TOWN OF NEWPORT 2024 HOUSING OPPORTUNITY GRANT PROGRAM FINAL REPORT

The Town of Newport received a grant from the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority as part of Governor Sununu's InvestNH initiative. The Town has partnered with the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC) to conduct a needs analysis, meet with local developers, analyze housing data, conduct a regulatory audit, and plan for future housing opportunities.

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Table of Contents

1 - Needs Analysis

The Town of Newport finds its place as an important part of the geographic, cultural, economic, and political divisions surrounding it. Newport is the 55th-most populous town in New Hampshire, the seat of Sullivan County, the 4th-largest town in the 27-town Upper Valley Lake Sunapee (UVLS) region, and a major regional employment center. The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) places Newport in the Newport, NH Labor Market Area (LMA), which also includes the much smaller towns of Sunapee, Goshen, and Lempster. Finally, the town includes the Newport census-designated place (CDP) in its center, which is home to 75% of the town's population and most of its major infrastructure, employers, and housing.

This Needs Analysis provides an overview of the social and economic circumstances in the Town of Newport, as well as the housing stock and market. It includes the historic and projected population, the needs introduced by the current demographic and financial characteristics of Newport's residents, and the strengths and limitations of the town's housing stock in meeting these needs. It will also specifically touch on communities of concern and their unique housing needs. The analysis places extra focus on objectively analyzing the need for housing low-income individuals, younger people, and employees of local businesses. These were identified as primary communities of concern critical to Newport's future by town leaders, so were targeted for analysis while not being prioritized over other groups. It also includes information from the 2023 Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) and Statewide RHNA efforts, most significantly the Fair Share housing production targets developed by Root Policy and the New Hampshire Planning Commissions.

The Needs Analysis includes data from time ranges and geographies that were deemed most appropriate. Census data such as exact population and housing counts are largely from the 2000, 2010, and 2020 Decennial Census, which occurs every 10 years and provides limited but accurate information. Other census data comes from the 2008-2012, 2013-2017, and 2018-2022 5-Year Estimates of the American Community Survey which provide an annually updated and detailed overview of social and economic characteristics over selected time spans. The two surveys have different data collection methods and time periods and should not be compared. Economic and market data is sourced from the NH Housing Finance Authority (NHHFA), NH Office of Planning and Development (OPD), NH Economic & Labor Market Information Bureau (ELMI), U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and AirDNA.

1.1 - Total Population – Historic & Projected

According to U.S. Decennial Census data, Newport's population increased by 3.8% between 2000 and 2010, then decreased 3.2% by 2020.[1] NH Office of Planning & Development projections suggest that the Town's population will bounce back and increase to 2010 levels between now and 2035 before dropping to pre-2000 levels by 2050.[2] The projected decrease is likely based on two factors. Between 2010 and 2019, Newport's death rate outpaced the birth rate for an average net loss of 11.2 individuals/year. The net population change in this same period was -208, meaning that, on average, 9.6 people migrated out of Newport per year.[3]

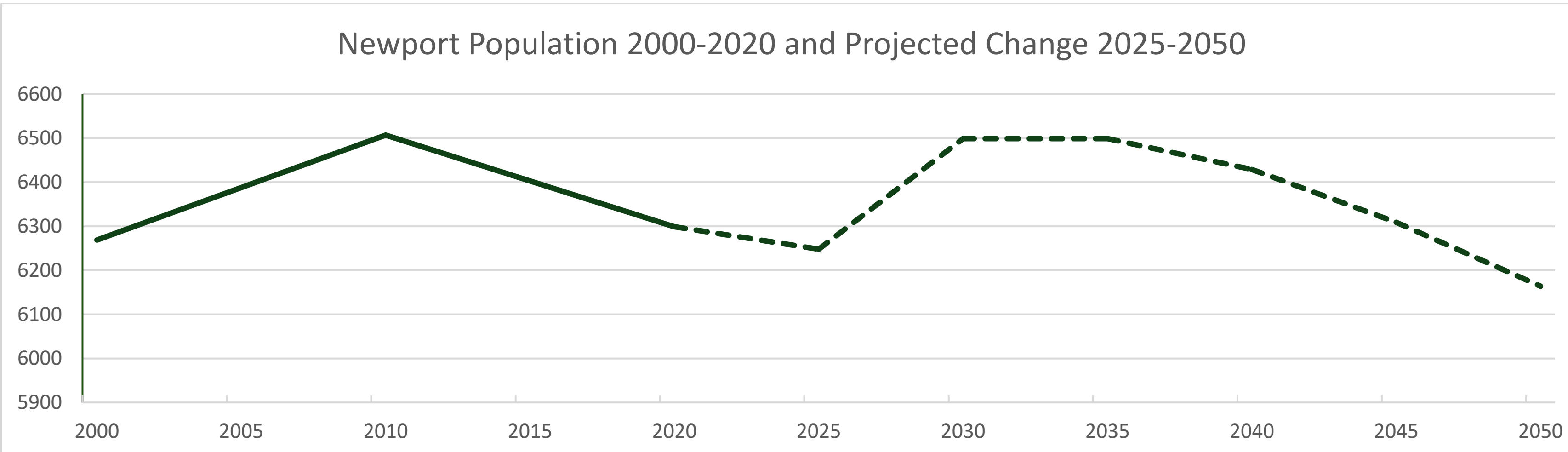


Figure 1 - Newport Decennial Census Population and OPD Population Projections until 2050.

Although OPD's mathematical projections suggest a decreasing population, these projections are based on life expectancy, birth rates, and migration patterns for several age- and gender-based cohorts. They do not incorporate external influences such as pandemics, disasters, cultural events, and climate change. This region of New Hampshire is generally expected to have increased rates of in-migration due to changing climate patterns, while Newport's out-migration matches anecdotal concerns expressed by community members, Town government, and local businesses about losing population in certain demographic cohorts due to housing concerns. The 2023 RHNA indicates that Newport had the lowest 20-year population growth in the region (excluding six towns that did not experience growth), while the other towns in the Newport NH LMA showed significantly higher increases.[4] Newport's northern neighbor Croydon had a total population growth of 21.2%, while western and southern neighbors Claremont and Unity lost 1-2% of their population. The nearby employment center of Lebanon had a 13.6% increase. Given anecdotal concerns from Newport leaders of local businesses struggling to find employees while existing residents find jobs in other towns, these values should be watched closely. In addition, the uneven population growth of the region may provide some insight as to the future patterns of climate migration and other factors that are excluded in OPD projections. Ultimately, whether birth- or migration-driven, Newport's population changes will depend heavily on the availability and affordability of housing.

1.2 - Demographics

Sex

According to Decennial Census data, Newport's population is approximately 51% male and 49% female and has held this ratio since 2000.[5] This slightly uneven spread doesn't match New Hampshire and the United States, both of which typically sit at around 50%-50%.[6] It is possible that this demographic feature is due to the heavy presence of the manufacturing industry in the town, but this is a highly generalized assumption based on traditional employment patterns.

Note: The U.S. Census Bureau does not ask questions about gender or sex at birth. Respondents are advised to respond either "male" or "female" based on how they currently identify their biological sex.

Age

The age distribution in Newport is similar to that of New Hampshire. The population pyramid in Figure 2 on the right shows the number of people in 5-year age groups divided by sex.[7] On the following page are Figure 3 and Figure 4, similar population charts for New Hampshire and the United States. The median age in 2020 was 41.0, up from 36.8 in 2000.

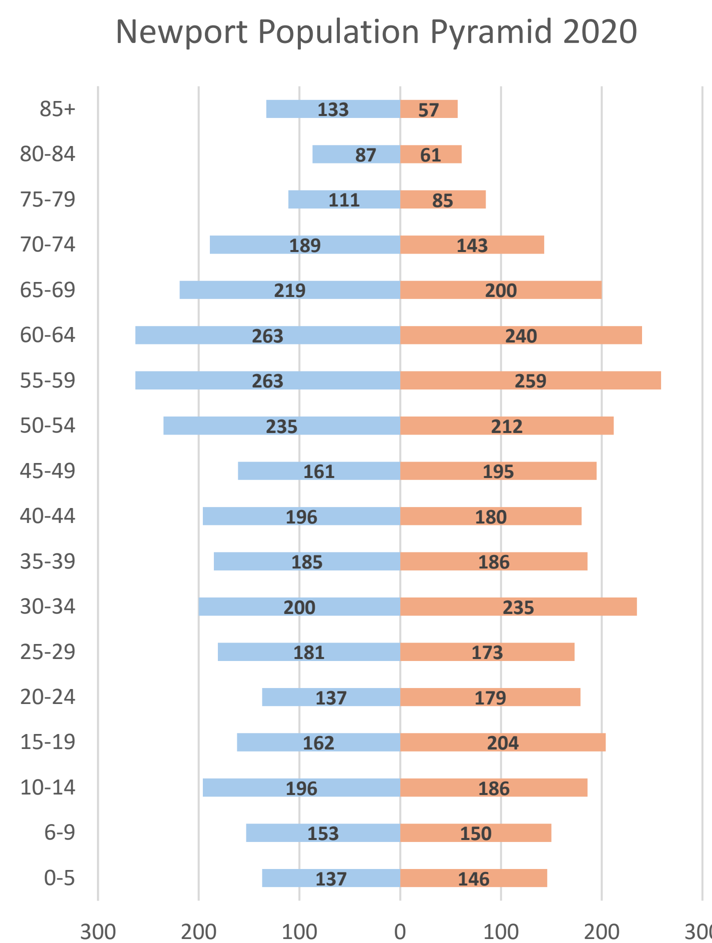


Figure 2 – 2020 Population of Newport separated into cohorts by age and sex based on Decennial Census data.

Compared to the population pyramid of the United States, New Hampshire's pyramid is far more top-heavy, indicating a larger older population and smaller younger demographic. Newport's pyramid is similar to New Hampshire's, but with more extreme highs and lows due to its smaller population.

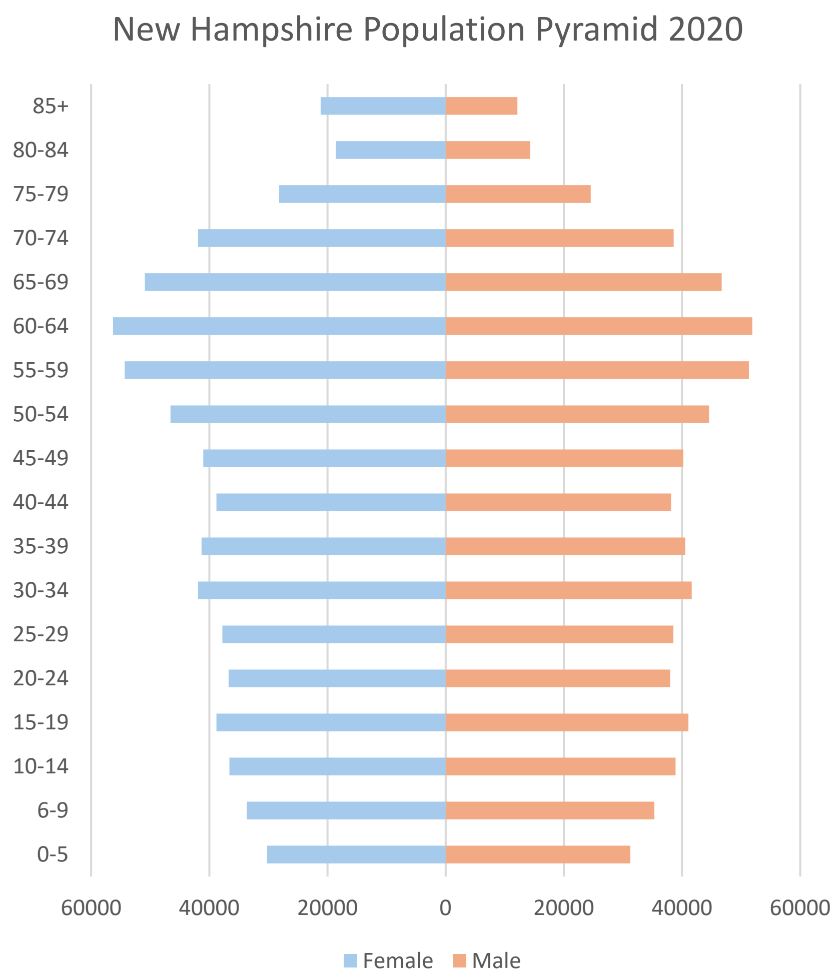


Figure 4 – 2020 Population of New Hampshire separated into cohorts by age and sex based on Decennial Census data.

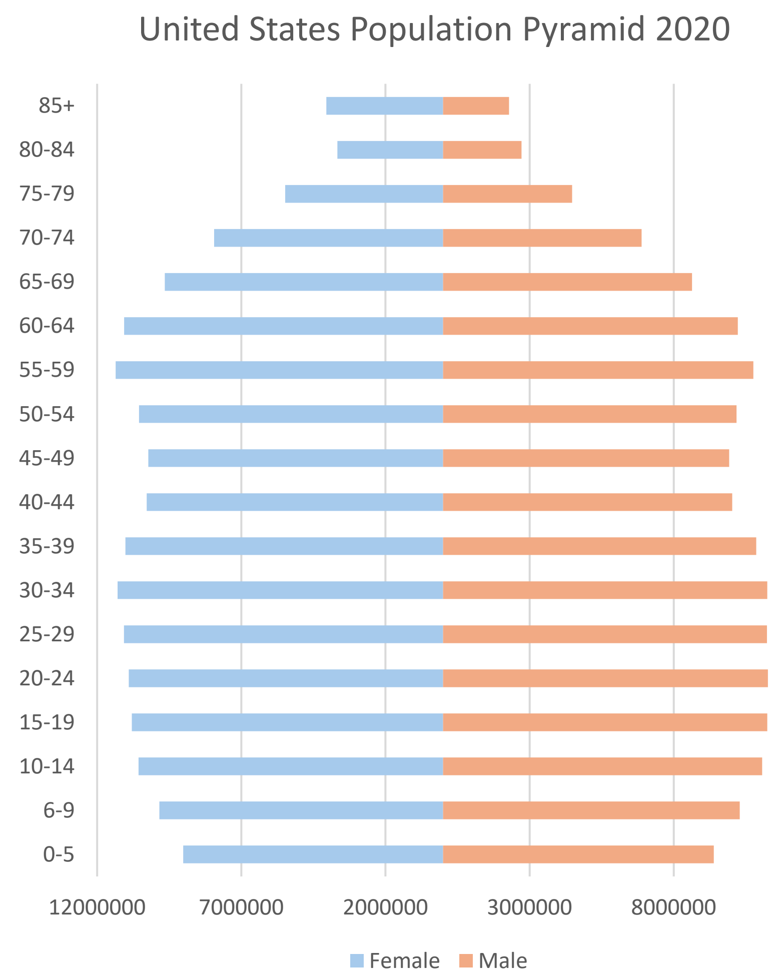


Figure 3 -2020 Population of the United States separated into cohorts by age and sex based on Decennial Census data.

1.3 - Race & Ethnicity

According to the 2020 Decennial Census, 91.3% of Newport's 6299 residents identified as "White Alone, not Hispanic or Latino". In 2000, 97.5% of residents identified as the same.[8] The specific breakdown is shown in the table below, as well as the changes in each racial/ethnic group since the 2000 Decennial Census. Note that the populations of all racial/ethnic minority groups increased between 2000 and 2010 (minus a drop of 1 in the "some other race alone, not Hispanic or Latino" category between 2010-2020), while the population identifying as White alone decreased by around 8% between 2010 and 2020. This change is reflected in the 3.2% decrease in total population in this same period, indicating that the "White Alone" demographic may be a primary source of Newport's out-migration and/or negative population growth.

Table 1 - Percent of total population of Newport that identifies with a certain racial or ethnic group. Note that the third column includes all groups to the right and categories including "Alone" refer to "Not Hispanic or Latino."

	Total Population	White Alone	Racial or Hispanic/ Latino Minorities	Hispanic or Latino of Any Race	Black or African American Alone	American Indian & Alaska Native Alone	Asian Alone	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone	Some Other Race Alone	Two or More Races
2000	6269	97.5%	2.5%	0.6%	0.1%	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%
2010	6507	96.6%	3.4%	1.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%
2020	6299	91.3%	8.7%	1.9%	0.3%	0.3%	0.6%	0.0%	0.2%	5.4%

Newport's increasing racial and ethnic diversity is reflective of wider trends, but the town is still far more demographically homogeneous, primarily dominated by people identifying as White Alone, not Hispanic or Latino compared to the national percentage of 57.8% and the state percentage of 87.1%.

1.4 - Group Quarters

Between 2000 and 2020, approximately 2% of Newport's population resided in group quarters.[9] This is consistent with the national average, which is also 2%. About half of this population lives in institutional quarters such as nursing homes (72 people) and juvenile facilities like Orion House (12 people), while the other half lives in noninstitutional quarters uncategorized by the Census Bureau, such as shelters and group homes. Newport is only one of two municipalities in the UVLS region that have had any individuals in juvenile facilities since 2000, the other being Plainfield which had 5 in 2020. Though the population in group quarters is small, this is a significant community of concern. Due to the circumstances that lead to people living in some types of group quarters, they may require such a housing arrangement to live safely, afford housing, or survive in the town. If this unique housing supply does not meet need, residents may be forced to relocate to a town with appropriate housing or continue to live in unsustainable circumstances in Newport.

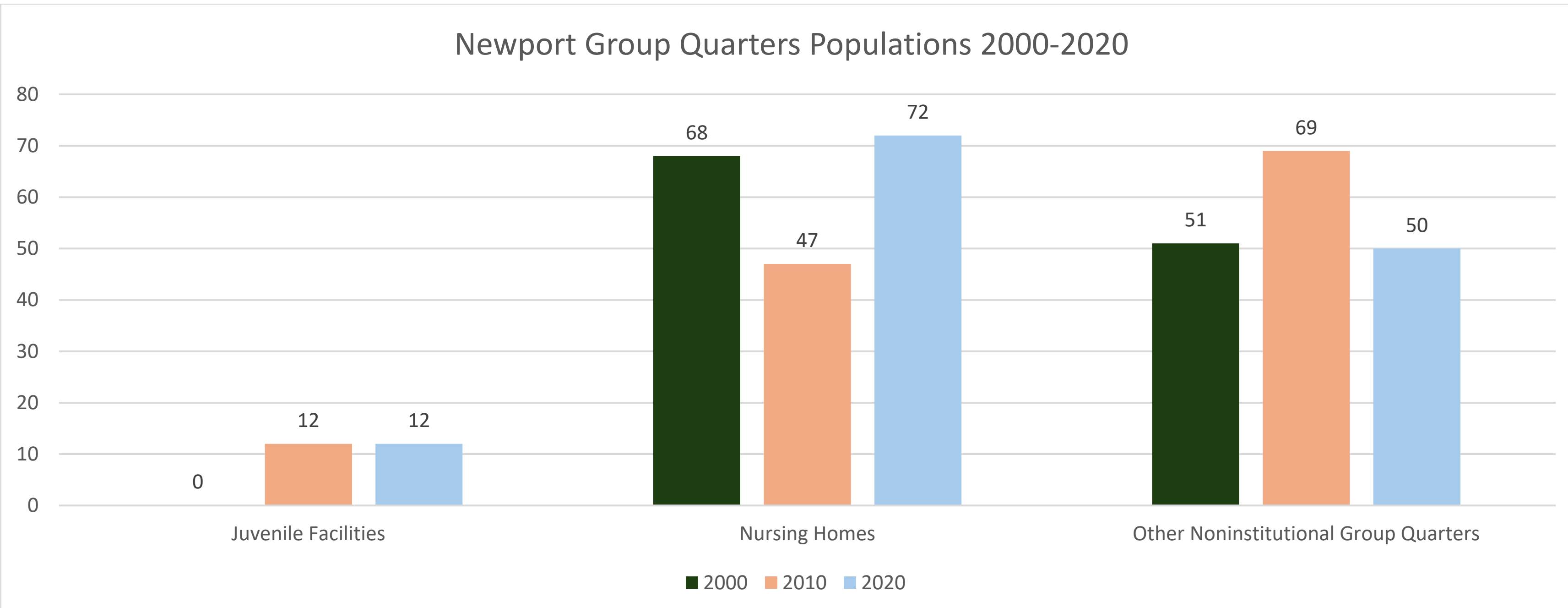
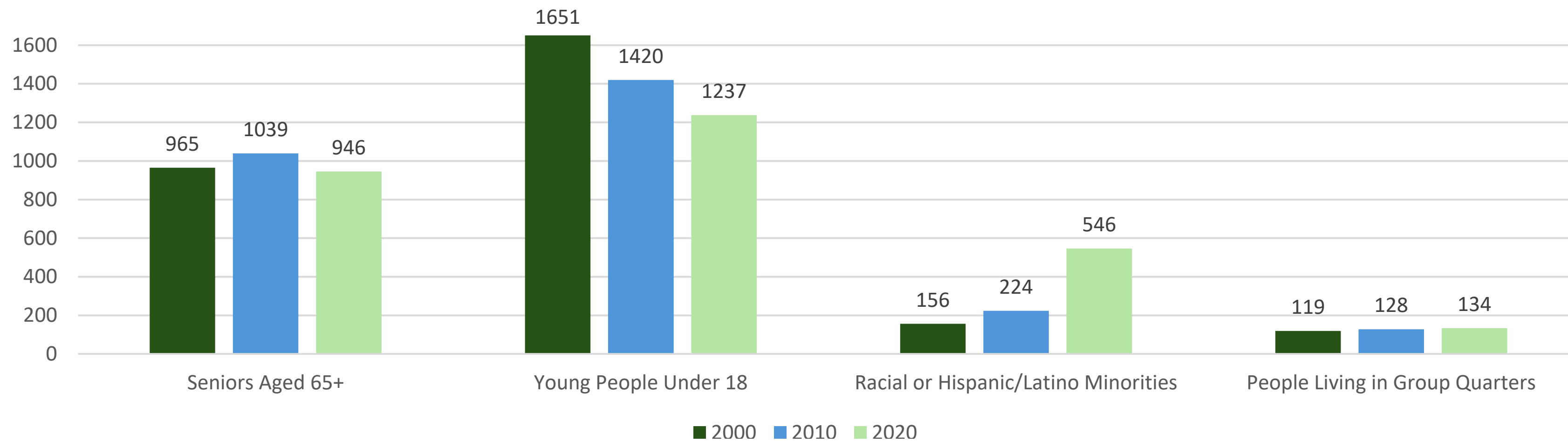


Figure 5 - Changes in group quarters populations in Newport from 2000 to 2020 based on U.S. Decennial Census counts.

