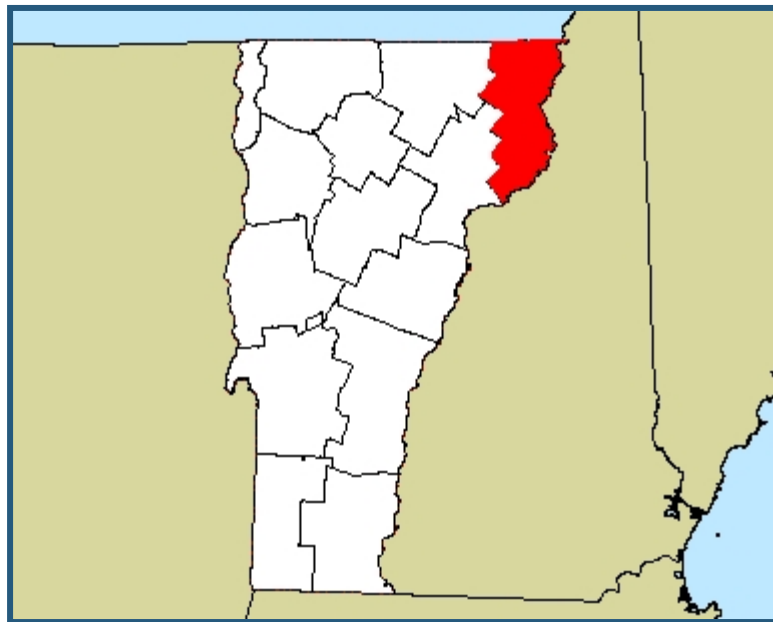


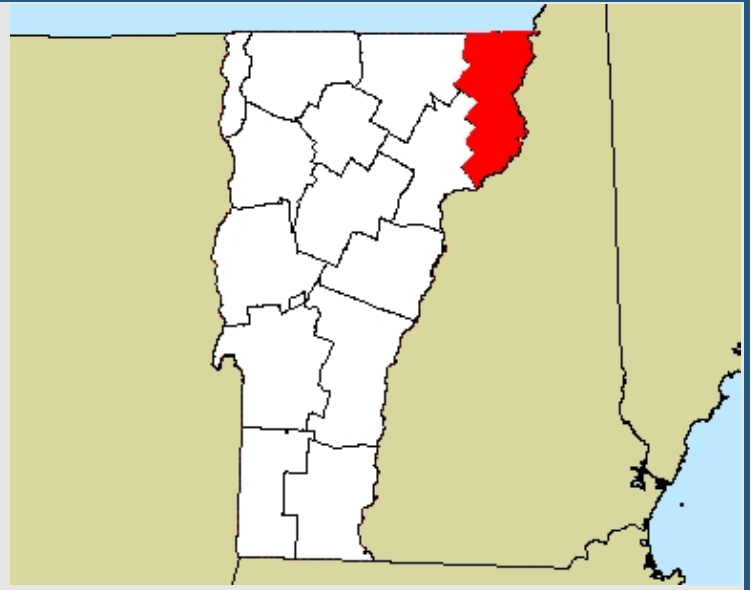
Essex County

Housing Needs Assessment



Essex County: County Overview

Introduction - Essex County is located within the northeastern portion of the state. It encompasses a total of 665 square miles, making it the 9th largest county (based on geographic area) in the state. The county had a 2010 total population of 6,306 (the smallest in the state) and 5,019 total households (smallest in the state). Lunenburg, with a 2010 population of 1,302, is the largest community in the county. Other notable communities in Essex County, along with their corresponding 2010 population numbers in parenthesis, include Concord (1,235), Brighton (1,222), and Canaan (972). The primary employment sectors and their corresponding shares of the county's total employment are Public Administration (15.0%), Manufacturing (14.1%), and Educational Services (12.0%).



Highlights

Population – Between 2015 and 2020, projected population growth of 1 (less than 0.1%).

Households – Between 2015 and 2020, projected household growth of 26 (0.9%).

Household Heads by Age – It is projected that by 2015, the largest share (24.1%) of households by age in Essex County will be within the 55 to 64 age cohort.

Rental Housing – Essex County has an overall vacancy rate of 0.0% for all identified and surveyed rental housing.

Owner Housing (for-sale) – As of October 2014, there are a total of 175 available for-sale homes in the county, with a median price of \$129,900.

Mobile Home Parks – As of 2013, mobile home parks in the county reported an overall 7.1% vacancy rate.

Senior Care Facilities – There was one senior care facility identified with a total of 16 beds.

Additional demographic and housing supply data is included on the following pages these facts sheets.

Housing Supply

Based on surveys of housing conducted by Bowen National Research and secondary data sources, a total of 7 multifamily rental properties, 2 mobile home parks, 55 recently sold housing units (175 available), and no senior care facilities were identified and analyzed in the county.

Housing Supply Overview

Housing Type	Vacancy	Rents-Prices
Apartment Rentals	0.0%	N/A
Mobile Home Parks	7.1%	\$198-\$445
Owner Housing (For-Sale)	-	\$14,000-\$775,000
Senior Care Facilities	N/A-RC N/A-AL N/A-NH	- - -

RC-Residential Care; AL-Assisted living; NH-Nursing Home

Housing Needs Estimates (Units) by Tenure and % AMHI

Household Income	Rental Units		Owner Units		Senior Care*
	Family	Senior	Family	Senior	
<30%	177	100	412	324	
30%-50%	27	17	228	155	
50%-80%	6	2	111	79	
80%-95%	3	1	35	27	
95%-120%	6	1	59	39	
Total	219	121	845	624	

*Senior care demand not calculated on a county level

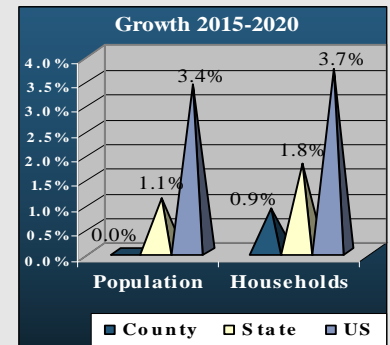
Note: Primary data sources include U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) and ESRI. All other data sources are cited within the full report.

Essex County: Demographics & Economics

US Census, ESRI & Claritas Estimates	Total Population	Total Households	Renter Households	Owner Households
2000 Census	6,459	2,602	486	2,116
2010 Census	6,306	2,818	558	2,260
Change 2000-2010	-153	216	72	144
Percent Change 2000-2010	-2.4%	8.3%	14.8%	6.8%
2015 Projected	6,413	2,895	573	2,322
Change 2010-2015	107	77	15	62
Percent Change 2010-2015	1.7%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%
2020 Projected	6,414	2,921	581	2,340
Change 2015-2020	1	26	8	18
Percent Change 2015-2020	0.0%	0.9%	1.4%	0.8%

While the Essex County population declined between 2000 and 2010, the number of households increased. The number of people are projected to increase 107 (1.7%) with an additional 77 (2.7%) households between 2010 and 2015. From 2015 and 2020, the population is projected to essentially remain unchanged while households are projected to grow by 26 (0.9%).

Within the county, the share of owner-occupied household was over 80.0% in 2000 and 2010, while the share of renter-occupied households has been under 20%. It is projected that in 2015 and 2020, the share of owner-occupied households will still be around four-fifths of the county and the share of renter-occupied households will be around one-fifth.

