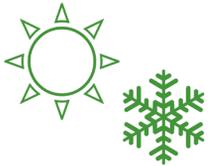


# Rockingham Housing Needs



Rockingham is home to 2,183 households. 1,288 of households live within the Village of Bellows Falls. 55% of Rockingham households own their homes, while 45% are renters. Owning a home in Rockingham is less common than Windham County as a whole, which has a homeownership rate of 67%.



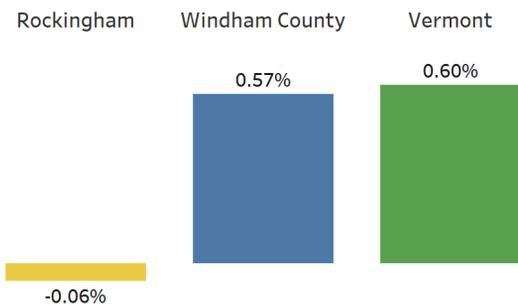
Roughly 6% of Rockingham's housing stock is used as seasonal or vacation homes. This is unusual for Windham County, which has 33% of its stock used as seasonal or vacation homes. As of May 2022, 21 Rockingham homes were listed as short-term rentals.



The average household size in Rockingham is 2.16 people, for both renters and homeowners. About 27% of households are headed by someone age 65 or older, slightly less than Windham County as a whole.

Rockingham has experienced slight population decline in recent years, with an estimated 14 fewer households in 2020 compared to 2010. The decrease has been concentrated amongst homeowners. The town has added 46 renter households over the past decade.

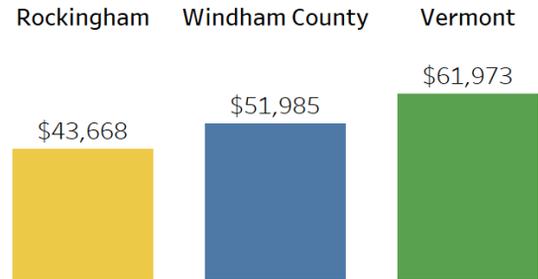
## Average annual household growth rate



Rockingham is home to 1,871 jobs and has experienced a small loss in jobs over the past decade.

The median household income in Rockingham is \$43,668, which is substantially lower than the median income for the county and the state.

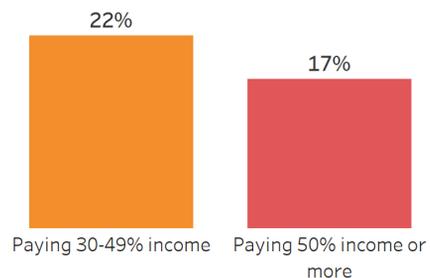
## Median household income



Rockingham renters have a median annual household income of \$27,316, compared to \$29,281 for Windham County and \$35,969 for Vermont. Rockingham homeowners have a median income of \$57,308, compared to \$66,315 for the county and \$75,634 for Vermont.

Nearly 40% of Windham County households are cost-burdened, spending more than one third of their income on housing costs. 17% of all households spend half their income on housing. (Rockingham has too few households for a reliable calculation.) This makes it very difficult for these households to afford other necessities like food, childcare, and healthcare, and puts them at higher risk for eviction and foreclosure.

## Windham County households with unaffordable housing

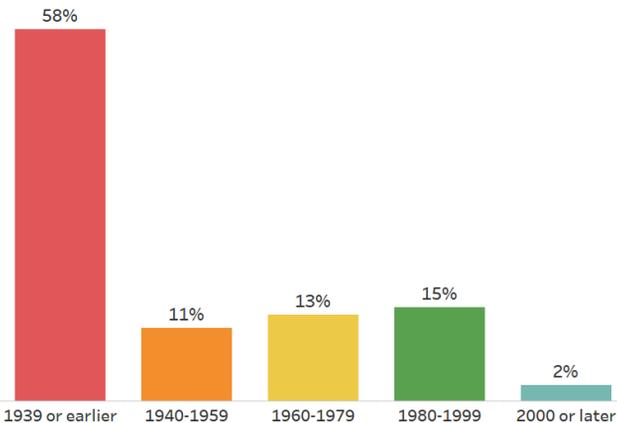


In addition to being more likely to be cost-burdened, low-income households are much more likely to live in older homes (*cont.*)

Older homes are overall more likely to have quality issues like lead paint and poor insulation, which can be dangerous for the households living there.

Rockingham has some of the state’s oldest housing stock. 58% of its homes were built before 1940, compared to 26% across Vermont. Rockingham records an average of only about 10 new building permits per year.

### Year homes were built



Rockingham also has an unusually high proportion of vacant homes that are not for sale, for rent, or being used as seasonal/vacation homes. The Census Bureau labels these 224 homes as “Other vacant”. Homes can fall into this category for many reasons, including homes that are under renovation or homes held vacant for personal reasons. However, since this category can also include foreclosed or abandoned homes, it is often used by housing researchers as an indicator of area housing stock decline.

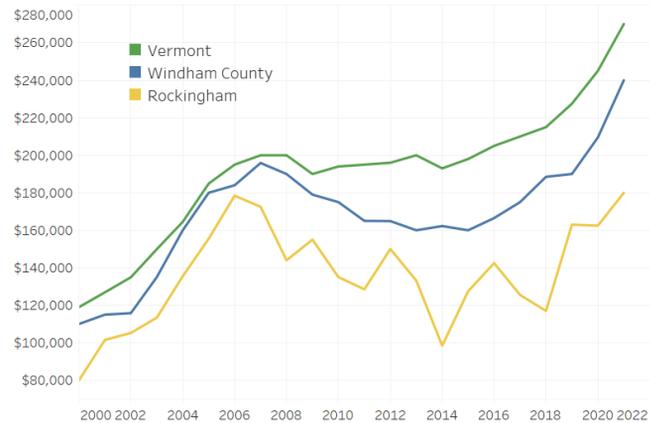
The age of Rockingham’s housing stock may be reflected in its home sale prices. The median primary (non-vacation) home sold for \$180,000 in 2021. Meanwhile, the median Windham County home sold for \$240,000 – 33% more.

### How can we make our town more affordable and vibrant?

- Identify underutilized parcels ideal for housing and align local land use regulations, fees and approval process to promote housing development and rehabilitation in these areas.
- Explore ways to promote development of Accessory Dwelling Units through grants and local bylaws.
- Support additional development of new decent, perpetually affordable, mixed-income homes, especially apartments.
- Consider using local ARPA funds for housing.

Rockingham experienced a greater decline in home prices after the Great Recession and less price appreciation throughout the pandemic than most parts of the state.

### Median primary home sale price



To afford to purchase the median home sold in Rockingham, a household would need to earn at least \$52,433 a year, which is less than would be needed for many parts of the state, but still more than the median Windham County renter household income of \$29,281.

The median rent in Rockingham is estimated at \$872, similar to the Windham County median.

Comparatively affordable housing prices can benefit local households, but it can also reflect a lack of investment in the housing stock, or a lack of home types or job opportunities that buyers or renters are seeking.

Towns need to be able to build new homes in order to attract workers, employers and avoid long-term population decline. An array of housing choices supports a diversity of household types, especially young households, setting the stage for the next generation.

### More information

- ❑ [www.housingdata.org/profile](http://www.housingdata.org/profile)
- ❑ [VT Housing Needs Assessment](#) 2020 full report
- ❑ VT Housing Needs Assessment 2020 chapter on [Windham County](#)
- ❑ Learn more at [www.housingdata.org/toolbox](http://www.housingdata.org/toolbox)