1.5 - Communities of Concern

While all residents may feel the impacts of the housing system and market, some groups may lack the ability to weather sudden shocks to the housing system, making them less resilient than the rest of the population. Please note that racial or Hispanic/Latino minority populations and people living in group quarters are communities of concern but are discussed on previous pages.



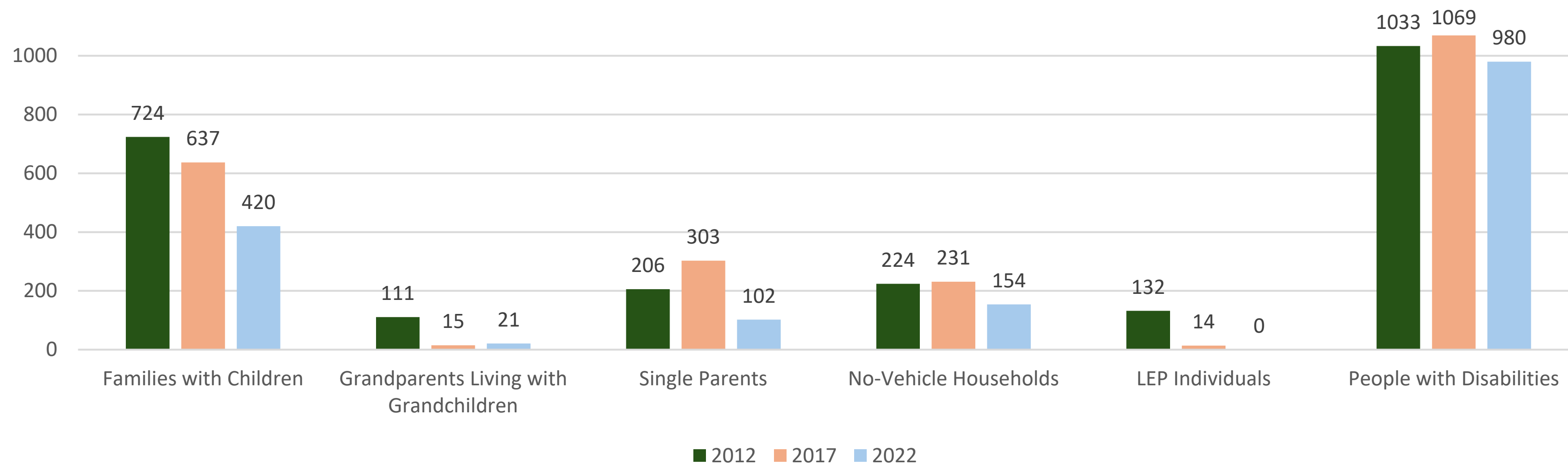


Figure 6 - Communities of Concern over time. Above from Decennial Census and below from American Community Survey. Please note the different years for each data source.

Age Groups

Seniors Aged 65+

Our population is aging, with the cohort of people aged 65+ steadily increasing or remaining steady in many towns while younger cohorts decline. In 2020, seniors aged 65+ made up 20% of Newport's population, up from 15% in 2000 and 16.1% in 2010.[10] See Figure 7 for the proportion of selected age groups in Newport over time. A population with 20% seniors is higher than the United States' 17% but lower than New Hampshire's 22%. Regionally, the population of seniors within the UVLS area is somewhat evenly disbursed across nearby towns. However, Newport has the eighth-largest senior population that makes up approximately 5% of the total regional senior population. This is a greater share than most towns but falls short of being equal to the 7% of the regional population that lives in Newport. Though the difference is small, it may indicate a lack of needed housing for seniors.

Senior citizens often experience hardships like loss of mobility and eyesight and may require frequent assistance as they age. Some may require congregate living in group quarters, and Newport is one of seven towns in the UVLS region that has such living arrangements, which provides opportunities for seniors but also may put uneven pressure on the town to house people from other towns that require such arrangements.

Young People

Newport's young population, like that of New Hampshire, is shrinking. In 2000, 26% of Newport's population was under the age of 18.[11] In 2010, this number dropped to 23%, and in 2020 it was down to 19%. See Figure 7 for the proportion of selected age groups in Newport over time. In the United States these percentages are following a similar but less severe pattern; 26% of the U.S. population was under 18 in 2000, which dropped to 22% in 2020. Minors under the age of 18 are a community of concern due to their housing needs, as they are unlikely to be able to live on their own. A stable and secure housing situation is essential for families with children, but many may face difficulties due to restrictions and housing discrimination. Though fewer young people in Newport may suggest a decreased need for their housing, such an age imbalance is unsustainable both socially and economically.

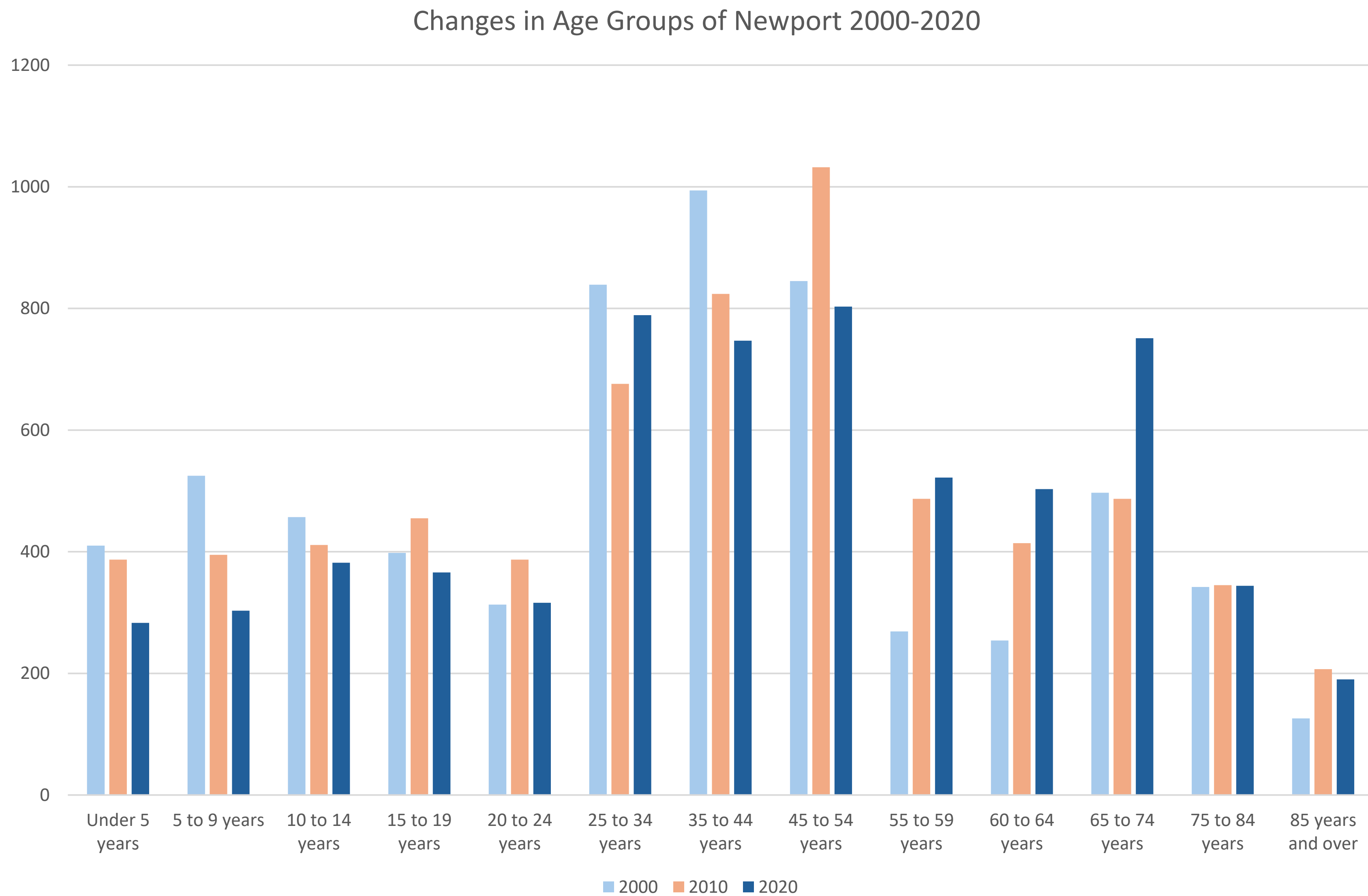


Figure 7 - Populations of selected age groups in 2000, 2010, and 2020 based on Decennial Census data. Changes in age group-based communities of concern are compared with other groups to show differences and identify age groups driving growth.

Families and Children

Families Living with Own or Related Children

Caring for a child may put great mental and financial stress on parents, making it difficult to afford, maintain, or find appropriate housing. Children require additional bedrooms, safe places, and more. In Newport, there are 1342 family households, of which 31% (420) have children of the householder under 18 years living in the home.[12] Family households make up 69% of owner-occupied and 32% of renter occupied, with both groups having similar numbers. Around 16% of owner households and 20.3% of renter households have own or related children of the householder. 70% of all family households have children between 6 and 17 years of age, while 25% have children under 6 and 5% have children in both age ranges. This indicates a high influx of children reaching 18 soon and potentially requiring appropriate independent housing. If birth rates remain low, that 25% value may also offer a warning of the opposite happening as the next generation ages into housing. This is especially notable given the sharp drop of 42% in the number of families with children in Newport over the last 20 years.

Grandparents

Households sometimes include multiple generations of one family, which can be due to financial, medical, or cultural reasons. In Newport, an estimated 0.6% of households have grandparents living with grandchildren.[13] The American Community Survey estimates that 100% of said households are at or above the poverty level, 81% have grandparents in the labor force, and 0% have grandparents responsible for grandchildren. This indicates a low level of concern.

Single Parents

The stress of being a parent is greatly increased for people caring for children alone. In Newport, approximately 27% of households with householder's own children are led by single mothers.[14] There are no estimated single fathers in Newport. Single parents are likely to require housing with appropriate capacity and safety to house one or more children, while also needing an affordable place to live due to the additional financial obligation of dependent children.

Economic Groups

No-Vehicle Households

Around 6% of households have no access to at least one personal or shared vehicle, which has decreased from 9% as estimated by 2013-2017 ACS data.[15] These households may be placed under financial stress due to reliance on alternative transportation. However, with a robust system for such transportation the alternative can be true. Newport is one of the few towns in the UVLS region with access to public transit, which is fortunate for the residents who can live within walking or biking distance to stops. This community of concern is unique in that much of its induced housing burden can be offset by development in transportation rather than housing.

People Experiencing Homelessness

The National Alliance to End Homelessness New Hampshire Balance of State Continuum of Care indicates that there were 851 people homeless on any given night in 2022.[16] Southwestern Community Services offers a Homeless Services Program that assists individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness. It is likely that many or all the 50 people reported as living in unspecified noninstitutional group quarters are in such housing situations (Figure 5).[17]

Single, Working-Age Adults

People in this demographic are primary contributors to local industry and municipal tax revenue but are often cost-burdened due to living on a single income and the challenge of finding affordable, desirable, and appropriately sized housing. In Newport, 31% of households are occupied by a single householder.[18] Of these, 53% are between 15 and 64. Note that while single householders are evenly split by sex, 73% of single male householders are under 65 while 34% of single female householders are under 65.

Groups Facing Physical, Mental, or Cultural Barriers

LEP (Limited English Proficiency) Households

Though English is the primary language of Newport, it is not always the language spoken in a household. People with limited English proficiency may face trouble finding housing including possible discrimination. However, 2018-2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates suggest that there are no such people currently living in Newport.[19] Given sampling capabilities and the 2013-2017 estimate of 14 LEP residents, it is likely that at least a few individuals are present.[20]

People with One or More Disabilities

According to 2018-2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, 16% of noninstitutionalized Newport residents live with one or more disabilities.[21] These residents may face a series of challenges that vary significantly in both type and severity. Figure 8 displays the percentage of Newport's population with a disability that have certain types of disabilities. Note that the total number of disabilities is higher than the number of people with disabilities, indicating that several people face more than one. The most common disabilities are ambulatory (554 people) and cognitive (357 people), which necessitate very different kinds of accessibility and potential care.[22] 19% of people with disabilities in Newport have a self-care related difficulty, and 28% have independent living related difficulty. Depending on the impairment, people with a disability may be completely independent with no housing impact, need physical housing improvements for accessibility, or require dependent care by family members into adulthood.

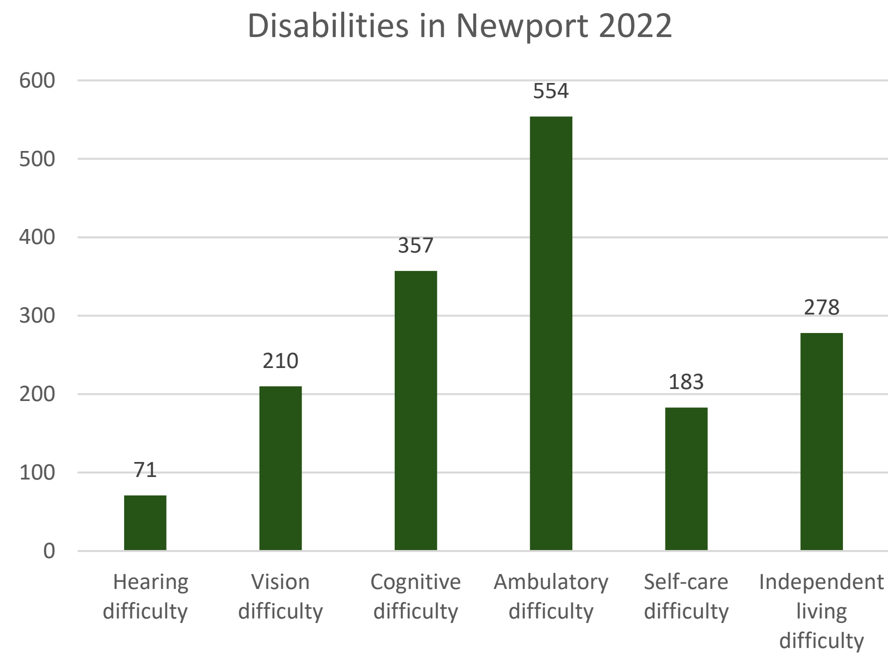


Figure 8 – Disability types in Newport according 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates. Per the Census Bureau, these numbers are based on non-institutional populations, which excludes nursing homes, correctional facilities, and similar housing for those who are "primarily ineligible, unable, or unlikely to participate in the labor force while resident."

Veterans

Our nation's veterans may face increased housing challenges due to physical or mental limitations caused by their service. In addition, they may require daily care and assistance with transportation. According to 2018-2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, around 380 people or 6.8% of Newport's 18+ population are classified as veterans, 54% of which are over the age of 65.[23] Senior veterans have particularly critical needs due to the combined challenges of aging and the lingering effects of military service.

1.6 - Housing Market Trends

In the last 20 years, Newport's rental prices have increased steadily. From 2013-2023, the average yearly increase was 3.8%, quite low compared to 6.1% statewide.[24] Rental costs remain high, but not unreasonably so. According to HUD, in FY23 the fair market rent for a 1-bedroom unit in Sullivan County was $960 and a 2-bedroom unit $1,264, slightly lower than Newport's 2023 median gross rent but falling in between 2022 and 2023 values.[25] See Table 2 and Figure 9 below, and Figure 10 on the following page.

Table 2 - Fair Market Rents for Sullivan County compared to Newport's Median Gross Rental Cost. Data is presented for rental sizes where data is available. Fair Market Rents from HUD, and Median GRC from NHHFA.

	1-Bedroom	2-Bedroom	3-Bedroom	4-Bedroom
FY18 Sullivan County Fair Market Rent	$ 774	$ 1,029	$ 1,360	$ 1,532
2018 Newport Median Gross Rental Cost		**$ 911**		
FY23 Sullivan County Fair Market Rent	$ 960	$ 1,264	$ 1,570	$ 1,804
2023 Newport Median Gross Rental Cost	**$ 931**	**$ 1,179**		

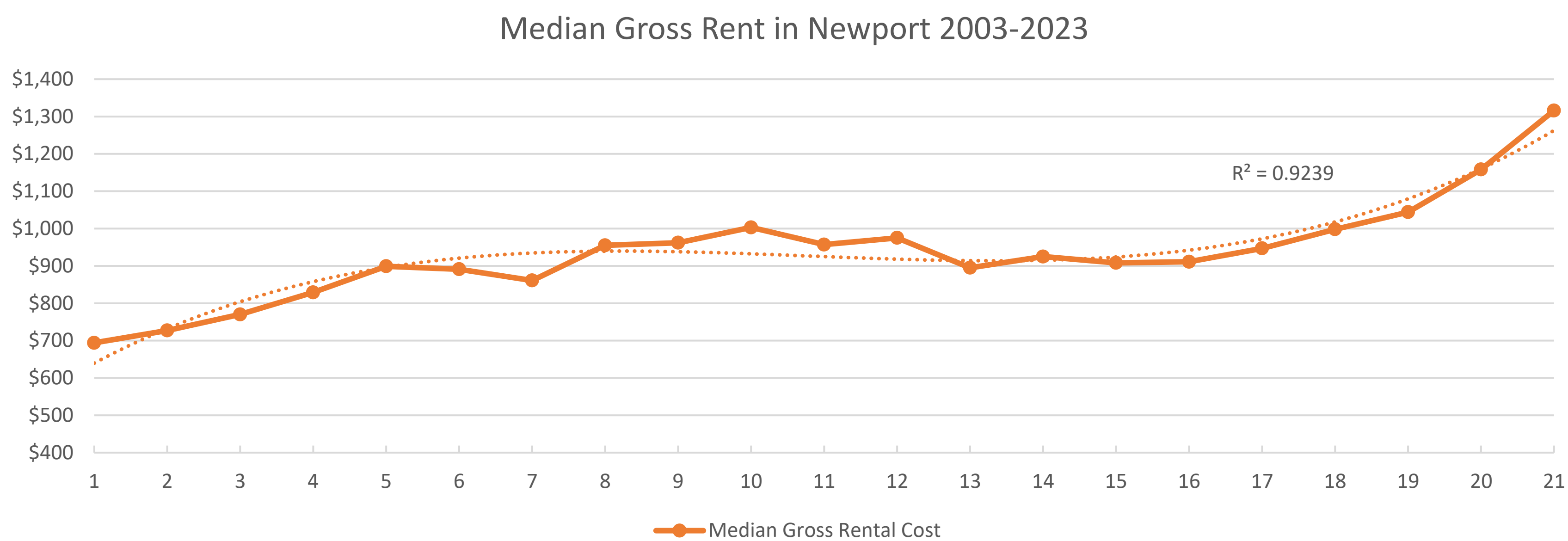


Figure 9 - Median Gross Rental Cost in Newport between 2003 and 2023 according to NHHFA.

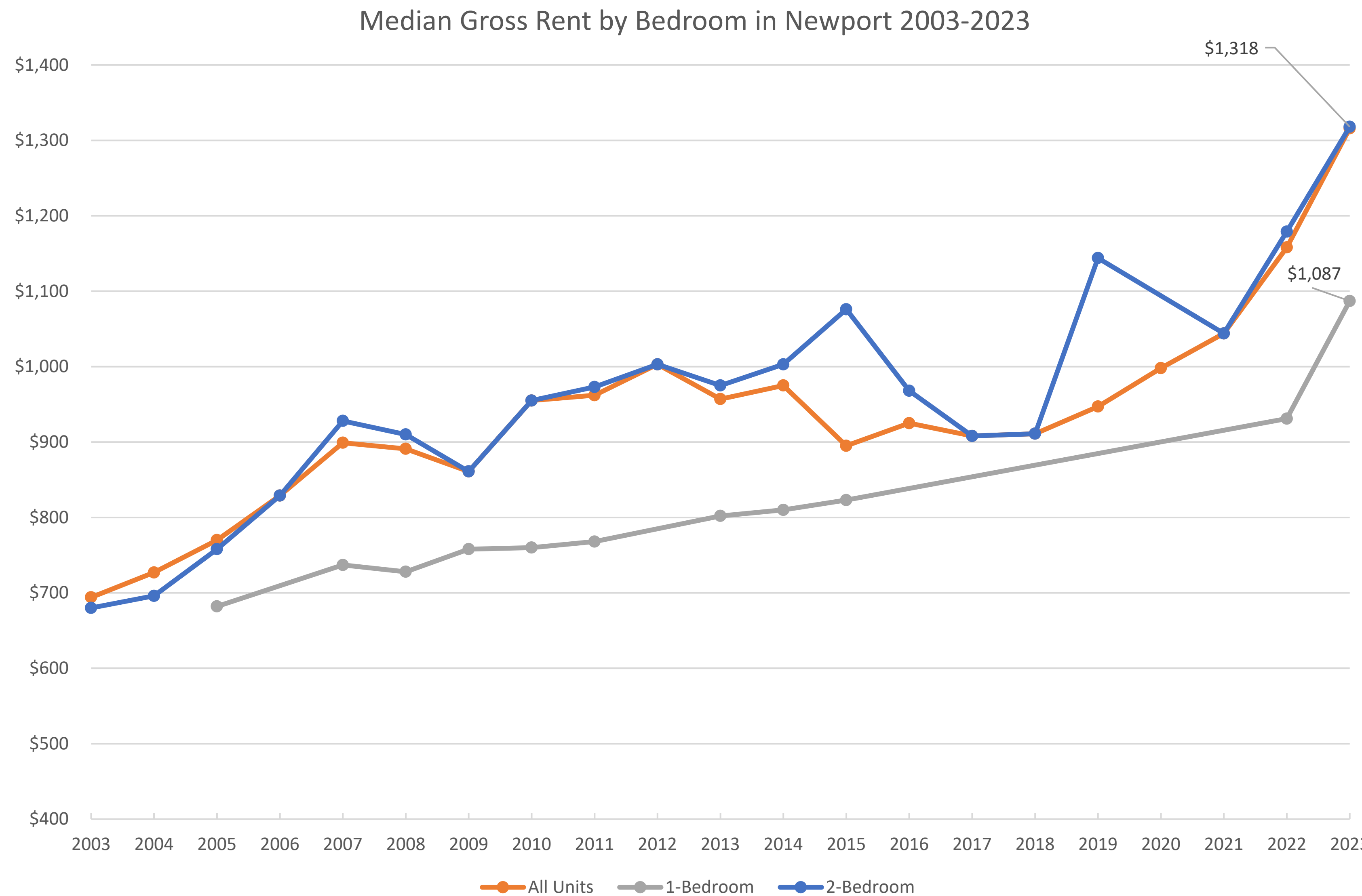


Figure 10 - Median Gross Rental Cost in Newport between 2003 and 2023 according to NHHFA separated by number of bedrooms per unit. Years with no points on a line indicate a sample size too small to draw usable data from.