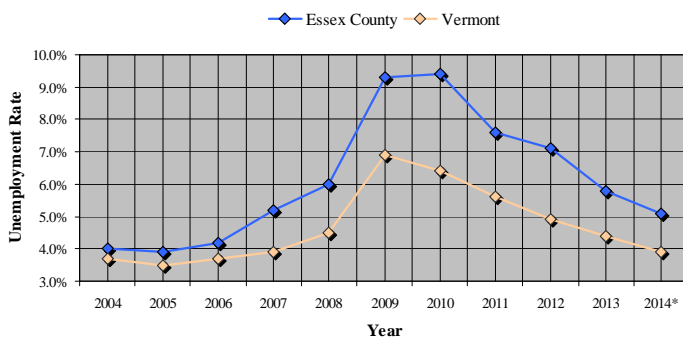


Year	Household Heads by Age						
	<25	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 to 74	75+
2010	73 (2.6%)	246 (8.7%)	422 (15.0%)	600 (21.3%)	643 (22.8%)	464 (16.5%)	370 (13.1%)
2015	67 (2.3%)	265 (9.2%)	393 (13.6%)	544 (18.8%)	698 (24.1%)	550 (19.0%)	378 (13.1%)
2020	59 (2.0%)	268 (9.2%)	370 (12.7%)	485 (16.6%)	703 (24.1%)	635 (21.7%)	401 (13.7%)
Change 2015-2020	-8 (-12.0%)	3 (1.1%)	-23 (-5.9%)	-59 (-10.8%)	5 (0.7%)	85 (15.5%)	23 (6.1%)

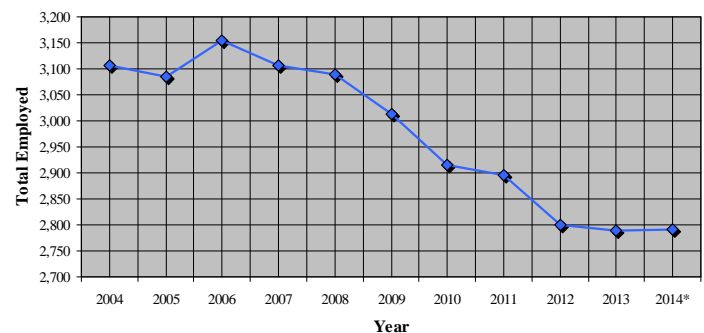
It is projected that by 2015, the largest share (24.1%) of households by age in Essex County will be within the 55 to 64 age cohort.

2013 County Unemployment (Rank in State)	Employment Change (2010-2013)	Top Three Industry Sectors
5.8% (13th)	-126 (-4.5%)	1. Public Administration (15.0%) 2. Manufacturing (14.1%) 3. Educational Services (12.0%)

Essex County/Vermont Unemployment Rate



Essex County Total Employment



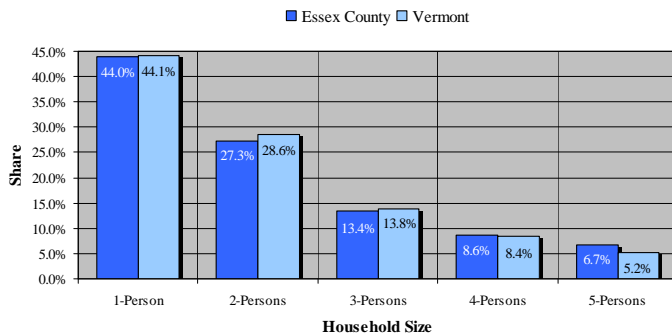
Essex County: Demographics & Economics

Tenure	Year	Persons Per Household						Median H.H. Size
		1-Person	2-Person	3-Person	4-Person	5-Person	Total	
Renter	2010	229 (41.0%)	159 (28.4%)	75 (13.4%)	53 (9.5%)	43 (7.7%)	558 (100.0%)	1.64
	2015	252 (44.0%)	157 (27.3%)	77 (13.4%)	50 (8.6%)	38 (6.7%)	573 (100.0%)	1.44
	2020	267 (45.9%)	154 (26.5%)	78 (13.4%)	47 (8.1%)	36 (6.1%)	581 (100.0%)	1.31
Owner	2010	598 (26.5%)	1,016 (44.9%)	306 (13.5%)	230 (10.2%)	111 (4.9%)	2,260 (100.0%)	2.05
	2015	667 (28.7%)	1,016 (43.7%)	318 (13.7%)	219 (9.4%)	102 (4.4%)	2,322 (100.0%)	1.97
	2020	715 (30.5%)	1,004 (42.9%)	319 (13.6%)	208 (8.9%)	94 (4.0%)	2,340 (100.0%)	1.91

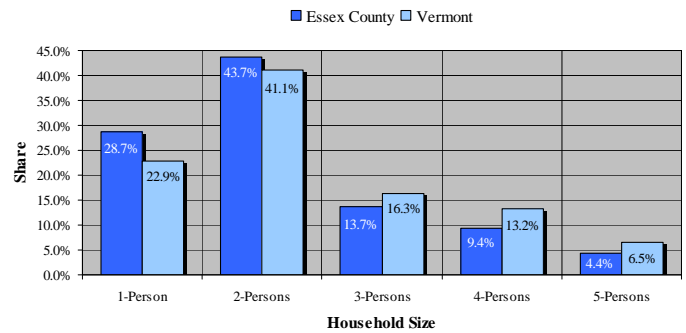
The median renter household size in 2015 will be 1.44 while owner households will be 1.97. These sizes are expected to decline very little by 2020.

Single person households will represent 44.0% of all renter households and 28.7% of all owner households in the county in 2015. Large family households (4+ persons) will represent 15.3% of renter households and 13.8% of owner households in 2015.

Essex County/Vermont Persons per Renter Household (2015)



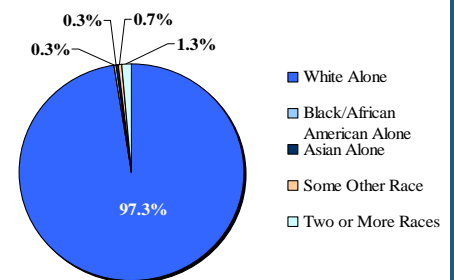
Essex County/Vermont Persons per Owner Household (2015)



Population by Race

	White Alone	Black/African American Alone	Asian Alone	Some Other Race Alone	Two or More Races	Total
Number	6,138	18	22	45	83	6,306
Percent	97.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.7%	1.3%	100.0%

Essex County Population by Race



Essex County: Housing Supply Overview

Surveyed Housing Supply Overview (Represents Sample Survey of Housing)						
Housing Type	Projects	Units	Vacant Units	Vacancy	Price Range	Median Price
Apartment Rentals	7	77	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A
Non-Conventional Rentals	1	1	-	-	\$450	\$450
Mobile Home Parks	2	42	3	7.1%	\$198-\$445	-
Owner Housing (For-Sale)**	-	175	-	-	\$14,000-\$775,000	\$129,900
Senior Care Facilities	RC-0	0	0	N/A-RC	-	-
	AL-0	0	0	N/A-AL	-	-
	NH-0	0	0	N/A-NH	-	-

RC-Residential Care; AL-Assisted living; NH-Nursing Home

*Price range illustrates the lowest to highest, regardless of bedroom type; Mobile Home Park price range is the base lot rent (2013) to the highest rent identified for a mobile home unit

**Units is the total number of active listings

Apartment Rentals

Total Surveved Properties	Vacancy Rates	Non-Subsidized Vacancy Rate Graph Unavailable All units identified and surveyed within the county operate with a project-based subsidy and all tenants pay up to 30% of adjusted gross income toward rent.	Subsidized Housing			
7	Overall		0.0%	Type	Count	Wait List
	Market-Rate		-	Public Housing Units	0	0
	Tax Credit		-	Other Subsidized Units	77	2-40 H.H.
Total Units Surveved		77	Housing Choice Vouchers	8	400*	
	Subsidized		H.H. – Households			
	0.0%		*Includes multiple counties			

