Needs Assessment is to set an annual target for housing 'interventions' distributed across all communities so that the region can 'catch up' and eliminate unmet housing needs in Franklin and Grand Isle counties.