While Newport's rental costs are reasonable, the town's rental vacancy rate is far from it. A healthy rental market typically has a vacancy rate around 5%, allowing for renters to find and choose housing appropriate to their needs rather than being forced to rent what is available. NHHFA reports that Newport's rental vacancy has been approximately 0% since 2020, and below 5% since 2011.[26] ACS 5-Year Estimates 2018-2022 also show an estimated 0% vacancy rate.[27] Figure 11 below shows the estimated vacancy rate of all units and 2-bedroom units from 2003 to 2023.

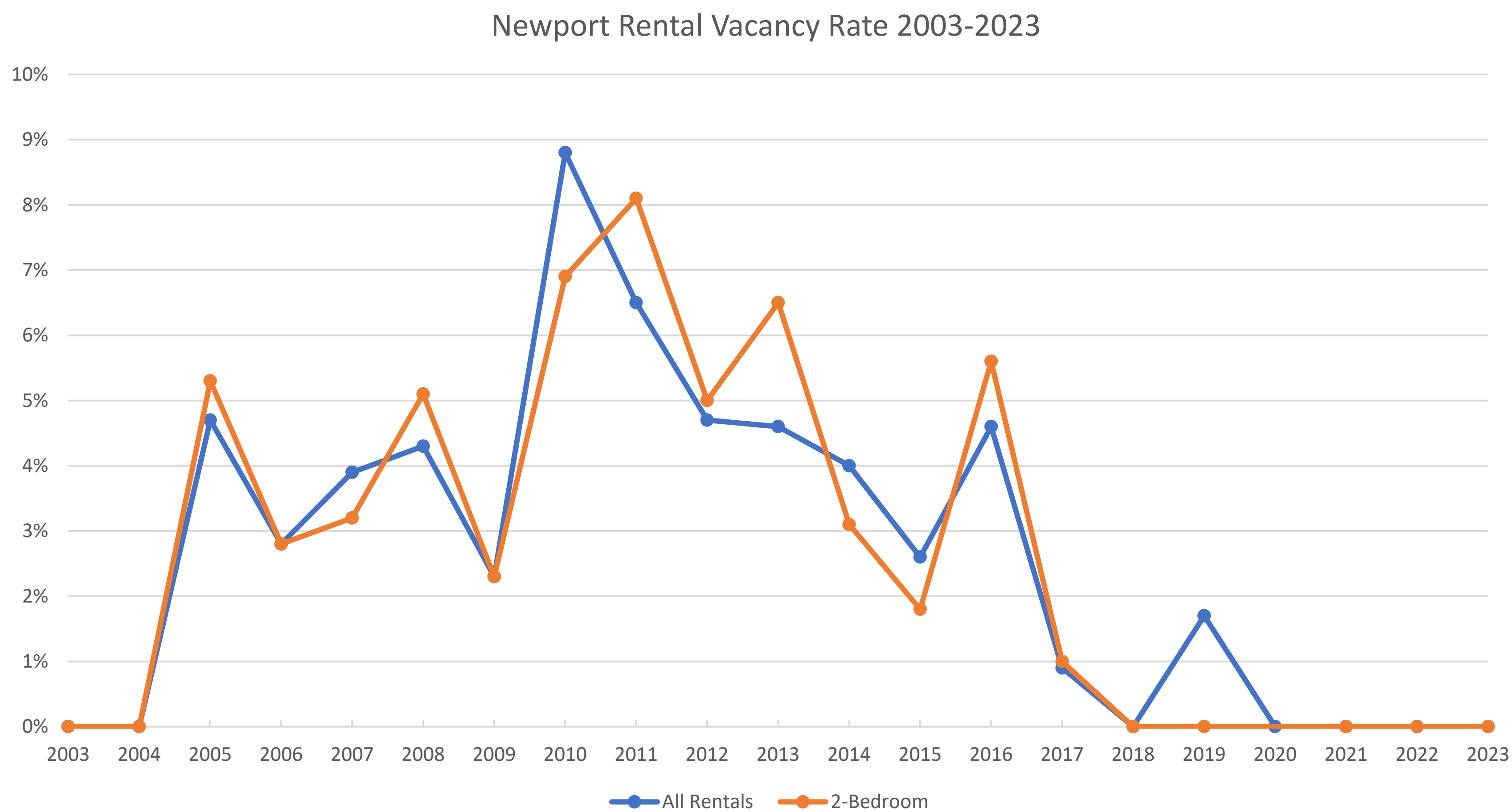


Figure 11 - Vacancy Rate of Rental Housing Units from NHHFA.

Contrasted with gradually rising rental prices, the median purchase price of a home in Newport has more than tripled since 2000.[28] The first decade of the new millennium showed an unprecedented increase, which dropped when the housing bubble burst in 2008. Between 2000 and 2004, median home purchase price increased by an average of 12.9% per year. Between 2018 and 2022, the average yearly increase has been 15.6%. Figure 12 displays the annual median home price in Newport between 2000 and 2022, which is compared to the same data from the Newport NH LMA, Sullivan County, and New Hampshire. Though Newport consistently has lower median prices than all three larger geographies, they all follow very similar patterns.

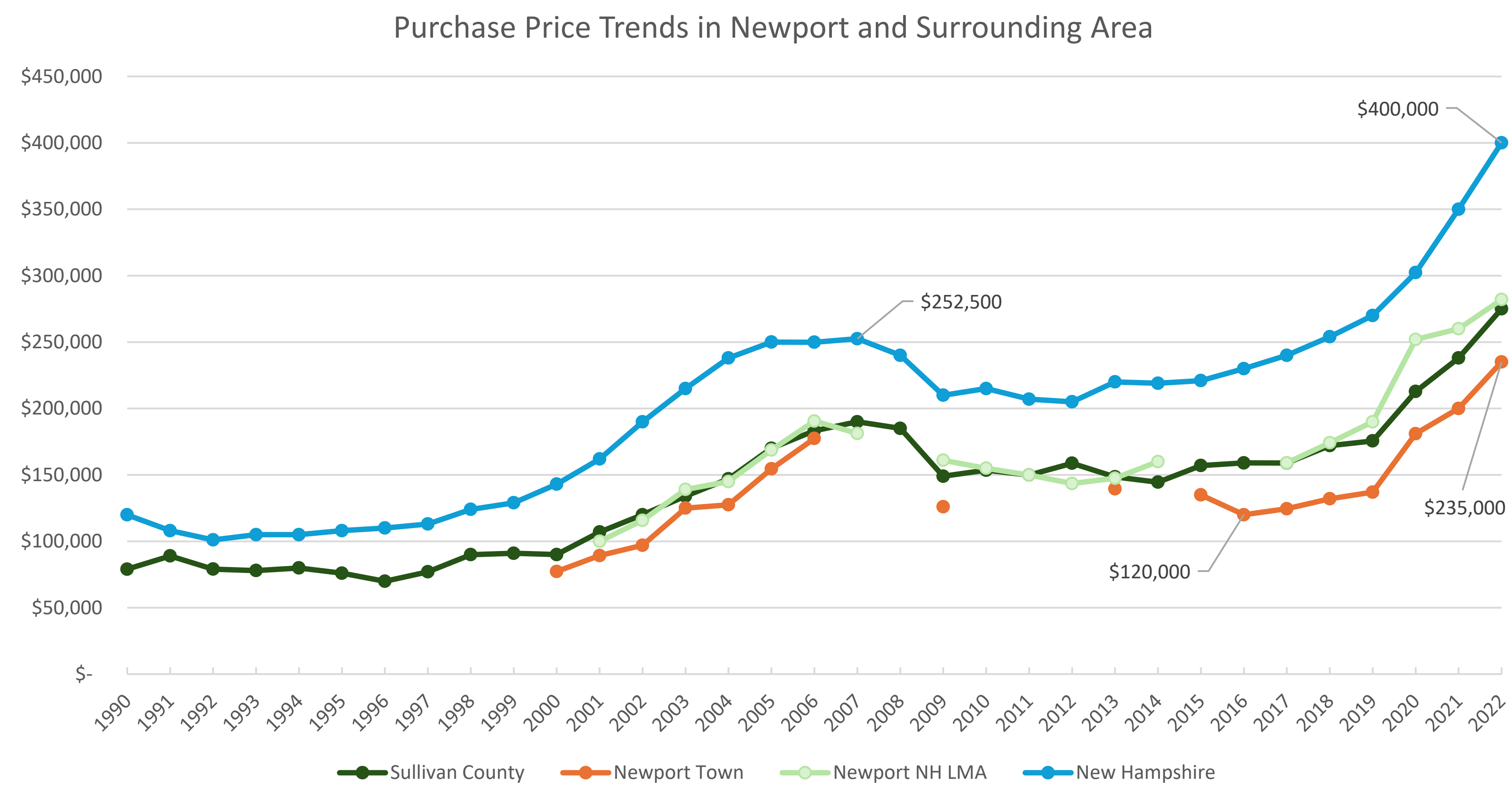


Figure 12 - Median purchase price in Newport, the Newport, NH LMA, Sullivan County, and the State of New Hampshire. Data from NHHFA Purchase Price Trends. Missing years indicate a lack of data needed to draw significant conclusions.

While ACS 5-Year Estimates 2018-2022 report a 0% homeowner vacancy rate, creating the same problem as a 0% rental vacancy rate, MLS data provided by NHHFA lends more insight into the homeowner's market than simple vacancy estimates can.[29] After remaining relatively steady from 2008-2015, the average annual number of active listings dropped significantly in the past eight years, decreasing 65% of months between October 2015 and October 2023 for a total change of -538 or an 81% drop.[30] During this same period, the months to absorb current housing inventory plummeted from 16.3 to around 1 month.[31] In fact, average months to absorb plummeted even faster than active listings, hitting 1.0 in December 2021 and a low of 0.5 in April 2023.

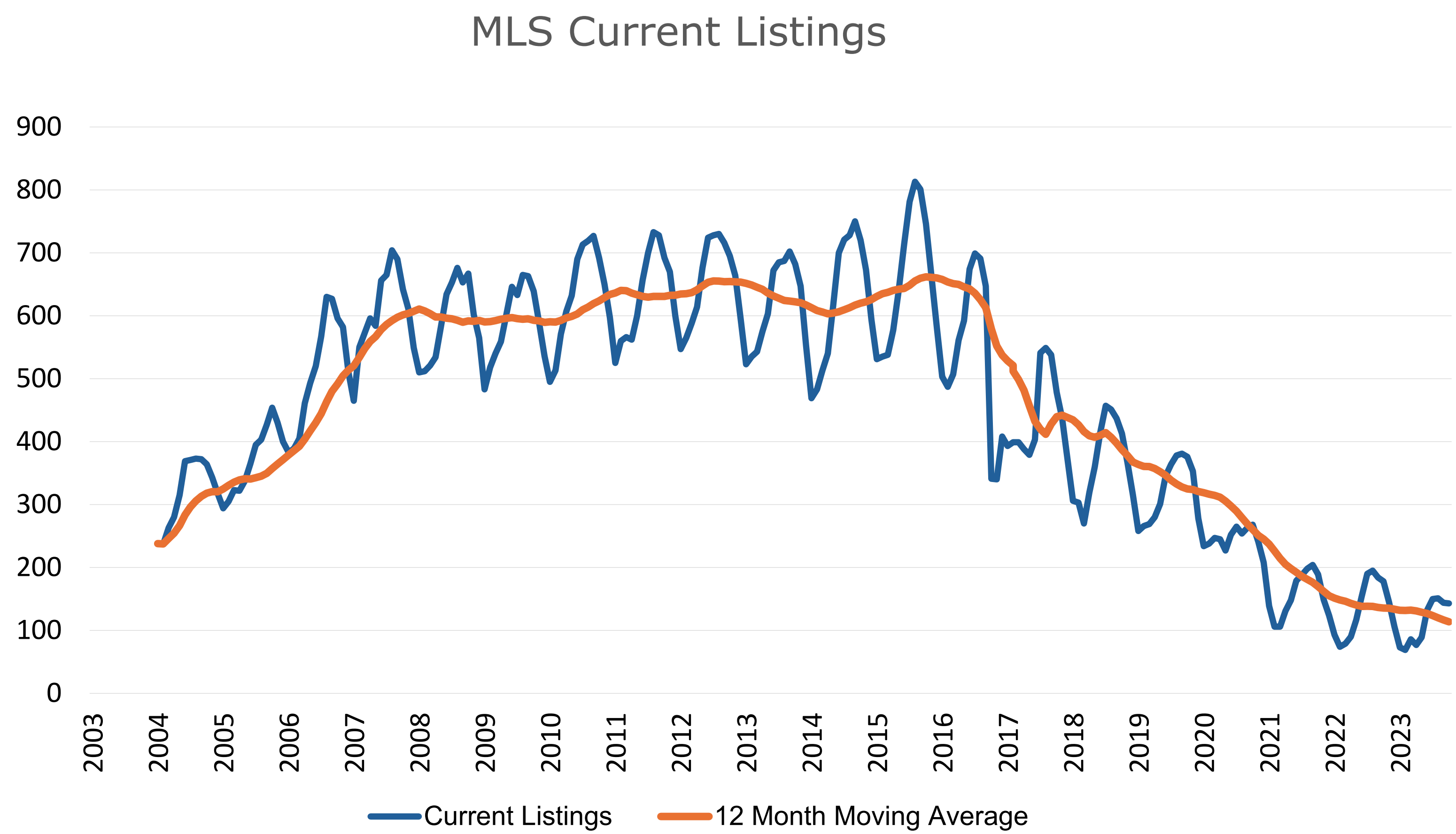


Figure 13 – Number of active listings in Sullivan County 2003-2023 from NHHFA-provided MLS data. Note that data begins in January 2004 due to lack of significant data in 2003.

The realtor survey conducted for the 2023 Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Housing Needs Assessment sheds some light on the realities of buying a home in this area compared to the rest of the state. Though the sample size is too small to draw significant conclusions, two-thirds of the UVLS respondents claimed the Sunapee region, which includes Newport, as their primary board.[32] Realtors reported that 54% of closed sales received 6-10 offers, with an additional 15% receiving 10-15 offers. Startlingly, zero accepted offers were at or below asking price, with 80% being at least $20,000 above. Compared to the 56% statewide accepted offers in the same range, nearby home prices are facing an affordability problem. 47% of local realtors also indicated that more than half of their clientele included out-of-state buyers, primarily from New England, New York, and New Jersey.

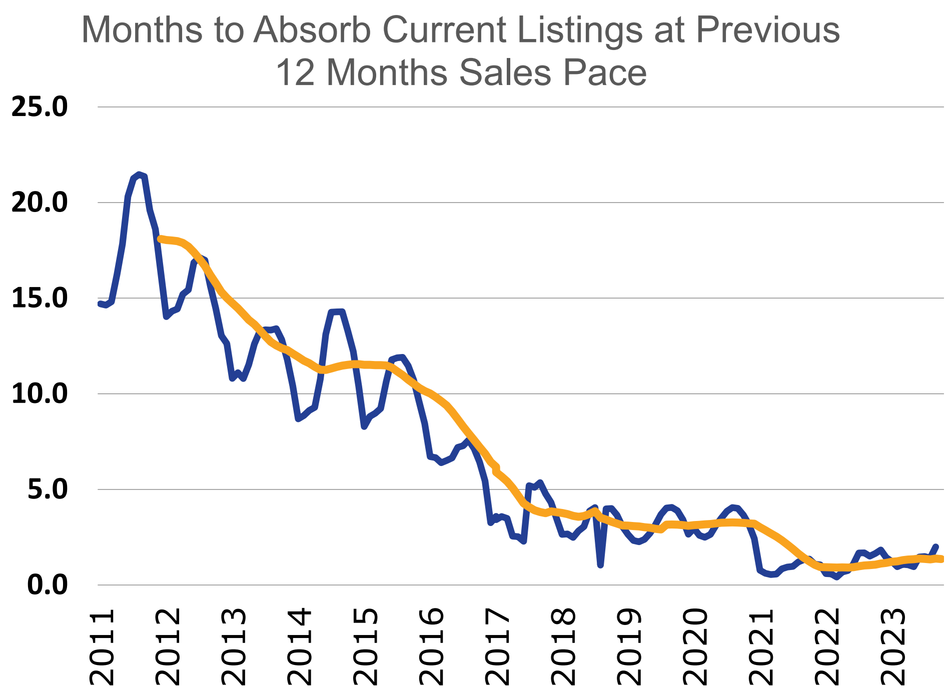


Figure 14 - Months to absorb current listings in Sullivan County 2011-2023 from NHHFA-provided MLS data.

These problems compound on one another, creating a market where both aspiring homeowners and renters are faced with limited options and miniscule amounts of time to secure a place to live. This creates the risk of residents unintentionally occupying homes unsuited for their needs, either leading to affordability issues for the occupant if overhoused or exacerbating issues for themselves and others if underhoused. Underhousing increases competition, but also increases the prices for the same homes due to the underhoused residents' ability to pay more than people with lower incomes. Were there higher-priced homes to the housing market, said higher-income individuals may be more likely to live in homes that they may view as more suited to their income level, decreasing competition for and increasing affordability of lower-priced homes.

1.7 - Economics, Employment, and Cost Burden

Households and Poverty

Of the 6231 people in Newport for whom poverty status is determined, 28% are considered low-income (income below 150% of the poverty line).[33] This is higher than the national percentage of 20.4%. Low-income residents are vulnerable to housing market volatility and insufficiencies, especially in a seller's market. They have limited ability to navigate high purchase prices and rental costs, forcing them to pay more than they can afford for housing, opt for smaller housing than needed, or move out of town. This group is also likely to be less financially flexible, creating additional strain if housing concerns force them to live somewhere far from their place of work. Of the same 6231 people, an estimated 14% are at or below 100% poverty level, meaning they are living in poverty.[34]

Table 3 - Number of individuals below certain income levels related to the poverty line.

Newport	Total Population	Total Population in Poverty	Below 50% of the Poverty Line	Below 125% of the Poverty Line	Below 150% of the Poverty Line	Below 185% of the Poverty Line	Below 200% of the Poverty Line	Below 300% of the Poverty Line	Below 400% of the Poverty Line	Below 500% of the Poverty Line
2017	6204	549	549	813	1102	1438	1606	2930	4000	4793
2022	6231	842	330	1250	1730	2128	2290	3307	4054	4721

Table 4 – Percent of the total population for whom poverty status is determined that fall below certain income levels related to the poverty line.

Newport	Total Population	% Total Population in Poverty	% Below 50% of the Poverty Line	% Below 125% of the Poverty Line	% Below 150% of the Poverty Line	% Below 185% of the Poverty Line	% Below 200% of the Poverty Line	% Below 300% of the Poverty Line	% Below 400% of the Poverty Line	% Below 500% of the Poverty Line
2017	6204	9%	9%	13%	18%	23%	26%	47%	64%	77%
2022	6231	14%	5%	20%	28%	34%	37%	53%	65%	76%

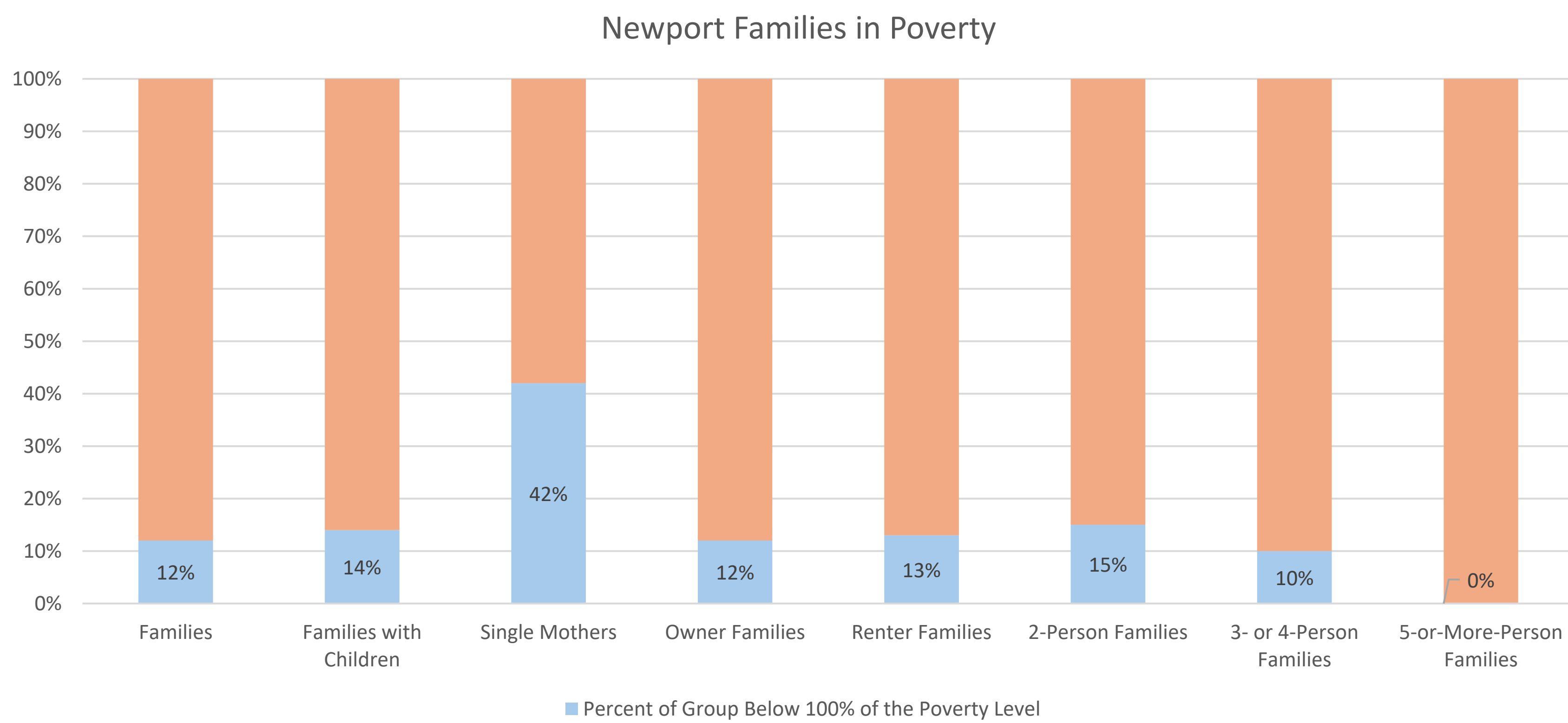


Figure 15 - Percentage of total Newport population of families in selected categories that are living in poverty according to 2018-2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Government services can provide food assistance to those in financial need. In Newport, 7.7% of households receive food stamps or benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).[35] Those receiving assistance include 30% of single mothers and 7% of both family households and non-family households. The median household income for those receiving food stamps or SNAP is $36,357, which gives a limit of $909 to spend on housing each month before becoming cost burdened.