Distribution of Units Non-Subsidized

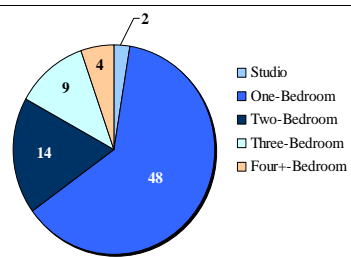
Non-Subsidized Rental Distribution

Graph Unavailable
No non-subsidized units were identified and surveyed within Essex County

Unit Type	Total Units	Vacancy Rate	Collected Rents		
			Low	High	Median
Studio	-	-	-	-	-
One-Bedroom	-	-	-	-	-
Two-Bedroom	-	-	-	-	-
Three-Bedroom	-	-	-	-	-
Four+-Bedroom	-	-	-	-	-

Government-Subsidized

Government-Subsidized Rental Distribution



Unit Type	Total Units	Vacancy Rate
Studio	2	0.0%
One-Bedroom	48	0.0%
Two-Bedroom	14	0.0%
Three-Bedroom	9	0.0%
Four+-Bedroom	4	0.0%

Mobile Home Parks

Number of Projects/Parks	2
Total Lots	42
Leased Lots	39
Vacant Lots	3
Vacancy Rate	7.1%
Median Base Lot Rent (2013)	\$198

The mobile home parks in Essex County were established between 1960 and 1979. According to data provided by DHCD's Housing Division, there are a total of three (3) vacant lots, yielding an overall vacancy rate of 7.1%. Median base lot rents within mobile home parks in Essex County have trended upward, increasing up to 2.6% annually between 2009 and 2013.

Essex County: Housing Supply Overview

Senior Care Facilities

Housing Type	Total Projects	Units/Beds	Vacant	Wait List	Median Base Rent
Residential Care	-	-	-	-	-
Assisted Living	-	-	-	-	-
Nursing Homes	-	-	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-	-	-

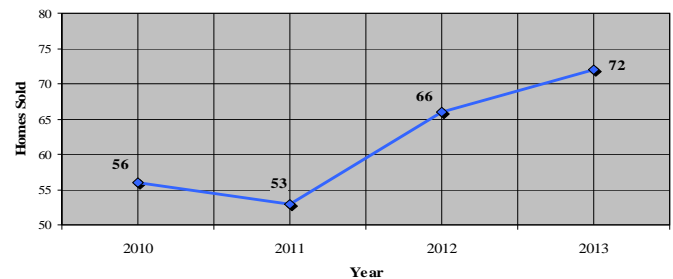
Within Essex County, there was only one senior residential facility identified, but we were unable to survey it. This project, a residential care facility, has 16 beds. It was rated "C" both in terms of quality and neighborhood. As a result of the limited number of beds, senior residents in the county requiring senior care must choose from receiving home health care services or moving to other counties that offer facilities with senior care services.

Owner Housing (For-Sale) by Year Sold

Year Sold	Units Sold	Change	Median Price	Change
2010	56	-	\$80,783	-
2011	53	-5.4%	\$107,000	32.5%
2012	66	24.5%	\$86,250	-19.4%
2013	72	9.1%	\$102,500	18.8%
2014*	55	-	\$98,500	-

Sales data is through October 2014

Essex County Annual Home Sales (2010-2013)



Overall Available Owner Housing (For-Sale)

Number of Homes Listed	Price Range	Average List Price	Median List Price	Average Days on Market
175	\$14,000-\$775,000	\$164,245	\$129,900	266

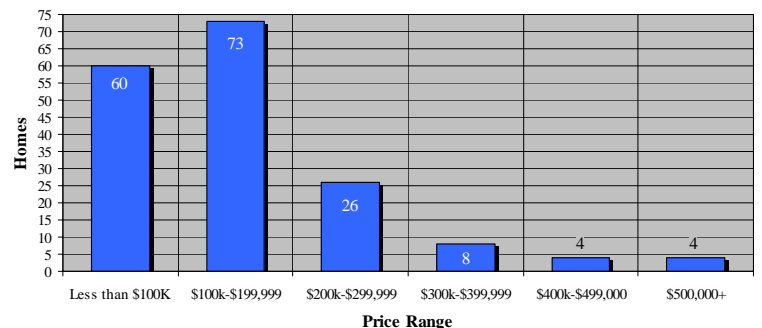
As of October 2014

Available Owner (For-Sale) Housing by Price

List Price	Median Price	Units	Share
<\$100,000	\$69,500	60	34.3%
\$100,000 - \$199,999	\$145,000	73	41.7%
\$200,000 - \$299,999	\$233,500	26	14.8%
\$300,000 - \$399,999	\$349,400	8	4.6%
\$400,000 - \$499,999	\$449,500	4	2.3%
\$500,000+	\$695,000	4	2.3%
Total		175	100.0%

As of October 2014

Essex County Available For-Sale Housing by Price



Excluding the number of households potentially impacted by lead based paint, the greatest housing issue facing residents appears to be associated with cost burden. The high share of cost burdened households indicates that many area residents are paying a disproportionately high share of their income towards housing costs, which is likely due to a lack of affordable housing.

Housing Issues by Tenure

Housing Issue	Renter-Occupied		Owner-Occupied	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Cost Burdened	204	44.6%	685	28.7%
Severely Cost Burdened	112	24.5%	237	9.9%
Overcrowded	17	3.7%	7	0.3%
Severely Overcrowded	0	0.0%	2	0.1%
Substandard*	0	0.0%	52	2.2%
Lead Paint	332	72.6%	1,568	65.7%

Notes: Some housing issues overlap with other issues; Lead Paint estimates are based on year built

*Incomplete Kitchen and Incomplete Bath have been added together

A detailed analysis of the county's demographics, economics, and housing supply is included in the Housing Needs Assessment.

Essex County: Special Needs & Homeless

Special Needs Populations

Special Needs Group	Persons	Special Needs Group	Persons
HIV/AIDS	N/A*	Persons with Disabilities (PD)	1,183
Victims of Domestic Violence (VDV)	105	Elderly (Age 62+) (E62)	1,533
Persons with Substance Abuse (PSA)	1,042**	Frail Elderly (Age 62+) (FE62)	109
Adults with Severe Mental Illness (SMI)	228	Ex-offenders (Parole/Probation) (EOP)	14
Co-Occurring Disorders (COD)	N/A	Unaccompanied Youth (UY)	48***
New Immigrants/Refugees (NIR)	N/A	Migrant Farm Workers	0

*Due to Federal Privacy Laws less than 5 cases cannot be reported

**Includes Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans counties

***Includes Caledonia/South Essex and Orleans/North Essex combined

Note: Data sources cited in full report

The largest number of special needs persons is among those with disabilities, elderly, and person with substance abuse. According to our interviews with area stakeholders, housing alternatives that meet the distinct demands of the special needs population are limited. While there are no facilities located within Essex County for special needs populations, many seek services through Umbrella, Northeast Kingdom Community Action, Northeast Youth Services, AWARE Inc., Loch Lomond, and Northeast Kingdom Human Services. It should be noted that these organizations generally serve the Caledonia, Essex and Orleans regions. As a result, rural area residents must travel further distances in order to seek service providers. According to various service providers, all special needs groups are underserved in terms of housing.

Homeless Population

Total Homeless Persons	Chronically Homeless	Motel Vouchers	Unsheltered	Households	Singles	Children
0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Homeless Housing Inventory

Project Type	Beds by Population Category					Seasonal Beds	Overflow Beds	Total Beds
	Single Male/Female and Households w/ Children	Single Male & Female	Veteran	Chronically Homeless	Youth			
Emergency Shelter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transitional Housing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent Supportive Housing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rapid Re-housing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Beds By Population	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Homeless Population Graph Unavailable

Based on the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness, there are no persons classified as homeless within Essex County.