Median Household Income

The median household income in Newport is $74,263.[36] For family households, it is $92,537, and for married-couple families it is $101,458. In 2017, the numbers were $69,693, $71,515, and $102,676, adjusted for inflation.[37] This is an average overall increase of 1% per year, which falls well below average annual inflation rates in the covered years, especially during the high rates up to 8% in 2023. Median family household income showed a 6% average increase per year, comfortably outpacing inflation. However, median married-couple household income has stagnated, even decreasing by 1% over the covered period.

Cost Burdened Households

If a household spends more than 30% of their gross income on housing costs, they are considered cost burdened. According to 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, 29.3% of owners with a mortgage, 23.4% of owners without a mortgage, and 46.3% of renters are cost burdened.[38] See Figure 16 and Figure 17 for these values compared to 2017 5-Year Estimates. While the percentage of cost-burdened owners with a mortgage and renters decreased slightly, there was a marked increase in the percentage of owners without a mortgage that are cost burdened.

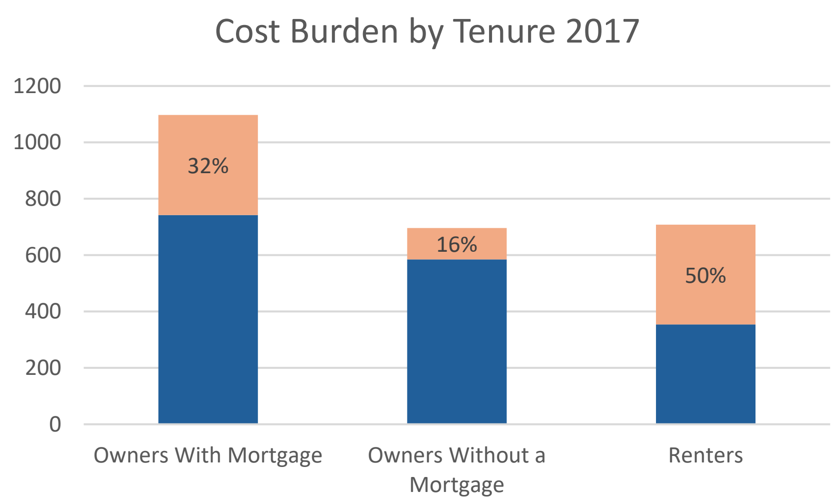


Figure 16 - Number of households by tenure and the proportion of each group that is cost burdened according to ACS 2017 5-Year Estimates.

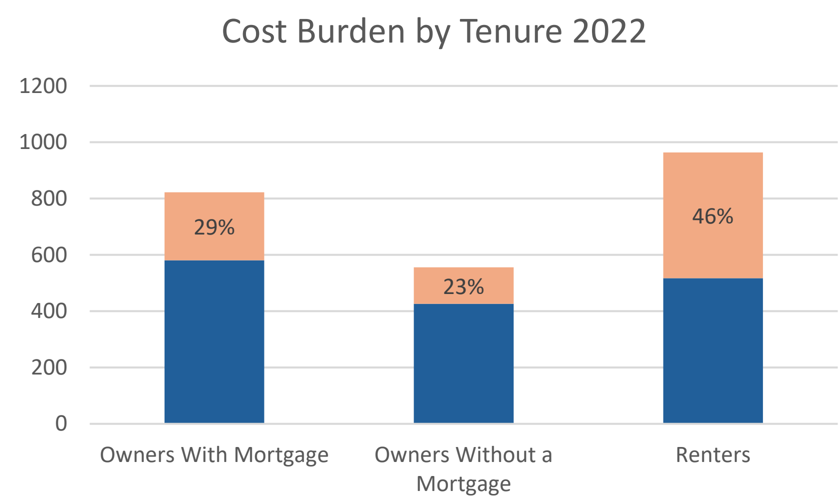


Figure 17 - Number of households by tenure and the proportion of each group that is cost burdened according to ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates.

Employers and Industries

Of the Newport NH LMA's 50 largest employers, 41 or 82%, are based in Newport, with 6 and 3 found in Sunapee and Lempster, respectively.[39] These span many industries, but the main employers are in manufacturing, banking, concrete, and education. Table 5 shows the total population of Newport 16 years and older that is employed in each industry.[40] It also shows estimated numbers and percentages in each industry by sex. What is evident in looking at the tables is that the employment industries of Newport's population don't match the employers found in the town of Newport, supporting anecdotes from town leaders, residents, and employers that many of Newport's residents do not work for Newport industries despite it being a significant employment center.

Table 5 – Industry by sex for the civilian employed population 16 years and over, according to 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

	Total Employed Pop. 16+ Years	Total Male	Percent Male	Total Female	Percent Female
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	3342	1854	55.5%	1488	44.5%
Construction	124	75	60.5%	49	39.5%
Manufacturing	561	419	74.7%	142	25.3%
Wholesale trade	120	59	49.2%	61	50.8%
Retail trade	507	293	57.8%	214	42.2%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities:	157	43	27.4%	114	72.6%
Transportation and warehousing	128	14	10.9%	114	89.1%
Utilities	29	29	100.0%	0	0.0%
Information	283	111	39.2%	172	60.8%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing:	38	0	0.0%	38	100.0%
Finance and insurance	22	0	0.0%	22	100.0%
Real estate and rental and leasing	16	0	0.0%	16	100.0%

Table 5, continued – Industry by sex for the civilian employed population 16 years and over, according to 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

	Total Employed Pop. 16+ Years	Total Male	Percent Male	Total Female	Percent Female
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services:	365	308	84.4%	57	15.6%
Professional, scientific, and technical services	100	89	89.0%	11	11.0%
Administrative and support and waste management services	265	219	82.6%	46	17.4%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance:	708	236	33.3%	472	66.7%
Educational services	239	75	31.4%	164	68.6%
Health care and social assistance	469	161	34.3%	308	65.7%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services:	194	93	47.9%	101	52.1%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	7	0	0.0%	7	100.0%
Accommodation and food services	187	93	49.7%	94	50.3%
Other services, except public administration	182	164	90.1%	18	9.9%
Public administration	103	53	51.5%	50	48.5%

As part of the 2023 Regional Housing Needs Assessment, the NH Planning Commissions analyzed the affordability of housing for select occupations in each planning region. The table from the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee RHNA is included below, with data from 2022.[41]

Table 6 - Affordability by occupation for the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee region from the 2023 Regional Housing Needs Assessment.

Occupation	Annual Median Wage	Max monthly gross rent	Max affordable home price	Max affordable home price with 1.5 workers in the same field	Can afford median rent?	Can afford median home price?	Can afford median home price with 1.5 workers per household?
Assemblers and fabricators	$32,969	$824	$95,809	$143,713	No	No	No
Cashiers	$23,666	$592	$68,774	$103,161	No	No	No
Childcare workers	$18,866	$472	$54,825	$82,237	No	No	No
Construction Laborers	$35,202	$880	$102,296	$153,444	No	No	No
Electricians	$44,113	$1,103	$128,194	$192,291	No	No	No
Engineers	$66,729	$1,668	$193,915	$290,872	Yes	No	No
Fast Food and Counter Workers	$22,161	$554	$64,400	$96,600	No	No	No
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	$41,283	$1,032	$119,969	$179,954	No	No	No
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	$28,291	$707	$82,215	$123,323	No	No	No
Janitors and cleaners, except maids and housekeeping cleaners	$29,405	$735	$85,450	$128,175	No	No	No
Office Clerks, General	$33,703	$843	$97,941	$146,912	No	No	No
Police and sheriff's patrol officers	$57,247	$1,431	$166,361	$249,542	Yes	No	No
Registered Nurses	$68,907	$1,723	$200,243	$300,365	Yes	No	No
Retail Salespersons	$24,949	$624	$72,501	$108,752	No	No	No
Waiters and Waitresses	$19,101	$478	$55,506	$83,260	No	No	No

1.8 - Households & Homes

Households by Tenure

Newport's households have historically been primarily owner-occupied. However, rental properties are becoming more popular. 2013-2017 ACS data estimates 69.7% were owner occupied and 30.3% were renter occupied, while 2018-2022 ACS data estimates 59.7% of households were owner occupied, and 40.3% renter occupied.[42] This increase may be driven by the increasing unaffordability of housing in Newport and New Hampshire as a whole, along with the relative affordability of Newport's rental properties. However, in contrast with median rent close to the fair market rent, half of Newport renters are cost burdened, suggesting that the rental market may not be connected well with local employment and wages. Rental properties are an important housing type for many households who are unable to buy a home or uninterested in homeownership for a variety of reasons.

Family vs Non-Family Households

Newport has recently witnessed a notable shift in household composition. Comparing 2017 and 2022 5-Year ACS data, the portion of households occupied by families fell from 66.3% to a mere 54.2%.[43] Among owner-occupied households, family households dropped from 71.3% to 68.8%, indicating most homeowners in the town are families. Among renters, however, the share of family households fell from 54.9% to 32.5%. This means that 67.5% of renter-occupied households are non-family households, almost a mirror of the owner-occupied percentage. While the number of non-family households is growing, there may be insufficient homeowner-focused housing supply suitable for such residents.

Marital status

As the dominance of family households decreased, marital status of residents within households shifted as well. In 2017, married households made up the largest category (41% of all households) while 28% of households included people who were never married.[44] In 2022, married households still make up the largest group, but the share has decreased to 38% as the never married category increased to 34.3%.[45] Table 7 shows the spread of marital status in the town between 2017 and 2022.

Table 7 - Marital status of population over 15 in Newport according to ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Newport	Now Married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated	Never Married
2017	41%	8%	23%	1%	28%
2022	38%	5%	22%	1%	34%

Household Size

The average household size of an owner-occupied home in Newport is 2.67 people, compared to 2.26 for renters.[46] In 2017, these sizes were 2.44 and 2.39 respectively.[47] The percentage of households that include only one or two people increased in the same period from 65.1 to 73.5%. Increases in household size may be driven by larger families (more likely for homeowners) or unrelated individuals cohabitating for social or financial reasons (more likely in rentals). Likewise, decreases in household size may be caused by lower birth rates or desires for smaller families or solitary housing.

Bedrooms

Though Newport's population is around 6300, the town's housing stock includes approximately 7400 bedrooms.[48] Looking at the frequency of household types compared to typical home sizes in Table 8 below, it is clear that Newport's housing stock does not fit its population. Though 1- and 2-person households make up 2/3 of Newport's population, 2- and 3-bedroom housing units make up most of Newport's stock.[49] This indicates that high-capacity homes are being underutilized by smaller households. This can be very expensive. However, these households may not have a choice due to what are clearly limited options for appropriately sized homes.

Table 8 - Households by number of people and units by number of bedrooms (both metrics as a percentage of total) according to 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates. Data for Newport (above) and New Hampshire (below).

Percent of Total Households and Homes 2022 (Newport)	1-Person	2-Person	3-Person	3-Person	4-or-More Person
	0-Bedroom	1-Bedroom	2-Bedroom	3-Bedroom	4-or-More Bedroom
Households	31.3%	42.2%	11.7%	11.7%	14.9%
Units	0.0%	14.1%	33.2%	36.7%	16.0%

Percent of Total Households and Homes 2022 (NH)	1-Person	2-Person	3-Person	3-Person	4-or-More Person
	0-Bedroom	1-Bedroom	2-Bedroom	3-Bedroom	4-or-More Bedroom
Households	27.6%	38.2%	15.1%	15.1%	19.1%
Units	1.8%	11.0%	30.3%	38.4%	18.4%

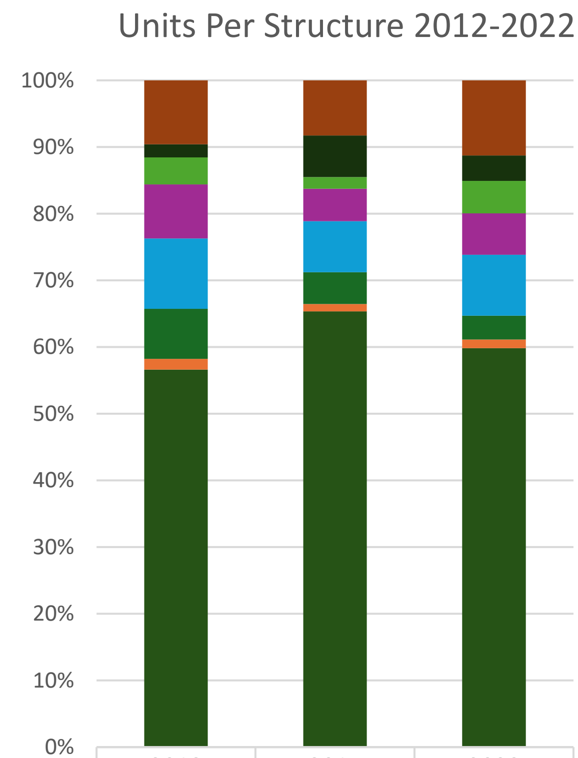
Units in Structure

Newport's housing stock is largely dominated by single-unit structures. Of these, the majority are the single unit, detached type, making up 59.8% of housing stock in 2022.[50] See Table 9 below for structure size spread compared to the Newport CDP and the State, and Figure 18 for Newport's housing stock spread over time.

While Newport's housing stock is largely single-unit, it includes a smaller proportion of single-unit structures than the State, and a greater proportion of 3-4-, 5-9-, and 10-19-unit structures.[51] 5-9-, 10-19-, and 20+ unit structures are more common in the CDP than the Town as a whole, implying slight concentration. Mobile homes make up a much greater proportion of housing in Newport than the rest of the State and are the structure type with the most significant percentage difference between the Town and the State.

Table 9 - Housing stock structure type at varying geographies by percent of total, according to 2018-2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

	Newport CDP	Newport	New Hampshire
1-unit, detached	56.5%	59.8%	64.1%
1-unit, attached	0.1%	1.3%	5.2%
2 units	2.8%	3.6%	4.9%
3 or 4 units	8.7%	9.1%	4.9%
5 to 9 units	8.4%	6.2%	5.2%
10 to 19 units	6.6%	4.9%	3.1%
20 or more units	5.2%	3.8%	7.8%
Mobile home	11.6%	11.3%	4.8%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%



	2012	2017	2022
Mobile home	287	227	322
20 or more units	59	171	109
10 to 19 units	122	48	139
5 to 9 units	243	133	178
3 or 4 units	316	210	261
2 units	225	131	102
1-unit, attached	48	30	37
1-unit, detached	1697	1792	1711

Figure 18 - Units in structure, estimated total quantity (below) and percentage of total housing stock (above) according to ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Population & Housing Density

Newport covers 43.64 square miles (27,930 acres), of which 43.57 (27,885 acres) are land.[52] The 2020 Census places the population at 6,299 and population density at 144.6 people per square mile.[53] This corresponds to 0.23 people per acre. The number of housing units at this time was 2,922, with a density of 67.1 units per square mile and 0.10 units per acre.

The Newport CDP covers 14.1 square miles (9030 acres) of land in the center of town. The 2020 Census places the population living within its bounds at 4,735, or 75% of Newport's total population.[54] This means the CDP has a density of 335.6 people per square mile or 0.52 people per acre. It also includes 2191 units with an overall density of 155.3 units per square mile / 0.24 units per acre. See Table 10 below for a breakdown of density in geographies varying in size from the Newport Census-Designated Place to New Hampshire, and Figure 19 on the following page for a map of housing and population density by census block.

Table 10 - Population and housing density for geographies increasing in size: Newport Census-Designated Place, Newport Town, Sullivan County, and the State of New Hampshire. Data based on 2020 U.S. Decennial Census. Number of bedrooms is a rough minimum estimate and is not exact due to uncertainty surrounding the quantity of bedrooms in units with more than 5 bedrooms.

	Total	Square Miles	Acres	Density per Square Mile	Density per Acre
Population Newport CDP	4,735	14.1	9,030	335.6	0.52
Units Newport CDP	2,191			155.3	0.24
Estimated Bedrooms Newport CDP	6,470			458.5	0.72
Population Newport	6,299	43.6	27,885	144.6	0.23
Units Newport	2,922			67.1	0.10
Estimated Bedrooms Newport	8,148			187.0	0.29
Population Sullivan County	43,063	537.9	344,256	801.0	0.13
Units Sullivan County	21,797			40.5	0.06
Estimated Bedrooms Sullivan County	60,520			112.5	0.18
Population New Hampshire	1,377,529	8951.0	5,728,640	153.9	0.24
Units New Hampshire	638,795			71.4	0.11
Estimated Bedrooms New Hampshire	1,706,767			190.7	0.30

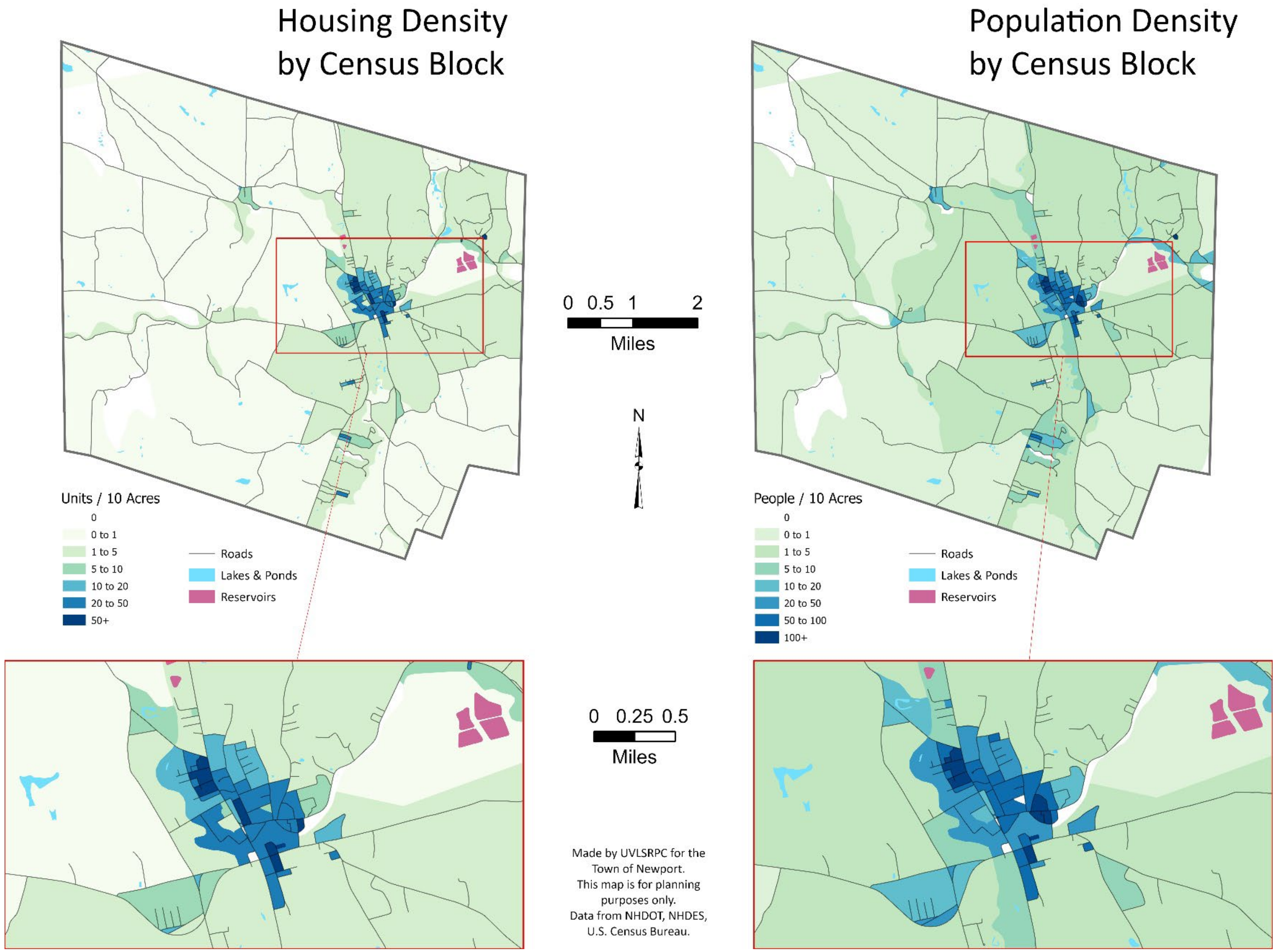


Figure 19 - Housing density in units/10 acres, and population density in people/10 acres of the Town of Newport, 2020. Data from 2020 Decennial Census.

Looking at Figure 19, it is clear to see that Newport's housing stock is quite geographically concentrated. Most of the town's land area has very low housing density, especially in the western half of town. In fact, 72% of Newport's total land area has a housing density of less than 1 unit per 10 acres.[55] Density increases closer to the town center, but rarely exceeds 5 units per 10 acres outside of the cluster of development at the junction of NH Routes 10 and 103. Inside the cluster, however, density is significantly higher, and in some census blocks exceeds 50 units per 10 acres, or 5 per acre. These high-density census blocks include 7.5% of the town's housing while only comprising 0.1% of the town's land area.

Newport's population is less concentrated than its housing stock, with 58% of the town's total land area having a density of fewer than 1 person per 10 acres.[56] However, density still increases significantly closer to the town center, and in the highest density census blocks reach over 100 people per 10 acres. Though these blocks are different than the highest density housing blocks, proportions are similar, with around 0.1% of the town's land area including 7.2% of the town's population.

Based on the 2020 Decennial Census data in Table 10, Newport has a slightly lower but similar population, unit, and bedroom density than the State of New Hampshire.[57] Most of this density is clearly concentrated in the Newport CDP, which has density values at least double that of the entire town. The CDP's population and unit densities are both greater by a factor of 2.32, while its bedroom density is greater by a factor of 2.45. This suggests that while there are more units in the center of town, they also tend to have a higher bedroom count. Newport also has a higher population and housing density than the whole of Sullivan County, which is to be expected as the town has more development than many other nearby towns.

Seasonal Housing

In 2017, 24% of vacant units in Newport were vacant for rent, 50% were vacant due to being used for “seasonal, recreational, or occasional” purposes, and 26% were vacant for unspecified reasons.[58] In 2022, 14% were sold but not occupied, 66% were seasonal, and 20% were unspecified.[59] AirDNA MarketMiner suggests that Newport has approximately 50 short-term rental listings.[60] This data indicates that a growing share of Newport housing is being used for seasonal, temporary, or other purposes that are not full-time housing. This effectively removes these units from the homeowner’s and renter’s markets.

When Homes Were Built

Old homes may pose a health risk to residents. Homes built prior to the 1970s are far more likely to have asbestos, and many were not built to properly prevent the buildup of carcinogenic radon. In addition, homes built prior to 1978 may have lead plumbing or paint. Newport homes constructed prior to 1980 account for 64% of stick, 51% prior to 1970.[61] See Figure 20 for a full breakdown of structure construction age in Newport.

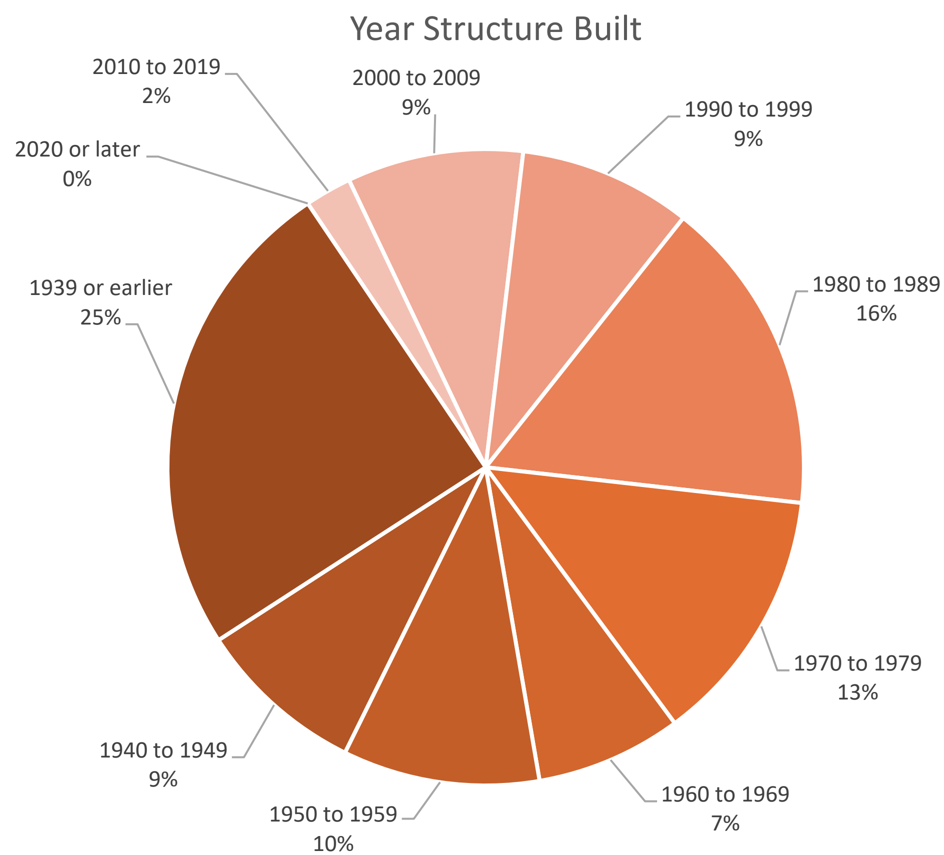


Figure 20 - Year structures were built as a percentage of total occupied housing units that fall within a selected time range according to 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Plumbing, Kitchen, & Telephone

2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates report that no housing units lack plumbing or kitchen utilities, but 2% of homes lack telephone access.[62] In 2017, an estimated 0.5% of households lacked complete kitchen access and 2.2% lacked telephone access.[63] This indicates a generally low level of concern for housing that lacks plumbing and kitchen access. In addition, lacking telephone access may not be an issue for households that do not rely on wired telephone connections.

Water & Sewer

Information provided by Newport suggests that the cost of water and sewer in Newport are quite high due to underutilization. The town has a water & sewer system that can accommodate many homes, but Town officials report that the system is only utilized at around 30% capacity. According to NH Department of Environmental Services data as of January 1, 2023, at 5,000 gallons Newport's typical water & sewer bill is $111.30, above the state median of $98.54.[64] NH DES reports a minimum statewide bill of $30.56 and a maximum of $208.04 for this quantity, placing Newport in the middle of statewide utility costs. After 10,000 gallons, utilities may cost more to encourage conservation. The average post-10,000 price per 1,000 gallons in Newport is $22.26, also higher than the state median of $14.27. This is towards the high end compared to other municipalities, with a statewide minimum of $0 and a maximum of $38.35.

Regarding town finances, NH DES reports that as of 2020, Newport's utility cost recovery ratio including depreciation was 0.96, indicating that utility rates may not be sufficient to effectively cover the cost of operations and maintenance and suggesting financial concern.[65] For households, the median amount that households spend on annual water & sewer bills is 2.04% of the area median household income.

Units Authorized by Building Permit

Between 2000 and 2020, 265 units were authorized in Newport by building permits.[66] Please note that this does not correspond to actual unit construction. Permit numbers peaked significantly in 2007, but have been low since 2008, which may be the result of the financial and housing crisis driving developers out of business. Local regulations and land use limits may also stall permit authorization, or limited affordability for contractors due to high construction material costs.

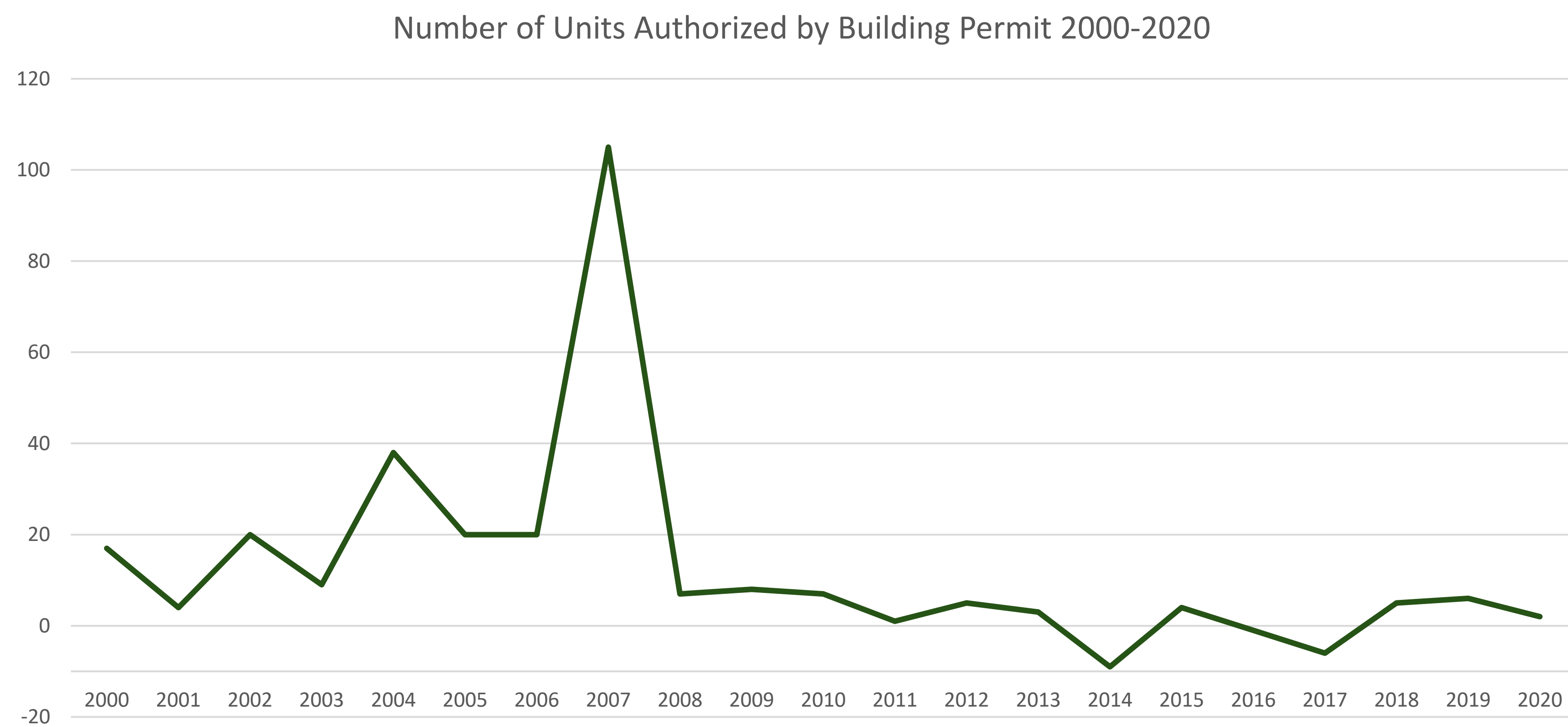


Figure 21 - Number of units authorized by building permit between 2000 and 2020 according to the American Community Survey. This does not correspond to units constructed.

1.9 - Fair Share Housing Targets

The 2023 UVLSRPC Regional Housing Needs Assessment includes a “fair share” assessment, in which targets for new housing are provided for municipalities to reach between now and 2040. The targets are based on the idea that all municipalities will provide their “fair share” of housing to the region, especially focused on the development of workforce housing stock. Future housing needs targets for the town of Newport are included in Table 11 and Table 12 below.

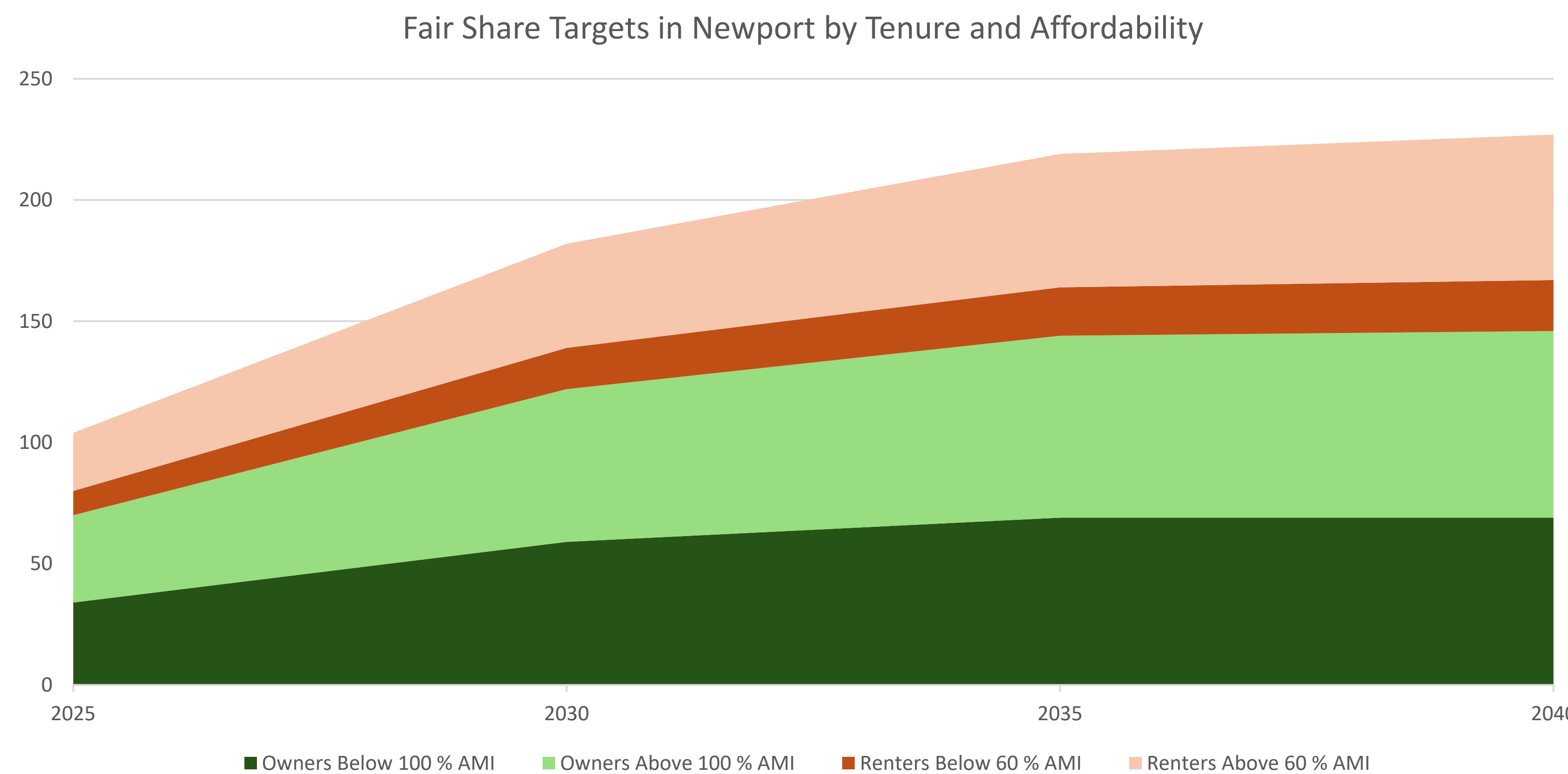
Table 11 - Summary of future housing targets for Newport, NH according to need and based on the Housing Production Model performed by Root Policy in 2022. New housing includes new construction and renovation of existing structures that results in additional housing units being made available.[67]

Targets for New Housing Production										
	2025	2030	2035	2040	Total	Below 100% AMI	Above 100% AMI	Total	Below 60% AMI	Above 60% AMI
Newport	105	182	219	227	146	69	77	81	21	60

Table 12 – Newport, NH fair share housing targets by year, tenure, and affordability.

	Total	Owners	Owners Below 100 % AMI	Owners Above 100 % AMI	Renters	Renters Below 60 % AMI	Renters Above 60 % AMI
2025	105	70	34	36	34	10	24
2030	182	122	59	63	61	17	43
2035	219	144	69	75	75	20	55
2040	227	146	69	77	81	21	60

Though affordable housing is a key topic of conversation, the addition of homes greater than 100% AMI is critical to the development and stability of the housing market. The inclusion of such homes in fair share targets is based on the idea that people who can afford such homes are currently occupying lower-priced homes and participating in the market for said homes. This increases competition, but also increases the prices for the same homes due to their ability to pay more than people with lower incomes. Adding higher-priced homes to the housing market gives said higher-income individuals the ability to “move up” to live in homes that may be viewed as more suited to their income level, decreasing competition for and increasing affordability of lower-priced homes. This lowered competition ideally leads to home prices decreasing, reducing the likelihood that people will live in housing they cannot afford.



1.10 - Stakeholder Input

Between November 2023 and January 2024, UVLSRPC conducted targeted stakeholder outreach with four priority groups identified by RPC staff and the Town. These groups were chosen due to their unique role in Newport's housing challenges and the ability to provide insight into areas of identified data gaps.

Businesses

UVLSRPC reached out to 66 of Newport's local businesses and received six responses. Despite a low participation rate, these responding businesses represented a variety of industries, from manufacturing to non-profit arts. While 5 of the businesses employ between 1 and 10 full-time employees, the respondent from the manufacturing industry employs approximately 100.

When asked about average salaries for employees, one business responded $15,001-$25,000, three responded $25,001-$35,000, and two responded $35,001-$50,000. Assuming a two-person household working the same job at the maximum income level within these ranges, this corresponds to maximum housing prices of $1,250, $1,750, and $2,500 before employees would become housing cost burdened. Employers mentioned concerns about housing affordability, with two specifically mentioning high costs and a lack of affordable housing. However, two businesses suggested that housing quality was a greater concern, and that adding housing for those with lower incomes would lead to further issues.

To assess concerns heard by town staff, UVLSRPC gathered information specific to the issue of employees working in Newport and having to live somewhere else. While two businesses employing 1-2 full-time employees reported between 90% and 100% of their employees live in Newport, the four larger employers reported percentages between 25% and 50%. Based on a rough calculation, these responses suggest that approximately 66 out of the 122 full-time employees mentioned in the survey do not live in Newport, or 54%. Five out of six businesses agreed that “Employees that do not live in Newport have difficulty finding housing that meets their needs (size, location, price, etc.) in Newport,” while the business employing one full-time employee and 90% Newport-based employees responded neutrally. Car trips are the most common mode of commuting to work, with estimated average commute times ranging from 5 to 30 minutes. This is quite a range, implying that some employees not living in Newport may live as far away as Lebanon or New London.

Employees who have difficulty finding appropriate housing, especially in relation to work and commuting, may be faced with great difficulty. Businesses were asked to estimate how many of their employees are unhoused or underhoused in a given year, and while three responded 0%, others did report that their employees face these conditions. The largest employer estimated this applies to

11%-20% of their employees, while smaller businesses suggested 1%-10% and 41%-50%. Some respondents mentioned quality concerns mentioning unsafe conditions and poorly-kept apartment buildings.

Housing difficulties impact employees directly, but effects are felt by the businesses employing them as well. In the last 5 years, half of the responding businesses lost an employee due to housing difficulties, and two were unable to hire someone due to housing difficulties. One business currently limits open hours due to a lack of employees, and two report that housing impacts the experience level of people they hire. UVLSRPC asked employers to assess how much they agree with the statement that several factors impact their hiring process. See Figure 22 below for responses to these questions.

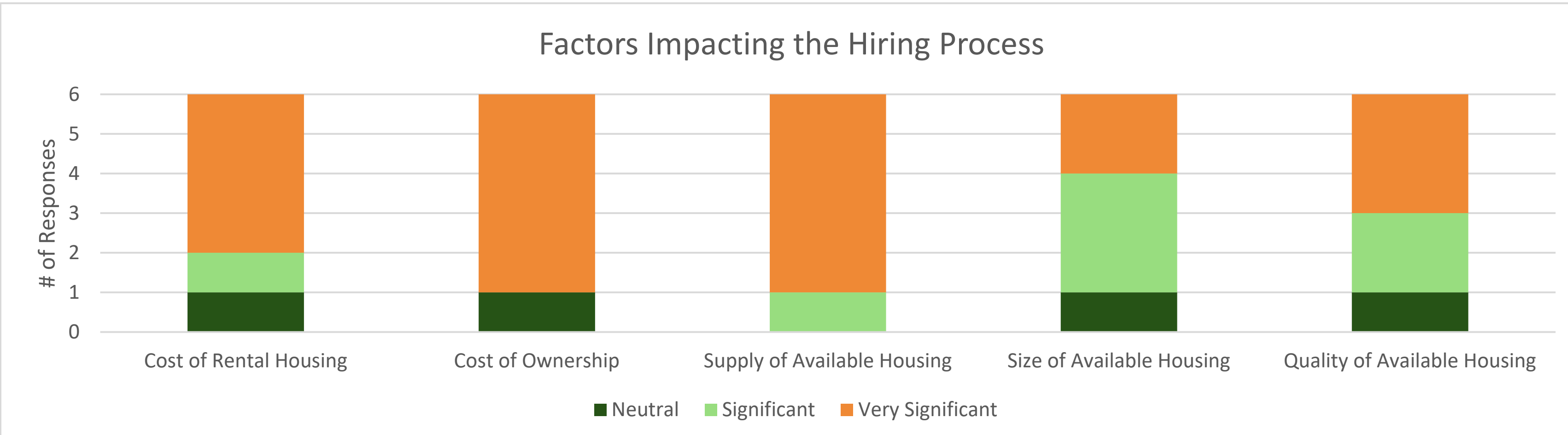


Figure 22 - Business survey responses when asked to give level of agreement with the statement that certain factors affect the experience level of people they are able to hire.

Businesses may involve themselves with helping employees navigate a difficult housing market. When asked if they help their employees access or find housing, all but one business answered no, with one stating that they help employees find apartments through word of mouth. However, additional comments received suggest a range of interest in employers playing a larger role in the housing discussion. One business suggested that local businesses could be involved “working with local officials to raise awareness of the shortage,” and join the decision-making process for what type of housing is added to Newport. Another business stated that employees have no role in housing, saying “this is something that has to be addressed with planning boards, selectmen, and state agencies.” They also cited concerns about funding, taxes, and schooling impacting housing.

Table 13 - Table of questions asked to businesses and the answer of the respondents. Names and identifying comments have been removed.

What best describes your business/organization?	Approximately how many full-time equivalent employees do you employ on average in a given year?	What is the average yearly earnings for most of your employees?	Approximately what percentage of your employees live in Newport?	Rate how much you agree with this statement: Employees that do not live in Newport have difficulty finding housing that meets their needs (size, location, price, etc.) in Newport.
Manufacturing	100	$35,001-$50,000	45	Strongly agree
Professional, Technical, or Adm	4	$35,001-$50,000	1	Strongly agree
Information, Media, Communicati	5	$25,001-$35,000	50	Agree
Non Profit Arts	1	$25,001-$35,000	90	Neutral
Information, Media, Communicati	2	$25,001-$35,000	100	Agree
Healthcare or Social Services	10	$15,001-$25,000	50	Strongly agree

Table 13, continued.

Do you have an estimate for how many of your employees are unhoused or underhoused (unsafe conditions, overcrowded living, etc.) in a given year? If so, what percentage?	In the last five years, have you lost an employee due to housing difficulties?	In the last five years, have you been unable to hire someone due to housing difficulties?	When hiring, do you you consider whether an applicant already lives within Newport?
11%-20%	Yes		No
0% (No Employees)	Yes	No	No
0% (No Employees)	No	Yes	No
0% (No Employees)	No	No	No
41%-50%	No	No	No
1%-10%	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 13, continued.

Do you help your employees access or find housing?	If you answered yes to the last question, in what ways do you help employees access or find housing?	Other - If you answered yes to the last question, in what ways do you help employees access or find housing?
No		
No		
Yes	We_help_employees_find_housing	
No		
No		
No		

Table 13, continued.