Based on the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness, there are no persons classified as homeless within Essex County. There are no emergency shelters, transitional housing, and/or permanent supportive housing options within Essex County. As such, it appears that there were no persons reported as being homeless in 2014 within Essex County and the fact that no persons remain unsheltered on a given night indicate that there is not a need for homeless or special needs housing.

Essex County

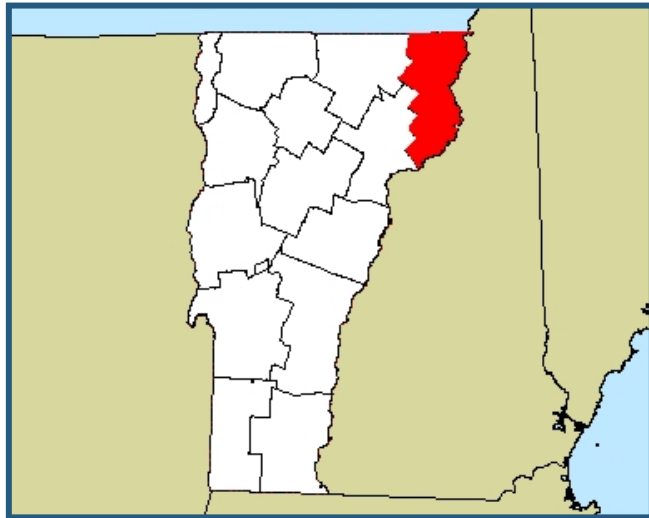
A. Introduction

The focus of this analysis is to assess the market characteristics of, and to determine the housing needs for, Essex County. To accomplish this task, Bowen National Research evaluated various socio-economic characteristics, inventoried and analyzed the housing supply (rental and owner/for-sale product), conducted stakeholder interviews, evaluated special needs populations and provided overall conclusions as to the housing needs of the county.

To provide a base of comparison, various metrics of Essex County were compared with overall statewide numbers. A comparison of the subject county in relation with other counties in the state is provided in the Statewide Overview portion of the Vermont Housing Needs Assessment.

B. County Overview

Essex County is located within the northeastern portion of the state. It encompasses a total of 665 square miles, making it the 9th largest county (based on geographic area) in the state. Primary thoroughfares within the county include U.S. Route 2, and State Highways 105, and 114. Notable natural landmarks and public attractions include Victory State Forest, and Brighton State Park. The county had a 2010 total population of 6,306 (the smallest in the state) and 5,019 total households (smallest in the state). Lunenburg, with a 2010 population of 1,302, is the largest community in the county. Other notable communities in Essex County, along with their corresponding 2010 population numbers in parenthesis, include Concord (1,235), Brighton (1,222), and Canaan (972). The primary employment sectors and their corresponding shares of the county's total employment are Public Administration (15.0%), Manufacturing (14.1%), and Educational Services (12.0%). Additional details regarding demographics, economics, housing, and other pertinent research and findings are included on the following pages.



C. Demographics

This section of the report evaluates key demographic characteristics for Essex County. Through this analysis, unfolding trends and unique conditions are revealed regarding populations and households residing in the county. Demographic comparisons provide insights into the human composition of housing markets.

This section is comprised of three major parts: population characteristics, household characteristics, and demographic theme maps. Population characteristics describe the qualities of individual people, while household characteristics describe the qualities of people living together in one residence.

It is important to note that 2000 and 2010 demographics are based on U.S. Census data (actual count), while 2015 and 2020 data are based on calculated projections provided by ESRI, a nationally recognized demography firm. The accuracy of these projections depends on the realization of certain assumptions:

- Economic projections made by secondary sources materialize;
- Governmental policies with respect to residential development remain consistent;
- Availability of financing for residential development (i.e. mortgages, commercial loans, subsidies, Tax Credits, etc.) remains consistent;
- Sufficient housing and infrastructure is provided to support projected population and household growth.

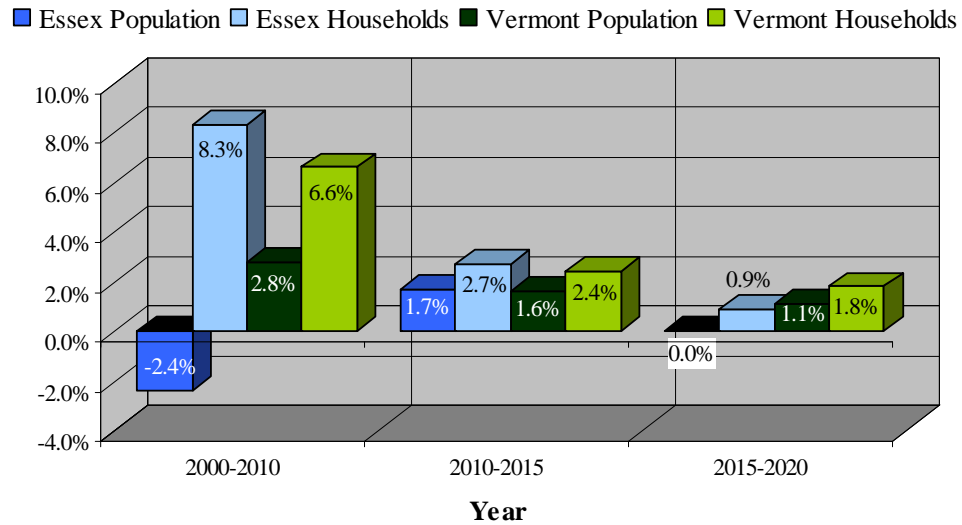
Significant unforeseen changes or fluctuations among any of the preceding assumptions could have an impact on demographic projections.

Population and household numbers for selected years within Essex County and Vermont are shown in the following table:

	Total Population		Total Households	
	Essex County	Vermont	Essex County	Vermont
2000 Census	6,459	608,826	2,602	240,634
2010 Census	6,306	625,740	2,818	256,442
Change 2000-2010	-153	16,914	216	15,808
Percent Change 2000-2010	-2.4%	2.8%	8.3%	6.6%
2015 Projected	6,413	635,440	2,895	262,502
Change 2010-2015	107	9,700	77	6,060
Percent Change 2010-2015	1.7%	1.6%	2.7%	2.4%
2020 Projected	6,414	642,480	2,921	267,270
Change 2015-2020	1	7,040	26	4,768
Percent Change 2015-2020	0.0%	1.1%	0.9%	1.8%

Source: 2000, 2010 Census; ESRI; Urban Decision Group; Bowen National Research

Essex County/Vermont Population & Household Trends



While the Essex County population declined between 2000 and 2010, the number of households increased. The number of people are projected to increase 107 (1.7%) with an additional 77 (2.7%) households between 2010 and 2015. From 2015 and 2020, the population is projected to essentially remain unchanged while households are projected to grow by 26 (0.9%).