Do you restrict your business/organization hours due to a lack of employees?	By household type, which employees are usually most in need of housing?	By age, which employees are usually most in need of housing?
No	Couples	25-34
No	Individuals	25-34
No	Individuals	25-34
No		25-34
No	Families	
Yes	Families	35-44

Table 13, continued.

Rate how much you agree with this statement: Housing impacts the experience level of the people we hire.	Cost of rental housing	Cost of housing ownership	Supply of available housing	Size of available housing	Quality of available housing
Neutral	Significant	Very Significant	Very Significant	Significant	Neutral
Agree	Very Significant	Very Significant	Very Significant	Very Significant	Very Significant
Agree	Very Significant	Very Significant	Very Significant	Significant	Very Significant
Disagree	Neutral	Neutral	Significant	Neutral	Significant
Neutral	Very Significant	Very Significant	Very Significant	Significant	Significant
Neutral	Very Significant	Very Significant	Very Significant	Very Significant	Very Significant

Table 13, continued.

How do your employees commute to work?	How long would you estimate (in minutes) your employees commute to work?	What barriers have you seen employees have with regard to housing?
Car,Public_ Transportation, Walk/Bike,Carpool	10-25	Low-income applicants receive preferential treatment to personnel who earn enough to pay their own way. Lack of available housing has a large volume of applicants and people working do not have a chance to meet with the landlords unless they take time off and lose wages as a result.
Car	20-30 minutes	Not enough available housing. What is available is very expensive.
Car	average commute is 25 minutes	Affordable rentals in Newport are hard to find, and anyone with school aged children would rather live elsewhere.
Car,Walk/Bike	5-20 minutes	We have an ample amount of housing, just not well kept. The type of apartment buildings being added don't seem like the quality our employees would want, it seems like more low income housing, which just perpetuates the problems.
Car	10 minutes	I have no direct experience with this.
Car	30 MIN	The lack of housing available and the high cost of housing if something is available. When housing is available, often times it is in unsafe conditions that do not meet code.

Table 13, continued.

What role do employers have in housing?
Working with local officials to raise awareness of the shortage and work to bring more affordable, not low income, housing to the area.
We do our best to help employees find rentals in town through word of mouth.
Currently, none. This is something that has to be addressed with planning boards, selectmen and state agencies. Because of the completely unfair and unbalanced education funding burden on property taxes, new housing in poor towns like Newport has to include discussions on how many children might come into the school system. We need housing, we need balanced school budgets across the state. These two should not be in conflict.

Table 13, continued.

Any additional comments?
First, why would manufacturing not be one of the drop-down choices for type of business? The majority of employees in the Newport area work in Manufacturing. The area of preferential treatment for low income is a real problem that must be addressed, Many of the people seeking housing in that work for us want to work and pay their own way, this must be a focus and not the people that chose to live off the tax revenue created by the people that are working. It is understood that there are people that need help, but many choose not to work and instead "work the system," these people must be culled from the welfare state. We have employees that are living in campers that are not winter ready as they do not qualify as low income.
House is an issue in Newport, but definitely not the only one.

Local Schools

UVLSRPC asked three schools and school districts several questions relating to student housing, transportation, and budget. Only one school district responded to UVLSRPC to provide input.

The school responded neutrally when asked if housing impacts school operations but agreed that housing impacts students. When asked about the school's relationship with the town's housing situation, however, the school reported difficulty finding staff locally.

Students in Newport may struggle with housing insecurity, which will have a significant impact on their lives at school. The respondent reported that "we at times have homeless youth" who are supported by the school's homeless liaison. In addition, around 60 students on average transfer in and out of the school district each year. Even if a student has secure housing, they may be faced with transportation difficulties if nearby housing is inadequate for their household needs. This may lead to unsafe trips or long travel times to school for students, high transportation costs for schools, and environmental or health impacts from fleet operations. The respondent responded "disagree" when asked if it is easy for students to walk or ride their bike to school, and that "we bus all students." This leads to a range of travel time between 12 and 80 minutes for students, much higher than most commuting lengths in the Town. In addition, 20% of the school's total budget goes towards transportation costs.

Table 14 - Table of questions asked to schools and the answer of the single respondent. Names and identifying comments (questions 1 and 11) have been removed.

How many students per year on average transfer in/out of the school/school district?	What is the relationship between your school/school district and your town's housing situation?	Rate how much you agree with this statement: Housing impacts school/school district operations.	Rate how much you agree with this statement: Housing impacts students.
60	we at times have homeless youth who we have to support with the homeless liaison. It has also been hard to get staff locally	Neutral	Agree

Table 14, continued

How do your students get to school? Please provide an approximate breakdown amongst bus riders, car riders, and walkers/bikers.	Rate how much you agree with this statement: It is easy for students to walk or ride their bike to school.	What do you estimate is the shortest amount of time (in minutes) a student travels for school in your school/school district?	What do you estimate is the longest commute (in minutes) a student travels for school in your school/school district?	How much of your school budget would you estimate goes toward transportation costs?
We bus all students	Disagree	12 minutes	80 minutes	20%

Low-Income Developers

UVLSRPC surveyed four local housing developers who are involved with low-income housing, with all four responding. Their developments ranged from 25-50 units in size with a median size of 35. Two of the four developments are specifically senior housing, while the other two are not.

Primary applicant household types are split 50-50, with the two senior housing developers receiving mostly individuals and the other two receiving mostly families. The two senior developers unsurprisingly estimated that the primary age group of tenants and applicants is 65+, while one developer who receives family applicants estimated 35-44 years and the last declined to respond.

Each of the four developers provided a different approach to answering UVLSRPC's question about vacancy rate, but all implied very low rates. One developer answered "0," and another said "Almost zero (we utilize a waitlist)." Another developer responded "3-4 weeks" implying that they also have very low vacancy rates and. The final developer, providing non-senior housing and the largest with 50 units, responded 2-6%. Despite varying vacancy rates, all four developers have a waiting list, with two reporting wait times of 3 and 4 years and another stating that the list includes 42 people.

One of the housing developers commented that they also provide senior housing in seven towns, supportive housing for chronically homeless in three towns, and family housing in three towns. They also added "we do have a parcel of land next to the parcel of land we are using for construction of our new Transit Facility... We purchased the adjacent parcel in hopes of possible housing development in the future."

Table 15 - Table of questions asked to low-income housing developers and their answers. Names and identifying comments (questions 1 and 11) have been removed.

How many units does your development have?	What is the approximate average vacancy rate of your development?	Do you have a waiting list?	If so, what is the average wait time of the waiting list?	If so, what is the approximate ratio of persons on the waiting list to available units?
40	3-4 weeks	Yes	approximately a 4 year wait	
30	0	Yes	3 years	
50	2-6%	Yes	Varies depending on preference.	36 people
25	Almost zero (we utilize a waitlist)	Yes	42	almost 2:1

Table 15, continued.

What do you estimate is the primary household type of applicants?	Other - What do you estimate is the primary household type of applicants?	What do you estimate is the primary age group of tenants and unit applicants?	Is your development specifically for senior housing?
Individuals		65+	Yes
Families			
Families		35-44	
Individuals		65+	Yes

2 - Developer Outreach

This section summarizes findings from UVLSRPC's outreach to current and potential housing developers in/for the Town of Newport. Conducted from March 1 through April 2, 2024, conversations with and surveys of developers helped identify common barriers to development as well as means to alleviate those barriers. This section includes a description of the survey, key findings, responses from each of four respondents, and an overview of guiding questions for outreach. **Altogether, education, increased diversity on planning boards, the pursuit of "missing middle" homes and other specific housing types, and municipal pursuit of a variety of policies, programs, funding, and regulations were identified as most impactful to reduce developer barriers to working in towns such as Newport.**

2.1 - Methodology

Through conducting developer outreach, UVLSRPC staff aimed to better understand municipal barriers to development. To maximize engagement and accessibility, developers were allowed to either participate via phone interview or completion of an online survey. Interview and survey questions addressed their experiences working in Newport or neighboring towns, their recent projects, and current economic conditions for developers. The survey questions were based on developer outreach conducted for the 2023 Regional Housing Needs Assessment and used to guide the developer interviews. Each question was optional for respondents and can be found at the end of this document.

UVLSPRC staff initially identified 16 housing developers who had experience overseeing projects in the Newport and/or broader Upper Valley Lake Sunapee/Greater NH/VT Upper Valley region. (Note: this preliminary list included the four low-income developers within Newport surveyed during for the Needs Analysis.) UVLSRPC expanded the list to include recommended contacts from developers as well as the New Hampshire Office of Planning and Development. From March 1 through April 2, UVLSRPC received input from four developers, including three contacts who have worked on projects within Newport and one developer who has overseen housing developments elsewhere in New Hampshire and serves as a property manager within Newport. Two respondents participated via phone interview, and two respondents completed the online survey.

2.2 - Key Findings:

Increased education for municipal staff, planning board members, and the public would improve efficiencies in decision-making processes, limit confusion and misinformation, and improve municipal-developer relationships.

- Better understanding of the effect of social imbalances throughout New Hampshire and the ability to make positive impacts via local policy change, municipal responsiveness to developers, municipal awareness of planning and construction costs, and communication between municipal staff and planning board members were highlighted as common skills to develop for municipal staff in New Hampshire.

- Throughout outreach, tension with planning boards was often cited as a major limiting factor for pursuing development. Planning board members' perpetuation of "myths" surrounding affordable housing, potential new populations, parking, and schools stalled and increased the cost of development. Additionally, planning board members' regular, incorrect citation of local regulations, Town data, and New Hampshire housing data increased confusion and project timelines. According to respondents, planning board members also often do not understand development costs, development processes, and developer risk.
- Likewise, respondents mentioned that members of the public had similar knowledge gaps to those serving on planning boards. Members of the public often express distrust of developers and are unfamiliar with State and local housing concerns, data, developer processes, and development costs.
- As a result of skepticism surrounding developers, developers are susceptible to poor treatment by the public. Such treatment may include name-calling, immediate denial of developers' statements, or an unwillingness to cooperate.

Developers believe that greater diversity on planning boards may alleviate stagnation in development.

- Developers noted that in their experience in New Hampshire, planning board members have typically been aged 50+ and served for several years.
- Respondents stated that this demographic tended to have outdated perceptions of housing and development, be the least reflective of housing need in their respective municipalities, and were more likely to bring personal, longstanding tensions with other board members, municipal staff, or developers into planning board meetings.

There is a current need for "mid-range" or "missing middle" homes that is currently risk for developers to pursue.

- Return on more expensive projects and government assistance for affordable housing has created a gap in housing stock.

Large multi-unit buildings (8+ units), senior specific housing, and workforce specific housing were considered most impactful to affect housing demand.

Municipal staff could pursue a variety of policies, programs, funding, and regulation changes to pursue innovative housing solutions:

- Allowing smaller lots

- Density bonuses
- Easier conversions of large home and non-residential existing buildings
- More skilled local labor
- Greater consultation with developers/builders/architects/engineers when receiving applications
- More locally produced building materials and supplies
- Pre-approved plans for accessory units
- Improved relations with or presence of building officials
- Clearer and more streamlined local permitting (fast track process; regional regulatory approaches)

2.3 - Respondent 1 – New Hampshire Developer and Property Manager; Manages a Property in Newport

Method: Phone interview (~40 minutes)

Date: March 21, 2024

How do inquiries and demand match up to your capacity?

- The business pipeline currently matches capacity.
- Rates are currently high and investors are squeamish; building market rate communities is challenging because rents are high, and builders and concerned about completing projects and having the market change.
- There is currently a huge demand for affordable housing (with units renting at approximately $1,600 per month). [Respondent's] business is mainly focused on affordable housing at the moment.
- Development timeline could be shortened if it were easier to find land that is developable.
- Because most of their costs are at the front end, their business would "pass" on communities that are particularly difficult to work with.

What types of housing do you see the greatest demand for? How are these achieved?

- There is "great demand" for single-family homes in mid-range.
- There is also high demand for studios and one-bedroom units.

How has the cost of construction changed over time?

- Over the last three years, the cost of "everything" has gone up 30 thirty percent.
- Construction is likely the most impacted, with recruiting staff in trade professions being difficult over the past ten years.
- There is a significant lack of plumbers, electricians, and pipe fitters, which has enabled those professionals to negotiate "much higher" wages.

What can local leaders do to encourage more affordable housing development?

- Education and dispelling myths.
- Communities and Consequences I and II are helpful short films for municipal staff.

- Attending planning board meetings and documenting common issues and inaccuracies in planning board statements to help educate them would be helpful.
- The broader community should also be further educated on realities of development and planning board operation.
- At a state/higher level, messaging and data should be consolidated to educate planning boards.

Do you have any experience developing in Newport? If so, how was it?

- Respondent currently working as a property manager for a developer in Newport.
- Respondent did not have many issues, and when they spoke with the developer, the challenges the developer faced were those that are typical: residents and those outside of the planning board expressed undue concern over school capacity and street parking (including in locations far from downtown Newport).

How could that experience have been made easier?

- There are three main obstacles to affordable housing: the public's perception of what it is, parking, and schools.
- People tend to have an outdated view of affordable housing, often conceiving of it as "project-based" or a "slum" and believe that it will attract unwanted residents, although the reality is that affordable housing typically suits a single adult, an adult and a couple children, and seniors.
- Many communities want two parking spaces per unit, although the reality of what residents actually need is much lower, "closer to 1.25." Parking has been a huge issue when speaking with planning boards, and perception of how much parking is needed seems to be based on decades-old planning around prevalence of shopping centers, malls, and a need for multi-vehicle households.
- Many people also think that if new housing is added, there will be a huge influx of students, further straining local schools. The reality is that two-bedroom, one-bedroom, and studio units don't attract that many large families.

What public policies, programs, funding, or regulation changes do you think could help produce innovative housing solutions that meet local needs?

- All the solutions are at the local level.
- The respondent is a proponent of ADUs by right and up to four units by right.

Other comments?

- Challenges are not unique to any particular community, and they have never had a development fall apart because of a community.
- Most people on planning boards are in their 50s and 60s and use decades-old information and ideas to inform their decisions. The general population needs to be educated on current data.
- Some towns have a large population of older people who will not be there in ten years. There's a tax base that will need to be replaced, and for a lot of people, homes in those towns are still out of reach.

2.4 - Respondent 2 – New Hampshire Developer; Developer in Newport

Method: Online Survey

Date: March 21, 2024

Where would new housing constructions be most impactful?

Table 16 - Respondent 2 Answers

	Very impactful	Fairly impactful	Impactful	Slightly impactful
Downtown			X	
Near downtown			X	
Village center			X	
Near village center			X	
Outlying rural areas			X	

What types of new housing would be most impactful to affect housing demand?

Table 17 - Respondent 2 Answers, Continued

	Very impactful	Fairly impactful	Impactful	Slightly impactful	Not at all impactful
Single-family homes			X		
Duplexes			X		
Small multi-unit buildings (1-8 units)			X		
Large multi-unit buildings (over 8 units)	X				
Tiny homes					X
Senior specific housing	X				
Workforce specific housing	X				
Accessory dwelling units		X			
Mixed use buildings				X	
Manufactured / mobile homes			X		
Rehab large older homes to multi-unit			X		
Rehab single-family homes			X		
Convert commercial structures	X				
Transit oriented development			X		

What public policies, programs, funding, or regulation changes do you think could help produce innovative housing solutions that meet local needs?

- Allowing smaller lots
- Density bonuses

- Easier conversions of large home and non-residential existing buildings
- More skilled local labor
- Greater consultation with developers/builders/architects/engineers when receiving applications
- More locally produced building material and supplies
- Pre-approved plans for accessory units
- Improved relations with or presence of building officials
- Clearer and more streamlined local permitting (fast track process; regional regulatory approaches)

What zoning characteristics do you look for?

- Zoning for high-density residential
- Reduced parking requirements

Any other comments?

Newport needs to invest in hiring people that are qualified to serve in the positions hired for that have the mentality to do what is necessary from a support standpoint to get to a "yes" on the proposed developments. Too often, people in town government positions are obstacles to such.

2.5 - Respondent 3 – New Hampshire Developer; Developer in Newport

Method: Phone interview (~30 minutes)

Date: March 26, 2024

Do you have any experience developing in Newport? If so, how was it? How could it have been made easier?

- The experience was not easy.
- When working with the town via RSA 79-E, the project was eligible for 15 years of tax relief, however, Newport gave the developer three years (some people at town meetings even called for zero years). Planning board thought that relief amounted to developers "stealing from them" and would set a precedent for "breaks." (For comparison, the respondent's development in Lebanon was granted eleven years.)
- The planning board set a precedent of not wanting to collaborate with developers.
- The public could be more aware of RSA 79-E; if it's difficult to work with external developers, residents could make changes to their own buildings, but it would still be difficult when facing resistance from the planning board.
- More than any policies or regulations, a change in the people in charge and the public perception of development would improve housing and attract developers.
- In one discussion of zoning, members of the public claimed that the respondent was attempting to bring migrants to the community.
- During project complications, municipal staff were repeatedly unresponsive, and there seemed to be a disconnect amongst municipal staff and the planning board. Resulting project delays were extremely costly.
- Planning board had errors that further delayed the project.
- If anything, streamlining the approval process for developers would be helpful and potentially reduce friction with the public.
- There isn't a conversation happening in Newport around development. Members of the planning board rely on outdated or untrue information and were unwilling to believe data (even when put out by national/state agencies).
- In respondent's work in Lebanon, municipal meetings usually entailed more of a conversation and both pro- and anti-development stances.

What are the key things for the public and/or planning board to learn?

- The town should educate property owners on what they can do to fix their buildings, including with regard to 79-E. In general, the town should make residents aware of how legislative changes can be used to their benefit.
- Building inspections should happen and codes should be enforced. “If all municipalities continue to let legacy building owners operate housing that is not safe or compliant, then no one is ever going to sell anything.” People also should not be paying so much for places that are not structurally sound.

What can local leaders do to encourage more affordable housing development?

- Although there’s a desire to build specific housing for specific incomes, the reality is that more units [even those that are more expensive] are needed.
- Make it easier for developers to build. Initial project approvals are only the first step. It’s much more difficult to efficiently go through construction while working with the public.
- Educate the public on the development process. Many people do not understand that developers incur risk, do not make millions of dollars off project approvals, and that building is extremely costly. Returns are very low right now, and out of town investors are wary of working in New Hampshire.
- The only projects being built are affordable housing because they’re government subsidized. “Missing middle housing” exists as a consequence.

Other comments?

- Newport needs to get younger people on the planning board and needs people willing to have an open mind about improving the Town.
- Newport should have security at their meetings and be willing to remove people and set expectations about behavior. There is one guy that is well-known throughout the Town for coming to meetings, swearing at people, and threatening to sue them. Other attendees are scared to voice their opinions because of this one person.
- Meetings should be streamlined; in example of Lebanon, board members will read documents word-for-word, which extends meeting timeline and becomes costly for developers who pay contractors (e.g. an architect) hourly to attend.
- [Respondent] would love to work with people in the area in the future and has a soft spot for Newport, despite past difficulties. They believe that the region is beautiful, has wonderful people, and has great homes.

2.6 - Respondent 4 – New Hampshire Developer; Developer in Newport

Method: Online Survey

Date: April 2, 2024

Where would new housing constructions be most impactful?

Table 18 - Respondent 4 Answers

	Very impactful	Fairly impactful	Impactful	Slightly impactful
Downtown	X			
Near downtown	X			
Village center	X			
Near village center	X			
Outlying rural areas		X		

What types of new housing would be most impactful to affect housing demand?

Table 19 - Respondent 4 Answers, Continued

	Very impactful	Fairly impactful	Impactful	Slightly impactful	Not at all impactful
Single-family homes		X			
Duplexes		X			
Small multi-unit buildings (1-8 units)	X				
Large multi-unit buildings (over 8 units)	X				
Tiny homes			X		
Senior specific housing	X				
Workforce specific housing	X				
Accessory dwelling units			X		
Mixed use buildings		X			
Manufactured / mobile homes			X		
Rehab large older homes to multi-unit	X				
Rehab single-family homes			X		
Convert commercial structures			X		
Transit oriented development	X				

What public policies, programs, funding, or regulation changes do you think could help produce innovative housing solutions that meet local needs?

- Allowing smaller lots
- Density bonuses
- Easier conversions of large home and non-residential existing buildings

- More skilled local labor
- Greater consultation with developers/builders/architects/engineers when receiving applications
- More locally produced building material and supplies
- Pre-approved plans for accessory units
- Improved relations with or presence of building officials
- Clearer and more streamlined local permitting (fast track process; regional regulatory approaches)

What zoning characteristics do you look for?

- Zoning for high-density residential
- Zoning for moderate-density residential

2.7 - Interview and Survey Guiding Questions

The below questions below were used to structure conversation during the interviews.

1. Tell me about your company/practice.

2. How long does it take to build new housing from first concept (or contact for private construction) through final completion?

3. How do inquiries and demand match up to your capacity?

4. What types of housing do you see the greatest demand for? How are these achieved?

5. How has the cost of construction changed over time?

6. As New Hampshire changes, do you see a need to build more diverse housing?

7. What are the biggest barriers to the development of housing that meets local needs and is affordable for its area?

8. What can local leaders do to encourage more affordable housing development?

9. Do you have any experience developing in Newport?

a. How was it?

b. How could it have been made easier?

10. Any other comments?

2.8 - Online Survey Question Layout

The following images demonstrate how the online survey appeared to respondents.

What is the name of your company?*

Where would new housing constructions be most impactful?

	Very impactful	Fairly Impactful	Impactful	Slightly impactful	Not at all impactful
Downtown					
Near downtown					
Village center					
Near village center					
Outlying rural areas					

Picture 1 - Survey Questions (Continued Below)

What types of new housing would be most impactful to affect housing demand?

	Very impactful	Fairly Impactful	Impactful	Slightly impactful	Not at all impactful
Single-family homes	○	○	○	○	○
Duplexes	○	○	○	○	○
Small multi-unit buildings (1-8 units)	○	○	○	○	○
Large multi-unit buildings (over 8 units)	○	○	○	○	○
Tiny homes	○	○	○	○	○
Senior specific housing	○	○	○	○	○
Workforce specific housing	○	○	○	○	○
Accessory dwelling units	○	○	○	○	○
Mixed use buildings	○	○	○	○	○
Manufactured/mobile homes	○	○	○	○	○
Rehab large older homes to multi-unit	○	○	○	○	○
Rehab single-family homes	○	○	○	○	○
Convert commercial structures	○	○	○	○	○
Transit oriented development	○	○	○	○	○

What public policies, programs, funding, or regulation changes do you think could help produce innovative housing solutions that meet local needs?

- [ ] Allowing smaller lots
- [ ] Density bonuses
- [ ] Easier conversions of large home and non-residential existing buildings
- [ ] More skilled local labor
- [ ] Greater consultation with developers/builders/architects/engineers when receiving applications
- [ ] More locally produced building material and supplies
- [ ] Pre-approved plans for accessory units
- [ ] Improved relations with or presence of building officials
- [ ] Clearer and more streamlined local permitting (fast track process; regional regulatory approaches)

What zoning characteristics do you look for?

- ☐ Zoning for high-density residential
- ☐ Zoning for moderate-density residential
- ☐ Density bonuses for affordable units
- ☐ Reduced parking requirements
- ☐ Other

Any other comments?

3 - Local Regulations for Housing Opportunity

3.1 - Looking To the Future

A Vision of Housing Opportunity

The Town of Newport needs more housing units to safeguard the health and well-being of its current population and workforce while also protecting its local ecology and rural character.

The Town's ability to meet this need is plentiful because of the existing water and sewer service capacity. This available infrastructure helps the Town make protective choices to safeguard the ecologically valuable areas of Town while meeting needs for housing supply. It is important to protect these natural functions of the Town for its water quality, flood control, rural character, and recreation economy. With this land use in mind, an increase in housing stock may be attained by diversifying the types of homes allowed within the more residentially suitable areas, while simultaneously increasing minimum lot size requirements in the more ecologically sensitive parts of Town. Further, the Town needs to advance homes at a missing middle, affordable price point by incentivizing targeted rental ranges, maintaining existing housing stock, and advancing the development of smaller homes. While density in the center of Town may increase, requirements can help to maintain the integrity of stormwater infrastructure such as adjusted standards for stormwater management plans.

Vital Outcomes

These six vital strategies represent the cornerstones of vital homes to the Town of Newport in 2024:

I. Meet Current Needs for Housing Supply

Current housing stock is insufficient, especially those at an affordable price for middle-income households. Increasing housing stock in Newport will reduce prices over time, however, additional action is needed to target certain types of homes that will help ensure those who live here and wish to stay here, can do so.

II. Meet Current Resident Needs for Quality Homes

The Town needs to decrease the risk of current homes due to exposure to various hazards and substandard conditions. The enforcement of building standards must continue and be strengthened. In addition, the Town needs funding for home rehabilitation, such as lead paint abatement and energy efficiency improvements.

III. Encourage Missing Middle Housing Types

A diversity in households necessitates a diversity in structures. Diversifying homes may mean dwellings with a shared wall (e.g., multi-family, attached ADUs, homeshare, town homes), small and clustered single-story types (e.g., cottage court), and converting old buildings to residential (e.g., garage, barn). Many of these benefit from less land required.

IV. Further Efficient Procedures for Desired Homes

Many housing market variables are outside the control of a community (e.g., cost of labor, cost of materials, building code standards); however, local regulations are under local control when enabled by state statute. Local regulations must be clear and not increase risk. Desired homes need standards that are achievable, specific, and with incentives.

V. Encourage Local Home Creators

Resident-developed homes (e.g., ADU, duplex) represent significant potential for short-term impact on the housing shortage, are relatively low cost, have minimum natural resource impact, have minimum impact to the cost of community services, and result in the highest return on investment.

VI. Promote Efficient Land Use

Clustering homes benefits through the efficient use of community infrastructure and preservation of natural features. This type of land use comes in the form of infill, as well as low land-intensity development in the rural district that minimizes the extension of roads and fragmentation of natural habitat.

3.2 - Local Regulatory Audit

The Role of Regulations

Local regulations provide for orderly development that advances established local priorities. While lots are owned by individuals, the impact of their use on neighbors, community, and culture becomes the subject of local regulations. Subdivision authorizes the creation of lots and associated facilities such as roads. Zoning controls which land uses are allowed, or not allowed. Together, these controls provide opportunities for integrated planning for needed homes. Like any tool, they can be well or poorly made, and improvements can always be found as priorities change and new techniques develop.

The first zoning regulations – regulating the size and location of uses or structures in order to promote a community's general welfare – were adopted by New York City in 1916, and for New Hampshire it was Manchester in 1927. In Newport, zoning was first adopted in 1988. Many zoning regulations need modernization, especially regarding the provision of "reasonable and realistic" opportunities for the development of workforce housing (NH RSA 674:58-61). Northern New England has a tradition of strong state legislative oversight of municipal governments.[68] All powers of municipal governments are enabled by State law, as opposed to in "home rule" states where there are greater levels of local autonomy. In other words, local regulations in New Hampshire are limited to only what is 'enabled' by state statute.

Theory of zoning law…

"Zoning law increasingly tempers the ancient property law maxim that ownership extends from the surface downward to the center of the earth and upward indefinitely to the skies. Through the application of zoning law, courts have increasingly recognized that the common law right must be balanced with the rights of others as protected or restricted through zoning."

Peter J. Loughlin, *NH Practice Series Land Use, Planning, and Zoning*

Audit Overview

This regulatory audit seeks to identify regulatory strategies to advance housing opportunities in Newport. This section first discusses regulatory aspects in how they work well and are limited, followed by techniques for novel improvement in Newport. Regulations were identified as outstandingly satisfactory according to these parameters. Other regulations were noted for a specific limitation according to one or multiple parameters. We then discuss in more detail specific strategies for areas of improvement, including case studies.

While all of New Hampshire (and the country) is experiencing a housing crisis that requires creative, strategic thinking, the Newport regulatory story is helpful to understand within the context of its peer NH communities. When it comes to housing regulations, the Town of Newport is middle of the pack in New Hampshire (NH). The NH Zoning Atlas, produced in 2022 by Saint Anslem College, provides a picture of zoning across the state, summarized by buildable land.[69]

- Newport zoning, like much of NH, allows single-household dwellings by right. A small subset of just 1.2% of buildable land in NH prohibits residential dwellings.
- Multifamily dwellings of five or more are allowed in just under half the state's buildable area, including Newport's downtown.
- Small lots are considered more economically viable. For single households, these are defined as under one acre and 200 feet of frontage, available on 16% of NH buildable land. For five or more multifamily, small affordable lots are defined as under 2.5 acres and 300-foot frontage. Newport allows these small-lots in a few zoning districts, with multifamily more limited.
- Accessory dwelling units are seen to advance infill development, thus are deemed more viable when allowed by right and requiring less than two additional parking spaces on 42% of buildable land. Newport allows ADUs by special exception, and requires two additional parking spaces.
- Manufactured homes on individual lots are allowed on 48% of buildable land, while 31% allow both individual lots and housing parks. These homes are prohibited on 15%. Newport allows both parks and individual lots in rural districts.

Figure 23 - Images of housing types considered in Newport regulatory audit, considered on the mid-small size of missing middle housing. Credit Oregon Metro[70] and Congress for the New Urbanism.[71] The image has been modified from its original format.

The diversification of housing types is a cornerstone of efforts to advance needed homes.[72] Different types suit different households and price points; however, not all types are suitable everywhere. This audit considers features such as living space size and physical accessibility, as well as building form such as accessory dwelling units (ADUs), duplex (or two-family), fourplex, cottage court and cluster homes, and mixed use, among others. To assist this housing type evaluation, dimensional and design standards from Opticos Design were considered. Opticos Design is a missing middle housing consultant working at the national level, including recent work in Hanover, NH. These standards are intended for walkable and bikeable areas, and thus are most appropriately compared to Newport standards in the Downtown districts and cluster developments.

Table 20 - Dimensional and design standards for smaller missing middle housing types that are suitable to foster an active, pedestrian focused area. Credit: Opticos Design.[73]

	Duplex Side by Side	Duplex Stacked	Fourplex	Multiplex Small	Courtyard Building	Townhouse or Live/Work	Cottage Court
Frontage	55-75 ft	45-75 ft	60-75 ft	60-75 ft	100-135 ft	18-25 ft	100-160 ft
Area of Lot	5,500-11,250	4,500-11,250	6,000-11,250	6,000-11,250	11,000-20,250	1,530-3,000	15,000-24,000
Max Height	2.5 stories	2.5 stories	2.5 stories	2.5 stories	2.5 stories	2.5 stories	1.5 stories
Unit Number	2	2	3-4	6-10	20	1	5-10
Parking and Driveways	Regulate the location and design. Parking should be at the rear, and the front facade of buildings should feature entrances and windows rather than garage doors. It may be allowable for driveways to be shared, where land efficiency is needed; and Parking/driveways to encroach side/rear setbacks.						
Open Space	In walkable areas, open space should not be too high to allow for efficient, affordable, and attractive use of space. Recommend 50 to 100 square feet per unit by way of porches, patios, dooryards, etc. Provide form controls through frontage and open space standards.						Require for livability and usability of central green space.
Minimum Setbacks	Typically functions with setbacks of 10–15-foot front, 15-20 rear, 5-10 interior side, and 10-12 side street.						
Maximum Building Footprint	Can work better than lot size to facilitate fitting with neighborhood feel, along with frontage and lot width.						

Table 21 - Summary of Newport regulatory audit and proposed changes according to priority missing middle housing types. For each district Current and Proposed regulations are described for minimum lot size and frontage in square feet, unless indicated. The top line explains current, and the bottom is proposed standards. An X represents a housing option not being allowed. The color for Current and Proposed reflect how the standards align with Opticos Design recommendations described in Table 20 where green meets all recommendations, yellow some, and red none.

		Duplex Side-by-Side or Stacked	Fourplex or Multiplex Small	Courtyard Building	Townhouse or Live/Work Unit	Cottage Court
RN	*Rural Natural Resource*	X Proposed	X X	X X	X X	X X
		CURRENT R district: 20,000 to 40,000 and 200; PROPOSED: 2 acres and 200.				
RC	*Rural Commercial*	X Proposed	X X	X X	X X	X X
		CURRENT and PROPOSED: 5 acres and 300. PCD allowed.				
RR	*Rural Residential*	X Proposed	X X	X X	X X	X Proposed
		CURRENT R-1 district: 10,000 to 40,000 and 100 or 75; PROPOSED: 10,000 to 40,000 and 100 to 60.				
R-2	*General Residential*	Current Proposed	Current Proposed	Current Proposed	X Proposed	X Proposed
		CURRENT and PROPOSED: 10,000 to 40,000 and None.				
K	*Kelleyville*	X Proposed	X X	X X	X X	X X
		CURRENT and PROPOSED: 10,000 to 40,000 and 100. PCD allowed.				
B-1 **B-2**	*Light & Heavy Commercial*	Current Proposed	Current Proposed	Current Proposed	Current Proposed	X X
		CURRENT and PROPOSED: No restriction. All new construction housing requires special exceptions.				
PB	*Professional Business*	Current Proposed	X X	X X	X X	X X
		CURRENT and PROPOSED: 10,000 and 75.				

Zoning Districts

Regarding zoning districts, the following geographic adjustments are identified:

#	Evaluation of Current Regulatory Language	Specific Strategies to Consider
Z.1	R-2 district is limited in scale. Abutting neighborhoods currently zoned as R-1 are suitable for residential housing and some already have a density similar to the R-2 district.	Expand the R-2 to where residential development is highly suitable and infrastructure is available.
Z.2	R district does not sufficiently protect important natural resources, especially those on the western side of town.	Change to an RN (Rural Natural resource district) with a higher minimum lot size and housing options limited to single, duplex, and ADU types.
Z.3	A portion of the R district is moderately suitable for housing especially related to floodplains and wildlife action plan priority areas[74].	Create an RR (Rural Residential) district including the remaining portions of the R-1 district and additional suitable areas of the previous R district.

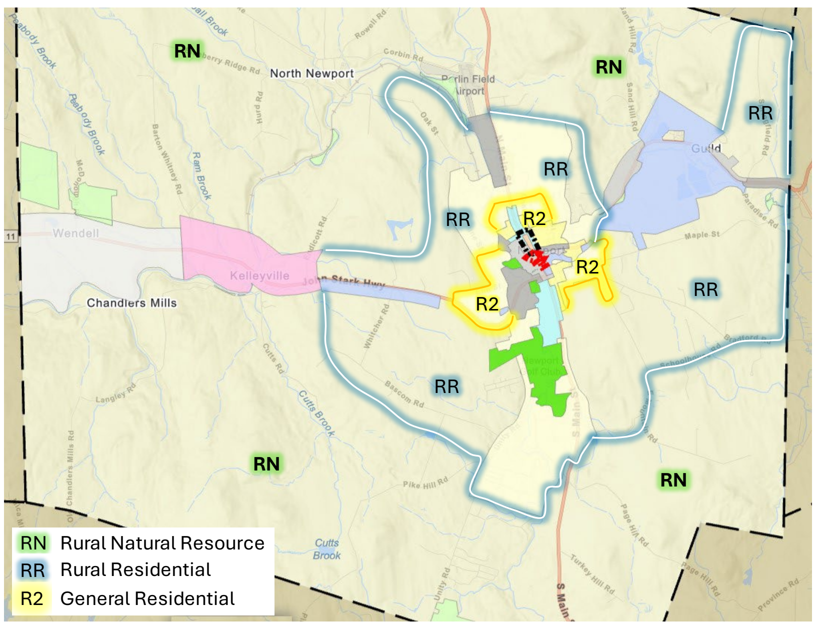


Figure 24 - Proposed modifications to geographic boundaries of the zoning districts. This includes 1) the expansion of the R-2 district for missing middle housing options; 2) the transformation of the remaining R-1 district to an RR district that includes portions of the previous R district for low-density housing options; and 3) the modification of the R district to the RN district for remote housing on larger parcels.

Permitted Uses

Current Town of Newport regulatory standards for allowed residential uses are described in Table 22, with recommended changes highlighted in Table 23 and subsequently described.

Table 22 - Permitted Uses in Newport by District, 2023 Zoning Ordinance.

District	R	R-1	R-2	RC	B-1	B-2	CN	I	K	OR	PB
	Rural	Single Family	General Residential	Rural/ Commercial	Light Commercial	Heavy Commercial	Conservation	Industrial	Kelleyville	Outdoor Recreation	Professional Business
SFD	P	P	P	P	SE	SE			P		P
ADU	SE	SE	SE	SE					SE		SE
Manufactured	P			P					P		
Two-Family			P		SE	SE					P
Three or More Unit			SPR		SE/SPR	SE/SPR					
Lodging House	SE		P								P
Manufactured Home Park	SE										
Cluster Development	SE										
Planned Commercial Development				P*				P*	P*		
Convalescent/ Rest homes		SE									
Elderly Housing			P		P	P					
Mixed Use											SE
Note	Max 16 ind	**	**								**
P = Permitted by Right; SE = Special Exception; SPR = Site Plan Review Required *** Uses allowed in PCD are the same as underlying district; ** No Trailer or Mobile/Manufactured Home Allowed**											

Table 23 - Proposed Alternative for Permitted Uses in Newport by District, changes highlighted in yellow to advance housing opportunity in Newport. Modified districts are described in Figure 24.

District	RN	RR	R-2	RC	B-1	B-2	CN	I	K	OR	PB
	Rural Natural	Rural Residential	General Residential	Rural/ Commercial	Light Commercial	Heavy Commercial	Conservation	Industrial	Kelleyville	Outdoor Recreation	Professional Business
SFD	P	P	P	P	SE	SE			P		P
ADU	P	P	P	P					P		P
Manufactured	P	P	P	P					P		
Two-Family	P	P	P	P	SE	SE			P		P
Three or More Unit (including town homes)		SE/SPR	SPR		SE/SPR	SE/SPR					
Cottage Court	SE	SE/SPR	SE/SPR								
Lodging House	SE	SE	P								P
Manufactured Home Park	X	SE/SPR									
Cluster Development	SE	SE									
Planned Commercial Development				P*				P*	P*		
Convalescent/ Rest homes		SE									
Elderly Housing		SE	P		P	P					
Mixed Use											SE
Note	Max 16 ind	**	**								**
P = Permitted by Right; SE = Special Exception; SPR = Site Plan Review Required * Uses allowed in PCD are the same as underlying district; ** No Trailer or Mobile/Manufactured Home Allowed											

#	Evaluation of Current Regulatory Language	Specific Strategies to Consider
P.1	For all relevant districts, use of an Accessory Dwelling Unit requires a special exception which is an excessive procedure for the applicant.	Remove ADU from special exception in all relevant districts and instead make permitted by right.
P.2	Manufactured homes are not allowed in the R-1 or R-2 districts, which are the main residential districts in areas with access to public water and sewer. Manufactured home parks are only allowed in the R district. Given the relative affordability of this type of home, limiting it to outside the infrastructure zone of the Town is restrictive.	Allow manufactured homes in the R-1 and R-2 districts, as well as the proposed RR district. Allow manufactured home park in the proposed RR district and not the proposed RN district.
P.3	Two-family are only allowed in the R-2 and PB districts. This is unnecessarily restrictive of infill development that fits within the current character.	Allow two-family by right in the same districts where single-family is allowed.
P.4	Three or more units are limited to R-2, as well as B-1 and B-2 by special exception. This is restrictive. Smaller multi-family units provide for development opportunity that maintains current character and provides economic opportunity, especially when those units are smaller units than many single-family homes.	Allow by right small multi-family. Consider with site plan review for: - Up to 4-units. - Not exceed 8 bedrooms or related square footage of living space.
P.5	The ordinance does well to allow lodging houses in residential districts for up to 16-persons. The allowance could be expanded for additional supportive housing.	Allow lodging house by right in the R-1 or proposed RR district. Consider similar density to P4 where not to exceed 8-persons. Require parking in the rear yard.
P.6	The cluster development is only allowed by Special Exception in the R district. This type of development provides opportunity but requires revision to contain sufficient incentives that are appropriate for both rural and downtown areas.	See recommendation SU.2.
P.7	Cottage courts are not an allowed use in Newport.	Define and allow cottage courts by special exception R, R-1 and R-2, as well as proposed RR and RN districts. See details in A.3.
P.8	Elderly housing is only allowed in the R-2 district.	Allow elderly housing by special exception in the R-1 or proposed RR district.

General Dimensional Standards

Current Town of Newport dimensional standards for residential uses are described in Table 24, with recommended changes highlighted in Table 25 and subsequently described.

Table 24 - General zoning dimensional standards by district in Newport, 2023. The Conservation, Industrial and Outdoor Recreation Districts are excluded as residential uses are not allowed.

District	R	R-1	R-2	RC	PCD* [Lot (Tract)]	B-1	B-2	K	PB
Minimum Lot			++	5 acres	1.5* (5)	NA	NA		10,000
if public water/sewer	20,000	10,000	10,000					10,000	
if public water or sewer	20,000	20,000	20,000		1.5			20,000	
if all private	40,000	40,000	40,000					40,000	
Frontage	200	100 unless with water & sewer, 75		300	100 (300)			100	75
Setbacks									
Front	50	25	15	100	25	25	25	50	25
Side Minimum / Total Both Sides	10/25	10	8	50	25	+	+	10	15
Rear	25	25	25	50	25	25	25	10	25
Height	40	40	40	40				40	35
Building Separation	10	10	10			6	6		10
Lot Coverage	30%	30%	30%	30%				30%	30%
Parking	Two spaces required for each dwelling unit whether it be apartment, ADU, single family, duplex, condo, townhouse, or cooperative unit; except Main Street between Elm and Oak Street unless gross floor area is enlarged.								
All dimensions in feet or square feet unless otherwise indicated. If blank, no requirement is indicated. + Not unless abutting a Residential district abuts ++ For multifamily, minimum 4,000 per unit. For lodging house, 2,500 per room * Quantity references minimum lot (tract) standards if properly served for water supply and sewage to each lot. PCD Tract is required to include 10% open space.									

Table 25 - Proposed Alternative for General dimensional standards in Newport by District, changes highlighted in yellow to advance housing opportunity. The Conservation, Industrial and Outdoor Recreation Districts are excluded as residential uses are not allowed. Modified districts are described in Figure 24.

District	RN	RR	R-2	RC	PCD* [Lot (Tract)]	B-1	B-2	K	PB
Minimum Lot				5 acres	1.5* (5)	NA	NA		10,000
if public water/sewer	2 ac	10,000	10,000					10,000	
if public water or sewer	2 ac	20,000	20,000		1.5			20,000	
if all private	2 ac	40,000	40,000					40,000	
Frontage	200	100 or 60 with water & sewer		300	100 (300)			100	75
Setbacks									
Front	50	25	15	100	25	25	25	50	25
Side Minimum / Total Both Sides	15	10	8	50	25	+	+	10	15
Rear	25	25	25	50	25	25	25	10	25
Height	40	40	40	40				40	35
Building Separation	10	10	10			6	6		10
Lot Coverage	15%	25%	35%	25%				25%	35%
Parking	One parking space is required for each dwelling unit. ADU and lodging house uses are exempt from parking requirements. Also, parcels along Main Street between Elm and Oak Street are also exempt unless gross floor area is enlarged.								

All dimensions in feet or square feet unless otherwise indicated.
If blank, no requirement is indicated in zoning.
+ Not unless abutting a Residential district abuts
*** Quantity references minimum lot (tract) standards if properly served for water supply and sewage to each lot. PCD Tract is required to include 10% open space.**
Remove MF/lodging house per unit and per room lot requirement.