Median household income for selected years is shown in the following table:

	Median Income	
	Essex County	Vermont
2000 Census	\$30,470	\$40,820
2010 Census	\$40,254	\$52,733
Percent Change 2000-2010	32.1%	29.2%
2015 Projected	\$35,970	\$50,968
Percent Change 2010-2015	-10.6%	-3.3%
2020 Projected	\$35,406	\$51,980
Percent Change 2015-2020	-1.6%	2.0%

Source: 2000, 2010 Census; ESRI; Urban Decision Group; Bowen National Research

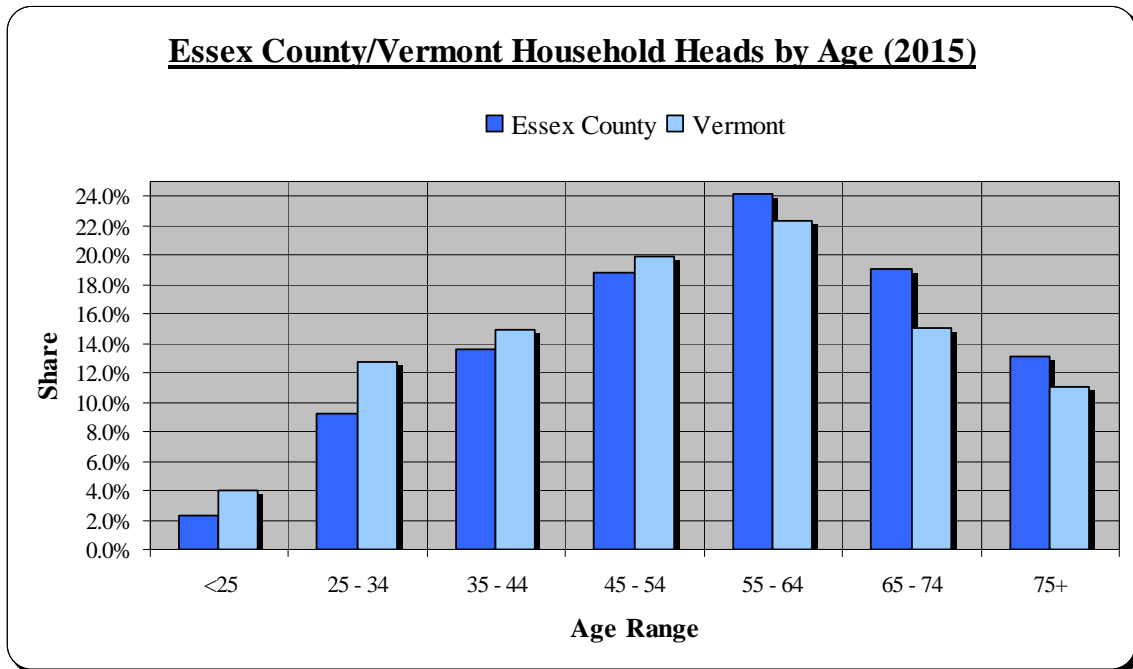
Essex County had an estimated median household income of \$40,254 in 2010. It is projected to decline to \$35,970 by 2015. This projected decline is likely influenced by several factors including 1.) Residual effects of the national recession, 2.) Reduced incomes of baby boomers retiring, and 3.) Growth among low-income households due to immigration and new household formations. It is projected that the county's median household income will decline slightly to \$35,406 (1.6%) by 2020.

The distribution of households by age for Essex County is compared with overall Vermont in the table below.

		Household Heads by Age						
		<25	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 to 74	75+
Essex County	2010	73 (2.6%)	246 (8.7%)	422 (15.0%)	600 (21.3%)	643 (22.8%)	464 (16.5%)	370 (13.1%)
	2015	67 (2.3%)	265 (9.2%)	393 (13.6%)	544 (18.8%)	698 (24.1%)	550 (19.0%)	378 (13.1%)
	2020	59 (2.0%)	268 (9.2%)	370 (12.7%)	485 (16.6%)	703 (24.1%)	635 (21.7%)	401 (13.7%)
	Change 2015-2020	-8 (-12.0%)	3 (1.1%)	-23 (-5.9%)	-59 (-10.8%)	5 (0.7%)	85 (15.5%)	23 (6.1%)
Vermont	2010	10,985 (4.3%)	32,492 (12.7%)	42,017 (16.4%)	57,987 (22.6%)	53,734 (21.0%)	31,424 (12.3%)	27,803 (10.8%)
	2015	10,505 (4.0%)	33,451 (12.7%)	39,129 (14.9%)	52,129 (19.9%)	58,571 (22.3%)	39,763 (15.1%)	28,947 (11.0%)
	2020	9,777 (3.7%)	34,033 (12.7%)	37,721 (14.1%)	46,382 (17.4%)	60,278 (22.6%)	48,166 (18.0%)	30,906 (11.6%)
	Change 2015-2020	-728 (-6.9%)	582 (1.7%)	-1,408 (-3.6%)	-5,747 (-11.0%)	1,707 (2.9%)	8,403 (21.1%)	1,959 (6.8%)

Source: 2000, 2010 Census; ESRI; Urban Decision Group; Bowen National Research

It is projected that by 2015, the largest share (24.1%) of households by age in Essex County will be within the 55 to 64 age cohort. Between 2015 and 2020, it is projected that households between the ages of 45 and 54 will decline by 59 (10.8%). The number of households between the ages of 65 and 74 will increase the most, adding 85 (15.5%) households during this time. Overall, Essex County will add a projected 113 households age 55 and older between 2015 and 2020.

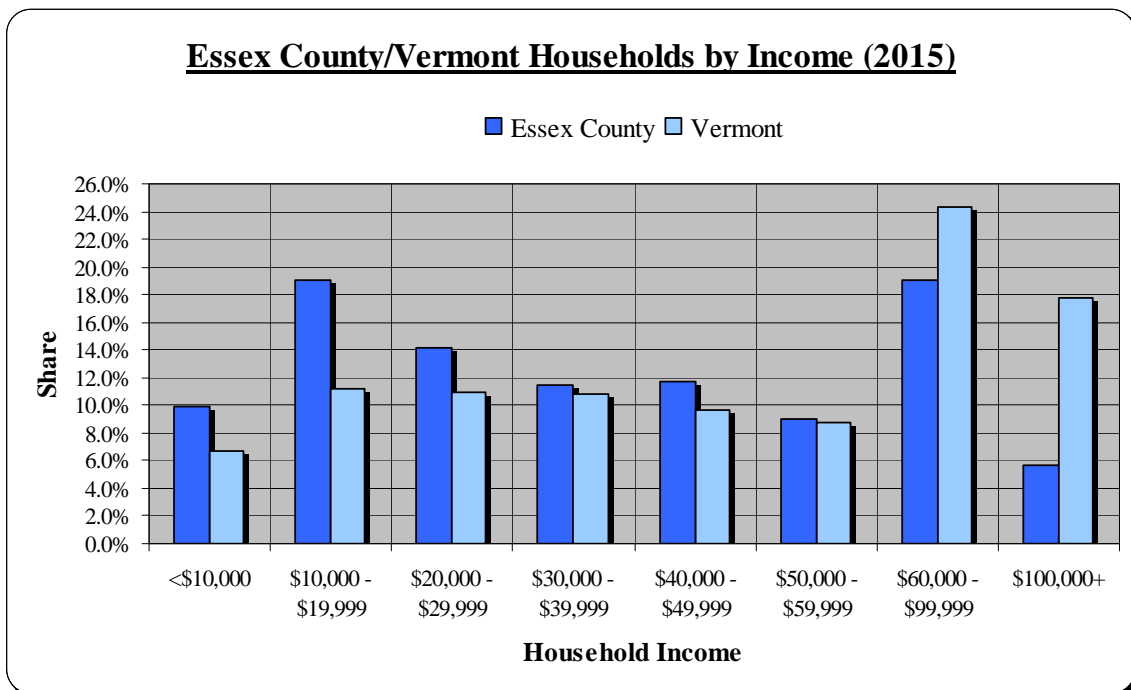


Households by income for selected years are shown in the following table:

		Households by Income							
		<\$10,000	\$10,000 - \$19,999	\$20,000 - \$29,999	\$30,000 - \$39,999	\$40,000 - \$49,999	\$50,000 - \$59,999	\$60,000 - \$99,999	\$100,000+
Essex County	2010	217 (7.7%)	448 (15.9%)	396 (14.0%)	341 (12.1%)	327 (11.6%)	280 (9.9%)	574 (20.4%)	237 (8.4%)
	2015	287 (9.9%)	553 (19.1%)	410 (14.2%)	331 (11.4%)	338 (11.7%)	260 (9.0%)	550 (19.0%)	165 (5.7%)
	2020	298 (10.2%)	563 (19.3%)	416 (14.2%)	340 (11.6%)	339 (11.6%)	261 (8.9%)	542 (18.5%)	163 (5.6%)
	Change 2015-2020	12 (4.1%)	10 (1.7%)	6 (1.4%)	9 (2.6%)	1 (0.2%)	1 (0.4%)	-9 (-1.6%)	-3 (-1.6%)
Vermont	2010	15,148 (5.9%)	27,596 (10.8%)	27,220 (10.6%)	26,485 (10.3%)	25,431 (9.9%)	23,203 (9.0%)	64,909 (25.3%)	46,451 (18.1%)
	2015	17,628 (6.7%)	29,311 (11.2%)	28,668 (10.9%)	28,272 (10.8%)	25,143 (9.6%)	23,022 (8.8%)	63,862 (24.3%)	46,596 (17.8%)
	2020	17,717 (6.6%)	29,150 (10.9%)	28,665 (10.7%)	28,307 (10.6%)	25,307 (9.5%)	22,673 (8.5%)	64,356 (24.1%)	51,095 (19.1%)
	Change 2015-2020	90 (0.5%)	-162 (-0.6%)	-3 (0.0%)	35 (0.1%)	163 (0.6%)	-348 (-1.5%)	494 (0.8%)	4,499 (9.7%)

Source: 2000 Census; 2010 Census; ESRI; Urban Decision Group; Bowen National Research

In 2015, over 43.2% of Essex County households will have annual incomes below \$30,000. Just under one-third of all households in Essex County will have incomes between \$30,000 and \$59,999. One-fourth of the households will have incomes of \$60,000 and higher. It is projected that between 2015 and 2020, the greatest increase in households by income level in Essex County will be among those with incomes below \$10,000 with notable growth among households with incomes between \$10,000 and \$19,999.



Households by income and tenure for selected years are shown below:

		Renter Households by Income							
		<\$10,000	\$10,000 - \$19,999	\$20,000 - \$29,999	\$30,000 - \$39,999	\$40,000 - \$49,999	\$50,000 - \$59,999	\$60,000 - \$99,999	\$100,000+
Essex County	2010	109 (19.5%)	126 (22.5%)	72 (12.9%)	45 (8.1%)	51 (9.1%)	64 (11.4%)	58 (10.4%)	34 (6.1%)
	2015	122 (21.3%)	143 (24.9%)	84 (14.7%)	43 (7.5%)	51 (9.0%)	60 (10.4%)	43 (7.5%)	27 (4.7%)
	2020	121 (20.8%)	151 (26.0%)	85 (14.6%)	44 (7.6%)	51 (8.7%)	57 (9.8%)	46 (7.9%)	26 (4.5%)
	Change 2015-2020	-1 (-1.0%)	8 (5.7%)	1 (0.7%)	1 (3.1%)	-1 (-1.3%)	-3 (-4.5%)	3 (7.8%)	-1 (-3.1%)
Vermont	2010	8,672 (11.6%)	13,748 (18.3%)	11,898 (15.9%)	10,467 (14.0%)	7,623 (10.2%)	6,209 (8.3%)	11,320 (15.1%)	5,097 (6.8%)
	2015	10,145 (13.4%)	14,446 (19.1%)	12,051 (15.9%)	10,459 (13.8%)	7,183 (9.5%)	5,848 (7.7%)	10,718 (14.1%)	4,933 (6.5%)
	2020	10,128 (13.1%)	14,375 (18.7%)	11,837 (15.4%)	10,338 (13.4%)	7,379 (9.6%)	5,841 (7.6%)	11,345 (14.7%)	5,810 (7.5%)
	Change 2015-2020	-17 (-0.2%)	-71 (-0.5%)	-215 (-1.8%)	-122 (-1.2%)	196 (2.7%)	-8 (-0.1%)	626 (5.8%)	877 (17.8%)

Source: 2000 Census; 2010 Census; ESRI; Urban Decision Group; Bowen National Research

		Owner Households by Income							
		<\$10,000	\$10,000 - \$19,999	\$20,000 - \$29,999	\$30,000 - \$39,999	\$40,000 - \$49,999	\$50,000 - \$59,999	\$60,000 - \$99,999	\$100,000+
Essex County	2010	108 (4.8%)	322 (14.2%)	324 (14.3%)	296 (13.1%)	276 (12.2%)	216 (9.5%)	516 (22.8%)	203 (9.0%)
	2015	165 (7.1%)	410 (17.7%)	326 (14.0%)	288 (12.4%)	287 (12.4%)	200 (8.6%)	508 (21.9%)	138 (6.0%)
	2020	178 (7.6%)	412 (17.6%)	331 (14.1%)	296 (12.6%)	288 (12.3%)	204 (8.7%)	495 (21.2%)	137 (5.8%)
	Change 2015-2020	13 (7.9%)	2 (0.4%)	5 (1.5%)	7 (2.5%)	1 (0.4%)	4 (1.9%)	-12 (-2.4%)	-2 (-1.3%)
Vermont	2010	6,475 (3.6%)	13,848 (7.6%)	15,322 (8.4%)	16,017 (8.8%)	17,808 (9.8%)	16,994 (9.4%)	53,588 (29.5%)	41,354 (22.8%)
	2015	7,483 (4.0%)	14,866 (8.0%)	16,616 (8.9%)	17,813 (9.5%)	17,960 (9.6%)	17,173 (9.2%)	53,144 (28.5%)	41,663 (22.3%)
	2020	7,589 (4.0%)	14,775 (7.8%)	16,829 (8.8%)	17,969 (9.4%)	17,928 (9.4%)	16,833 (8.8%)	53,012 (27.9%)	45,285 (23.8%)
	Change 2015-2020	106 (1.4%)	-91 (-0.6%)	212 (1.3%)	157 (0.9%)	-33 (-0.2%)	-341 (-2.0%)	-132 (-0.2%)	3,622 (8.7%)

Source: 2000 Census; 2010 Census; ESRI; Urban Decision Group; Bowen National Research

The largest share (24.9%) of renter households in 2015 is projected to be among households with incomes between \$10,000 and \$19,999, while the largest share (21.9%) of owner-occupied households at this same time will be among those with incomes between \$60,000 and \$99,999. Between 2015 and 2020, the greatest renter household growth, while nominal, is projected to occur among households with incomes between \$10,000 and \$19,999 and among homeowners with incomes below \$10,000.

Population by race for 2010 (latest race data available) is shown below:

		Population by Race						Total
		White Alone	Black or African American Alone	Asian Alone	Some Other Race Alone	Two or More Races		
Essex County	Number	6,138	18	22	45	83	6,306	
	Percent	97.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.7%	1.3%	100.0%	
Vermont	Number	596,291	6,277	7,947	4,472	10,753	625,740	
	Percent	95.3%	1.0%	1.3%	0.7%	1.7%	100.0%	

Source: 2010 Census; ESRI; Urban Decision Group; Bowen National Research

The largest share of population by race within the county is among the “White Alone” segment, which represents 97.3% of the city’s population. “Two or more Races” represents the next largest share in the county at 1.3%.