#	Evaluation of Current Regulatory Language	Specific Strategies to Consider
D.1	Minimum lot size for the Rural Residential District reasonably maintains goals for housing allowance; however, this acreage could break up large tracts of intact natural resources (such as current use) if strategies around clustering are not considered. Consider strategies to ensure larger tracts of unfragmented land are maintained. An open space district or overlay can specify open space requirements for larger subdivisions or developments of a designated scale (e.g., more than four lots or units, construction of a new street, larger parcel that could undergo a series of subdivisions).	For a proposed RN district, increase lot size to two acres. For a proposed RR district, allow for 10,000 minimum lot size when public water and sewer are accessible. Adopt an open space overlay for lots without access to public water and sewer infrastructure. The overlay would require Newport's major subdivisions to utilize cluster subdivision standards. It is recommended to also revise the cluster development. See SU.2. Examples (Milford, NH; Warner, NH).
D.2	Minimum lot size R-1, R-2, and K districts is reasonable and provide for potential for different missing middle homes.	Keep the same, however, changes described in P.1-6 and D.3 are highly recommended.
D.3	Building and lot coverage can be a useful method to further specific lot design standards and establish thresholds for impervious cover. "Building coverage" is the percentage of a lot that can be covered by a building (sometimes referred to as maximum building footprint). "Lot coverage" is similar, but adds the area covered by other impervious surfaces such as driveways and parking spaces. Currently lot coverage is standardized at 30% for relevant districts, which appears to defeat some of the density potential that would also promote a pedestrian friendly environment.	Reduce lot coverage in rural areas (15-25% recommended to minimize water quality impact[75]) and increase in the downtown R-2 and PB district (35% recommended maximum for developed sites). To further evaluate, the proper percentage to be used for these caps can be determined by measuring the existing buildings and lot sizes in the surrounding neighborhood and calibrating accordingly or measure other neighborhoods with the character you want for new development and replicating the percentages.
D.4	District setbacks, building height, and building separation are generally reasonable to housing opportunity goals.	No recommended change.
D.5	Frontage requirements are not extravagant in Newport; however, downsides are present. The 100ft requirement in downtown residential districts, reduced to 75ft when water and sewer is available, does well to increase the pedestrian friendly potential of the districts for missing middle types of housing. Although, the recommended frontage for this purpose can go lower for duplexes and fourplexes. In addition, the efficient use of road infrastructure in the rural district warrants consideration for a smaller frontage, while maintaining reduced	Allow downtown districts R-1 (proposed RR) and R-2 with a minimum frontage of 60 feet.

#	Evaluation of Current Regulatory Language	Specific Strategies to Consider
	density. Consider strategies to reduce frontage while addressing design through other standards.	
D.6	Additional lot area stipulations dependent on the number of units or bedrooms are required for elderly housing facilities, as well as the R-2 district lodging houses and three or more-unit buildings. The requirement is restrictive of housing opportunity for especially small missing middle types of homes and demographic groups in need of homes in Newport. The requirement raises land requirements and developer costs irrespective of the unit/bedroom footprint.	Remove the additional lot area requirements for elderly housing facilities, small multi-family dwellings, and lodging houses in the R-2 district. Instead consider utilizing lot area coverage and a building coverage requirement to control for intensity of development. See D.3.
D.7	The current ordinance does well to allow for Back Lots.	No recommended change.
D.8	Parking requirements are excessive as a Town-wide requirement, currently requiring two parking spaces for any type of residential unit.	Reduce parking requirements to one per unit. This allows for flexibility by the owner in design and affordability.
D.9	Accessory Dwelling Unit requirements are restrictive for a desirable and flexible infill form of development. Specifically the limitation of an ADU only to single-family dwellings and a maximum living area of 750 square feet.	Allow ADU's to also accompany a town home or manufactured home. Allow a larger living area space, up to 1,200 square feet and subsidiary in size to the main building. Require the ADU be consistent in color to the main home.
D.10	Planned Commercial and Residential Development.	See SU.2.

Subdivision Regulations

Regarding the subdivision regulations, the following recommended changes are identified:

#	Evaluation of Current Regulatory Language	Specific Strategies to Consider
SU.1	The regulations do well to provide for an expedited process for minor subdivisions.	No recommended change.
SU.2	The cluster subdivision (and planned residential development) are similar in nature. Both can do more to incentivize needed types of homes and higher open space percentages. (Section II, Articles 8 and 9)	Combine the cluster subdivision and planned residential development into a single type of subdivision with incentives that provide developer flexibility in outcomes, and higher overall open space requirements. Consider the following: - Pair with open space overlay, see D.1. - Allow for cottage court housing style development that furthers community and privacy goals (e.g., 'Nesting' dwellings with open and closed sides: the open side may have windows facing its own side or rear yard, while the closed side may have high windows, translucent windows, or skylights to bring in ample light while preserving privacy) - Provide for higher percentage of required and incentivized open space. - Incentivize the inclusion of needed types of homes, such as duplex, fourplex, ADUs, and cottage courts. See example regulatory language in Appendix for an alternative cluster subdivision approach, alternatively called a conservation subdivision. The appendix also provides language for cottage court requirements. Alternatively, these provisions might be built into either the cluster or planned residential development.
SU.3	The procedure does well to include a role for the Newport Conservation Commission in review of Open Space plans.	No recommended change.

Site Plan Review Regulations

Regarding the Site Plan Review Regulations, the following recommended changes are identified:

#	Evaluation of Current Regulatory Language	Specific Strategies to Consider
SP.1	Considering the lack of impact fees for stormwater impacts to the local public system in Newport, the requirement of a stormwater management plan may be insufficient in scope under current regulations.	Expand the requirement of a stormwater management plan to all Site Plan Review with more than 15% impervious or more than 2,500 square feet total impervious on a lot. This provision is already required in Newport as part of the Groundwater Protection District.
SP.2	Stormwater management creates safeguards against development impacts. Consider the following areas for refinement. a. An engineering analysis is required to specific design criteria. The NH stormwater manual advises systems post development not exceed predevelopment discharge for 50-year frequency (24-hour storm events). Given experiences by road agents and highway departments that severe storms are happening more often than in previous decades, a higher threshold may be appropriate. b. In general, the plan does not specify a preference for how goals are achieved. This may be revisited to encourage stormwater informed site design as well as fewer structural stormwater systems.	Consider the following changes: - Add details to the site drawing that communicate details of different land cover with relevance to infiltration rates, snow storage, and non-structural stormwater management strategies. - In 2c, require development not exceed the 1065 rule presented in the NH Stormwater Manual Volume.[i] [76] In addition, the requirement must suit up to the 100-year frequency event. - Require presence of adequate stormwater techniques,[ii] including low impact development and green infrastructure. - Add language that requires water feature buffer of 50 foot minimum unless engineering analysis can show stormwater and water quality losses are compensated elsewhere. This does not represent a comprehensive regulatory audit of stormwater regulations. A detailed audit from this perspective would likely give added value.

[i] This rule recommends that any lot with more than 10% effective impervious cover or less than 65% undisturbed cover on a parcel undergo pollutant loading calculations.

[ii] Applicants shall demonstrate why the use of nontraditional and/or nonstructural approaches are not possible before proposing to use traditional, structural stormwater management measures (e.g., stormwater ponds, vegetated swales). The use of nontraditional and/or nonstructural stormwater management measures, including low impact development and green infrastructure, are preferred and shall be implemented to the maximum extent practical. Such techniques include, but are not limited to, minimization and/or disconnection of impervious surfaces; develop that reduces the rate and volume of runoff; restoration or enhancement of natural areas such as riparian areas, wetlands, and forests; and use of practices that intercept, treat, and infiltrate runoff from developed areas distributed throughout the site (e.g. bioretention, infiltration dividers or islands, or planters and raingardens).

Additional Considerations

#	Evaluation of Regulatory Language	Specific Strategies to Consider
A.1	Workforce housing incentives, not currently used in Newport, can help to increase housing stock that is affordable.	A Workforce Housing Ordinance could include any zoning tools, if they enable Workforce Housing development. In this regard, Newport can: - Provide more diversity of housing types. Expand allowance for ADUs, duplexes, small multi-family, and cottage courts. - Use a modified cluster subdivision (or planned residential development), which may include an incentive for affordable units for households with 60% to 80% area median income. See SU.2.
A.2	Stormwater and road design considerations are not fully reviewed.	A comprehensive review related to stormwater management and road/driveway design may be warranted.
A.3	Smaller and more physically accessible homes are uncommon in Newport. These types of homes especially address needs of current residents.  	Incentivize smaller and more physically accessible homes through permitted uses (P.7), the cluster subdivision (P.6), and a revised multi-family definition (P.4). Incentivize Cottage Cluster types of homes through the Cluster Subdivision. Treat the unit size and density like that allowed for under the ADU ordinance. Require design standards, such as size limits, nested housing, minimum and maximum cluster size, common space, parking shielded from the street, and shared transportation option. This style of home can be part of more typical single household dwellings.  Example – City of Keene. The appendix provides example language. 77 *Figure 25 - Cottage court (called pocket) with a single cluster (Left) and alongside standard single household dwellings (Right).*

3.3 - Appendix

Conservation (Cluster) Subdivision

Background

A Conservation Subdivision is a residential subdivision in which a portion of the site remains as permanently protected open space. Homes are located on a predetermined portion of the remaining lot. Under this approach the Planning Board works with the applicant to fit the development into the newly defined landscape to maximize the protection of important natural features and to maintain the character of the zoning district.

Reference: NH Housing Toolbox

Article VII: Conservation Subdivisions

Section I: Authority

Pursuant to RSA 674:21 (Innovative Land-use Controls), Cluster Development is permitted, subject to the requirements of this article.

Section II: The Purpose

The purpose of the Conservation Subdivision is to encourage flexibility in the design and development of land, promote the efficient use of land and infrastructure, and **preserve open space in harmony with its natural features and for rural character**. To maintain the rural character of Newport, as defined by:

1) To preserve those areas of the site that have the highest ecological value. Specifically large unfragmented block of undeveloped land especially when connected to lands that are conserved, vegetation around water features for water quality and habitat protection, highest ranked wildlife habitats and wildlife habitat corridors as determined by the N.H. Fish and Game Department and drinking water supply areas.
2) To design sites and buildings (or structures) on those portions of the land, and in a way, that are appropriate for development and able to be maintained. This includes soil condition, slope of land, water table, stormwater management and reduced impervious surface, proximity to infrastructure, wildlife habitat, and minimal land disturbance.
3) To preserve historic, archeological, and cultural features located on the site, especially those listed in the Town Master Plan.

4) To create a contiguous network of open spaces or “greenways” by linking the site’s open spaces both within the subdivision and on adjoining lands wherever possible and provide access to public outdoor recreation.
5) To minimize the potential deleterious impact of development on the municipality, neighboring properties, and the natural environment.

Section III: Procedure

Prior to commencing a Conservation Subdivision, the owner of such parcel shall obtain:

- a Special Use Permit from the Planning Board and Conservation Commission.
- Subdivision approval, and
- where applicable, Site Plan Review approval, are also required.

The application for a Special Use Permit shall be processed concurrently with Subdivision and Site Plan Review applications, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Planning Board.

Section IV: Requirements

Conservation Subdivisions shall comply with all provisions of the Newport Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. Where regulations are in conflict, the provisions of this Ordinance shall apply.

Prior to approving a Special Use Permit for a Conservation Subdivision, the Planning Board shall determine that the following requirements are met.

1) **MASTER PLAN**: All Conservation Subdivisions shall be consistent with the character of the Town of Newport and the objectives of the Master Plan.
2) **ALLOWED USES**: Permitted uses and special exceptions in a Conservation Subdivision shall be the same as in the underlying zoning district.
3) **Homestead Ownership**: Conservation Subdivisions may be established with either of the three types of ownership included herein. The ownership of homestead sites shall be established at the creation of the Conservation Subdivision. Well and septic may be of individual or shared ownership:

a) Individual lots and separate ownership of each building site on the parcel. Each lot will be identified with a property line and building envelope which shows where any building and any well and septic will be placed.

b) Land owned by one entity with an individual dwelling or commercial units owned by others. Each dwelling unit will have an identifiable envelope indicating the location for each building and any well and septic but will not have separate property lines.

c) Ownership of dwelling units, land, and common spaces is distributed among owners by a share of stocks in the corporation which owns the property. Those shares entitle each owner to a portion of the building, your unit, and a portion of the common lands.

Section V: Open Space Requirements

1) Conservation Subdivisions are allowed in the RN, RC, RR, R-2, and K zoning districts, provided that they meet minimum open space requirements:

    a) Where public water and sewer infrastructure is not available – 40%

    b) Where either public water or sewer infrastructure is available – 20%

    c) Where both public water and sewer infrastructure is available – 10%

2) Open Space Ownership: To ensure that the open space will be held in perpetuity as open space, the Conservation Subdivision shall provide for one or a combination of the following forms of ownership:

    a) a lot owners' association or similar form of common ownership set up by the developer and made part of the deed for each lot,

    b) the grant of a conservation easement to conservation organization approved by the Planning Board; or

    c) the grant of a conservation easement to the Town of Newport.

3) **PLAN**: An **open-space plan** shall be submitted as part of the Conservation Subdivision proposal. The plan shall identify the location, use and treatment of all open space as well as proposed provisions for ownership, maintenance and control of the open space. Before the final plan's approval, the boundaries of the designated open space shall be subject to planning board approval.

4) **ACCESS**: Each lot in a Conservation Subdivision shall have **access to the common open space** and need not adjoin such open space.

5) **Use**: Up to 50 percent of the designated open space may be permitted by special permit to be used for the following. The planning board may impose specific criteria or restrictions on such uses as deemed necessary to support the goals of this section: 1. Agriculture involving animal husbandry and/or boarding. 2. Active outdoor recreation uses, including formal playgrounds and fields. 3. Parking areas for access to the designated open space. 4. Individual or community wells provided that this use was approved as part of the subdivision plan and that appropriate legal arrangements are established and approved by the planning board for the maintenance and operation of these facilities.

6) **LEGAL DOCUMENTS**: All legal documents required to guarantee adherence to the above stated requirements, such as **association documents**, **protective covenants**, **deed restrictions** and **easements**, shall be subject to review and approval as to both form and substance by the Planning Board and town legal counsel prior to final approval of the Conservation Subdivision proposal.

7) **CONVEYANCE**: No portion of the common open space shall be conveyed in a manner which would result in non-compliance with this section.

Section VI: Maximum Density

The number of dwelling units permitted in a Conservation Subdivision shall be determined in the following manner:

1) Yield Plan: A "yield plan" shall be developed to provide an initial number of units. This number will be determined as follows.

    a) First, non-buildable area is subtracted from the total acreage of the parent tract, including but not limited to existing rights-of-way, watercourses, water bodies, wetlands, a 50-ft riparian buffer from waterbodies or wetlands, and steep slopes (i.e., those with greater than 25% slope over elevation changes greater than 20 feet.)

    b) Next, the remaining contiguous buildable acreage of the parent tract is divided by the minimum lot size of the zoning district in which the parent tract is located, or two-thirds of an acre.

    c) Multiply this number by 1.5

    d) The resulting number of units shall be the conservation subdivision's "yield plan". All fractional numbers of 0.5 or greater shall be rounded up to the nearest whole number; those fractional numbers less than 0.5 shall be rounded down to the nearest whole number.

2) The maximum total density incentive is not to exceed 50% bonus over the yield plan.

Section VII: Incentives

For parent parcels in the residential district, the Planning Board may award the development an open space bonus that increases the maximum number of dwelling units identified in the yield plan. Bonuses may be awarded from any combination of the following criteria.

Open Space Incentives: In no case shall the open space bonuses result in more than a 20% increase in dwelling units.

1) Additional “Designated Open Space” Bonus: 10% increase above the yield plan where more an additional 10% of the proposed development of the parent tract is designated as open space, protected as such in perpetuity, OR 15% increase in number of dwelling units above the yield plan where an additional 20% of the proposed development of the parent tract is designated as open space, protected as such in perpetuity.
2) Trail Bonus: 5% increase above the yield plan when designated open spaces and trails are open to the public, with access points clearly labeled. Public access must allow pedestrian traffic (motorized vehicles can be restricted).
3) Water Resource Bonus: 5% increase above the yield plan where at a vegetative buffer of at least 100 feet is present for all water features on the parcel (i.e., river, stream, wetland, vernal pool). Pedestrian trails may pass through this buffer zone.
4) Forest Management Bonus: 15% increase above the yield plan where the designated open space to be preserved is mostly mature forest (70% or greater), where no more than 30% of this mature forest area shall be cut at one time, and where the cutting is well distributed and will be based on a “best practices” management plan developed by a N.H. Licensed Forester and approved by the Planning Board.

Diversification of Housing Types Incentives: In no case shall the diversification of housing types bonus result in more than a 20% increase in dwelling units.

1) Small Home Bonus: Up to 15% increase above the yield plan where 50% of the dwelling units are 2-bedroom or less with a maximum living area of 1,200 square feet.
2) Accessible Home Bonus: Up to 10% increase above the yield plan where 15% of the dwelling units, or at least one, be accessible for persons with mobility impairments. These units must be constructed in accordance with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) or a standard that is equivalent or stricter.

3) Transportation Bonus: Up to 5% increase above the yield plan for developments that provide alternative transportation options such as a community van or shared bicycle system.

Conservation Subdivision Plan may include energy efficiency and/or resource conservation, in addition to conservation of open space. In no case shall conservation practices result in more than a 10% increase in dwelling units.

1) Energy and water efficiency Bonus: Up to 10% increase above the yield plan where building meets or exceeds current LEED-registration benchmarks. Completion of LEED Certification is not required.
2) Historic buildings bonus: Up to 10% increase above the yield plan for protection or repurpose of historic buildings and structures that maintain their historical integrity.

Section VIII: Design Criteria

1. **SETBACKS**: Setbacks shall be the same as in the underlying zoning district. The Planning Board may require setbacks greater than minimum requirements.
2. **BUFFER STRIP**: In the residential and commercial district, a buffer strip having a **minimum depth of 30 feet** shall be provided between any proposed structure within the subdivision and the perimeter of the tract. No building structure or parking area shall be permitted within the buffer strip. The planning board may require additional area for buffer strip, up to 100 feet, to ensure the proposed use is by no means obtrusive upon the surrounding environment due to noise or light. The buffer strip may be included as part of the common open space, provided that the buffer strip is contiguous with the remainder of the common open space. Whenever feasible the buffer strip **shall remain in its natural state** with no construction, grade alternation or clearing, and it shall contain existing, natural vegetation. In the absence of existing vegetative cover, new vegetative screening shall be planned to buffer the conservation subdivision from abutting properties. This vegetative screening shall be of a size, type and spacing determined adequate by the Planning Board to screen and buffer buildings, parking areas and other structures and activities from neighboring properties and public rights-of-way and to otherwise **establish a landscaped setting** for development consistent with the surrounding community.
3. **IMPACT**: A Conservation Subdivision shall not have an adverse impact on the environment or on transportation systems, community facilities, utilities and services. The Planning Board may require an applicant for Conservation Subdivision approval to submit an **impact statement**(s) that sets forth the impact of the proposal on

the natural and man-made environment and/or community facilities, traffic, utilities and municipal services.

4. **BUILDINGS**: The Planning Board may require that the scale size, configuration, color and exterior materials of building units in a Conservation Subdivision are complementary to the existing architectural styles of the surrounding relevant zoning district.
5. **CONDITIONS**: The Planning Board may attach such conditions to its approval of a **Special Use Permit** as it deems necessary to accomplish the objectives of this article and/or sound land planning or as are otherwise conducive to the health, safety and general welfare.

Cottage Cluster and Multi-Family Types

Article: Definitions

Dwelling, Cottage Cluster: Four to twelve Dwelling units used for occupancy by four or more families living independently of each other on a single lot with detached structures, including Accessory Dwelling Units. The average bedroom count does not exceed 2 bedrooms.

Dwelling, Low-Density Multi-family: A building or portion thereof used for occupancy by three or more families living independently of each other and containing three to six dwelling units. Bedroom count in all dwelling units does not exceed 8 bedrooms, including Accessory Dwelling Units.

Dwelling, High-Density Multi-family: A building or portion thereof used for occupancy by three or more families living independently of each other and containing three or more dwelling units where the bedroom count in all dwelling units exceeds 8 bedrooms or unit count.

Article: Cottage Cluster

Section I: Purpose

The intent of this regulation is to **encourage housing options that are small and single-story and have a community component**. All this while ensuring residents' privacy and preserving the rural and village character of the town.

Section II: Impervious and Floor Area

1. No maximum impervious coverage permitted for principal and accessory structures provided that stormwater engineering requirements under site plan review and all other requirements are met.

Section IV: Required Open Space

1. Common Open Space: Open space that is commonly owned and managed by all residents. It is intended that it be adequately sized and centrally located with individual dwelling entrances oriented towards the open space.
    (a) A minimum of 400 square feet per unit of common open space is required.

(b) At least 50 percent of the unit shall abut the common open space, all of the cottage units shall be within 60 feet walking distance of the common open space, and the common open space shall have cottages abutting at least two sides.

(c) Shall be oriented in a way so at least 75% of units face each other around at lest two side, not the street.

2. Private Open Space: A sense of community requires the right balance of personal privacy. Private open space is an essential component of this balance. A 'front' yard creates a buffer between public and private spaces, while a 'side' or 'back' yard offers increased seclusion.

    (a) Location. Private open space shall separate the main entrance to the dwelling from the common open space or street by a hedge or fence not to exceed 36 inches in height. Private open space may be located in the side and rear yards as well.

    (b) Size. Each residential unit shall be provided with a minimum of 200 square feet of usable private open space, with no dimension less than 15 feet. Such open space requirements may be met with a combination of front, side or rear yard locations.

Section V: Parking

1. Parking between structures is only allowed when it is located toward the rear of the principal structure and is served by an alley or private driveway.
2. Parking may not be located in the front yard.
3. Parking may be located between any structure and the rear lot line of the lot or between any structure and a side lot line, which is not a street side lot line.

Section VI: Additional Requirements

1. Adjacent buildings setback a minimum of 15-feet from each other, except no setback for garage from associated unit provided fire separation requirements are met.
2. Privacy between Dwellings by Nesting. Dwellings shall be designed so that no window peers into the living space of adjacent dwellings closer than 30 feet apart. This may be accomplished by: 'Nesting' dwellings with open and closed sides: the open side may have windows facing its own side or rear yard, while the closed side may have high windows, translucent windows, or skylights to bring in ample light while preserving

privacy; The side yard of a dwelling may be fully usable to the face of the neighboring building through landscape easements or other means.

3. Every Cluster shall contain at least two of the following elements shared and managed by residents of that cluster:
    (a) Barbeque, pizza oven, campfire circle, or outdoor terrace;
    (b) Picnic shelter;
    (c) Woodworking shop, or Tool and general storage shed;
    (d) Heated commons building, with optional bathroom and kitchenette, for meetings, card games, movie nights, potlucks, exercise, etc;
    (e) Playground;
    (f) Kitchen garden or flower garden, including a rain garden.
4. The applicant shall prove to the Town that there will be a suitable legally-binding system in place, such as homeowner association agreements, to ensure proper maintenance and funding of shared facilities, such as shared parking areas, common open spaces, alleys and other improvements.

Section VII: Procedure

All cottage cluster shall require a Site Plan Review by the Planning Board, and all clusters with more than six units shall require adherence to Conservation Subdivision requirements.

4 - Endnotes

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