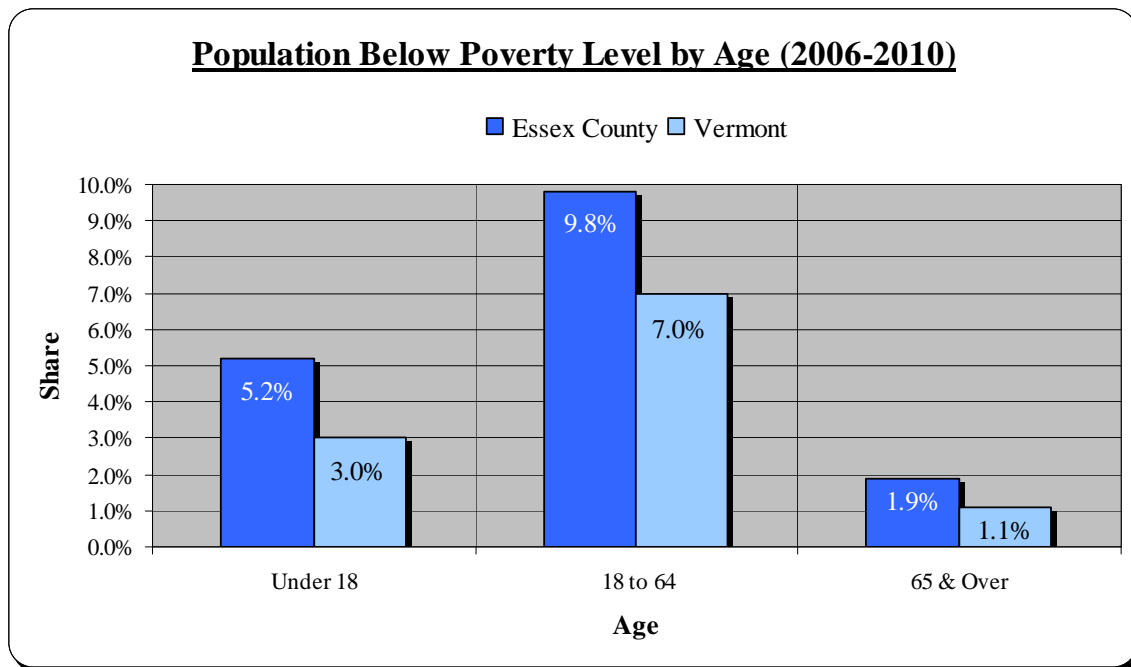
Population by poverty status for the county is shown in the following table:

		Population by Poverty Status						Total
		Income below poverty level:			Income at or above poverty level:			
		<18	18 to 64	65+	<18	18 to 64	65+	
Essex County	Number	328	616	120	941	3,253	1,047	6,306
	Percent	5.2%	9.8%	1.9%	14.9%	51.6%	16.6%	100.0%
Vermont	Number	18,492	44,076	7,007	116,645	359,152	80,367	625,740
	Percent	3.0%	7.0%	1.1%	18.6%	57.4%	12.8%	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey; Urban Decision Group; Bowen National Research

Approximately 16.9% of the county’s population lives in poverty. One in four children (under the age of 18) within the county live in poverty. Approximately 9.8% of the county’s population is between the ages of 18 and 64 and lives in poverty, while only 1.9% of the population consists of seniors age 65 and older who live in poverty.

The following graph compares the share of population by age group with incomes below the poverty level for the county and state based on the ACS five-year (2006-2010) rolling average:



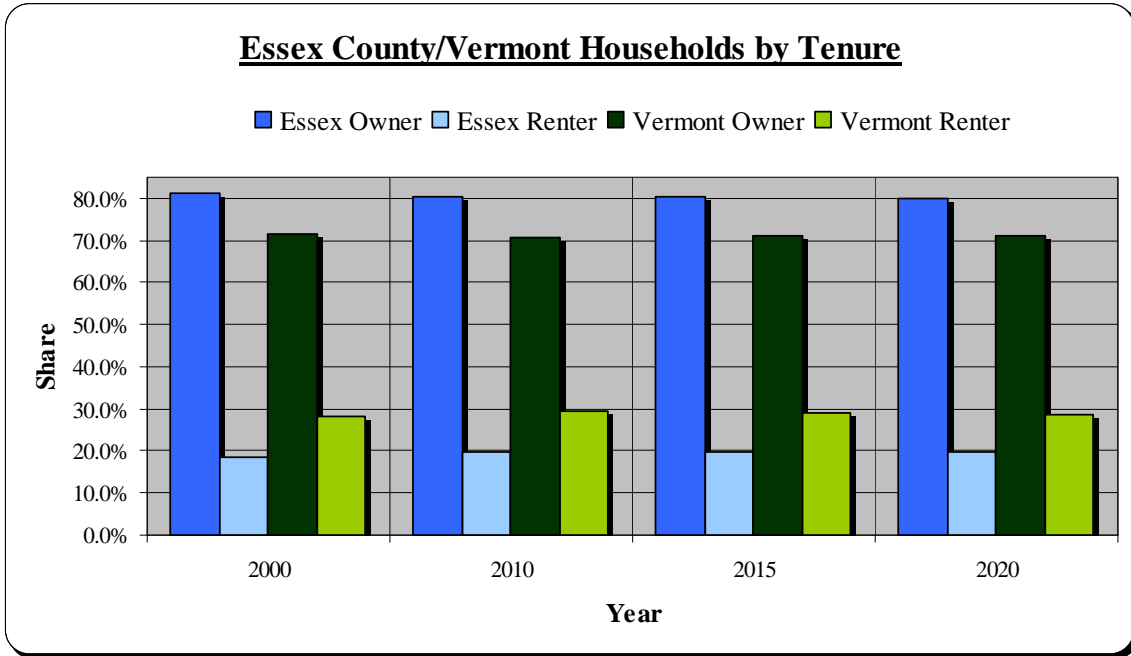
Households by tenure for selected years for the county and state are shown in the following table:

		Households by Tenure							
		2000		2010		2015		2020	
Essex County	Household Type	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
		Owner-Occupied	2,116	81.3%	2,260	80.2%	2,322	80.2%	2,340
	Renter-Occupied	486	18.7%	558	19.8%	573	19.8%	581	19.9%
	Total	2,602	100.0%	2,818	100.0%	2,895	100.0%	2,921	100.0%
Vermont	Owner-Occupied	172,467	71.7%	181,407	70.7%	186,718	71.1%	190,219	71.2%
	Renter-Occupied	68,167	28.3%	75,035	29.3%	75,784	28.9%	77,051	28.8%
	Total	240,634	100.0%	256,442	100.0%	262,502	100.0%	267,270	100.0%

Source: 2000 Census; 2010 Census; ESRI; Urban Decision Group; Bowen National Research

Within the county, the share of owner-occupied household was over 80.0% in 2000 and 2010, while the share of renter-occupied households has been under 20%. It is projected that in 2015 and 2020, the share of owner-occupied households will still be around four-fifths of the county and the share of renter-occupied households will be around one-fifth.

The following graph compares household tenure shares for 2000, 2010, 2015 and 2020:



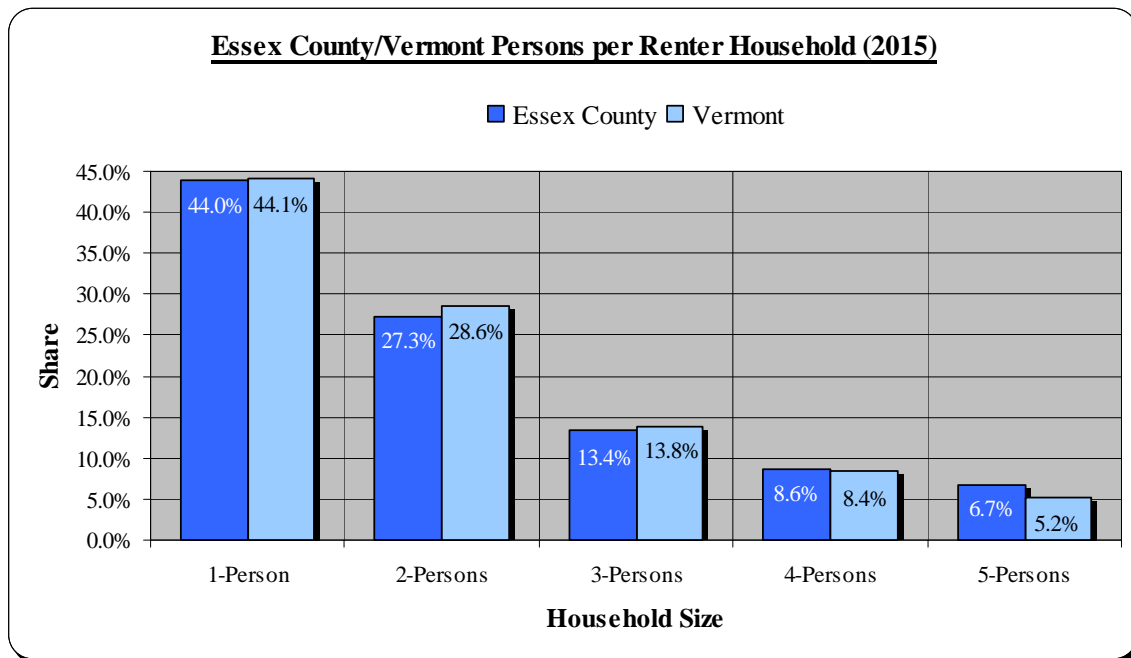
Renter households by size for selected years are shown in the following table:

		Persons Per Renter Household						Median Household Size
		1-Person	2-Person	3-Person	4-Person	5-Person	Total	
Essex County	2010	229 (41.0%)	159 (28.4%)	75 (13.4%)	53 (9.5%)	43 (7.7%)	558 (100.0%)	1.64
	2015	252 (44.0%)	157 (27.3%)	77 (13.4%)	50 (8.6%)	38 (6.7%)	573 (100.0%)	1.44
	2020	267 (45.9%)	154 (26.5%)	78 (13.4%)	47 (8.1%)	36 (6.1%)	581 (100.0%)	1.31
Vermont	2010	32,279 (43.0%)	21,756 (29.0%)	10,358 (13.8%)	6,530 (8.7%)	4,112 (5.5%)	75,035 (100.0%)	1.48
	2015	33,397 (44.1%)	21,645 (28.6%)	10,436 (13.8%)	6,369 (8.4%)	3,937 (5.2%)	75,784 (100.0%)	1.42
	2020	34,567 (44.9%)	21,768 (28.3%)	10,566 (13.7%)	6,302 (8.2%)	3,847 (5.0%)	77,051 (100.0%)	1.36

Source: 2000, 2010 Census; ESRI; Urban Decision Group; Bowen National Research

In 2010, the share of county renter households with one- and two-persons was just under 70%, while three-person or larger renter households represent around 30% of the total households. Interestingly, the shares of renter households by household size are not projected to change much in 2015 and 2020. The county's median household size of 1.64 in 2010 is projected to decline to 1.31 in 2020. This is attributed to the increase in one-person households during this 10-year period.

The following graph compares renter household size shares for the county and state in 2015:



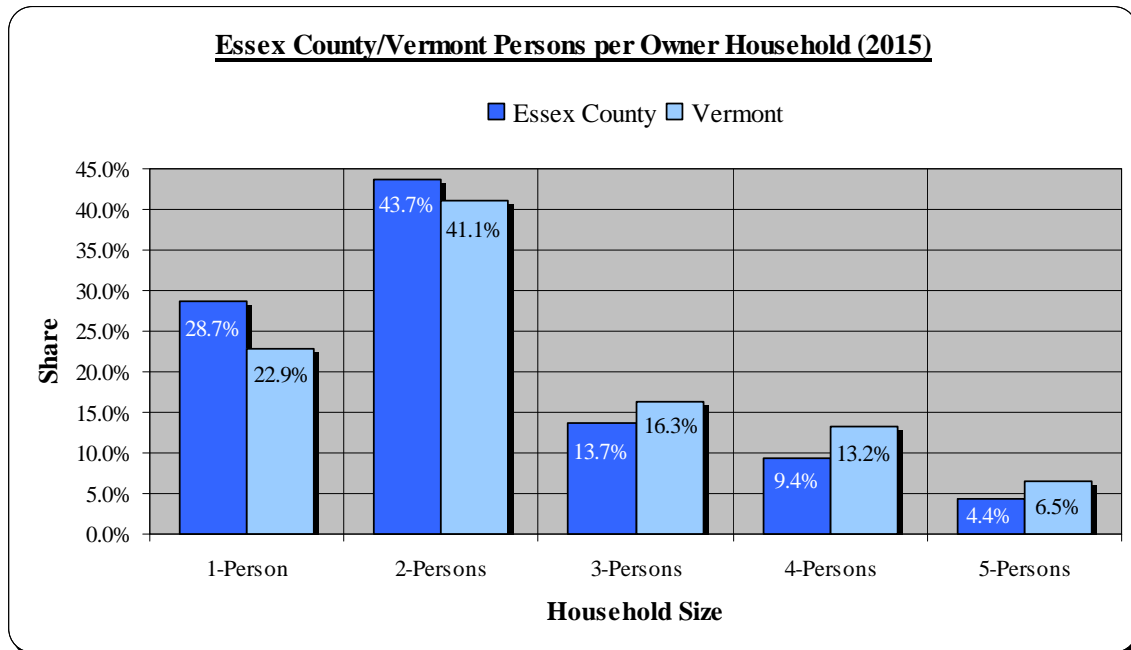
Owner households by size for selected years are shown on the following table:

		Persons Per Owner Household						Median Household Size
		1-Person	2-Person	3-Person	4-Person	5-Person	Total	
Essex County	2010	598 (26.5%)	1,016 (44.9%)	306 (13.5%)	230 (10.2%)	111 (4.9%)	2,260 (100.0%)	2.05
	2015	667 (28.7%)	1,016 (43.7%)	318 (13.7%)	219 (9.4%)	102 (4.4%)	2,322 (100.0%)	1.97
	2020	715 (30.5%)	1,004 (42.9%)	319 (13.6%)	208 (8.9%)	94 (4.0%)	2,340 (100.0%)	1.91
Vermont	2010	39,956 (22.0%)	75,130 (41.4%)	29,356 (16.2%)	24,662 (13.6%)	12,302 (6.8%)	181,407 (100.0%)	2.35
	2015	42,730 (22.9%)	76,706 (41.1%)	30,376 (16.3%)	24,712 (13.2%)	12,194 (6.5%)	186,718 (100.0%)	2.32
	2020	44,759 (23.5%)	77,662 (40.8%)	31,076 (16.3%)	24,667 (13.0%)	12,055 (6.3%)	190,219 (100.0%)	2.30

Source: 2000, 2010 Census; ESRI; Urban Decision Group; Bowen National

Generally, one- and two-person owner-occupied households are projected to represent about two-thirds of the owner-occupied household base within the county. At the same time, approximately 13% of the county's owner-occupied households have consisted of three-persons, around 9.4% have been four-persons, and approximately 5% have been five-person or larger. The median owner-occupied household size is projected to decrease through 2020.

The following graph compares owner household size shares for the county and state in 2015:



Residents of the county face a variety of housing issues that include such things as lacking complete kitchen and/or indoor plumbing, overcrowding (1.01 or more persons per room), severe overcrowding (1.51 or more persons per room), cost burdened (paying over 30% of their income towards housing costs), severe cost burdened (paying over 50% of their income towards housing costs), and potentially containing lead paint (units typically built prior to 1980).

The following table summarizes the housing issues by tenure for Essex County. It is important to note that some occupied housing units have more than one housing issue.

Housing Issues by Tenure				
Housing Issue	Renter-Occupied		Owner-Occupied	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Cost Burdened	204	44.6%	685	28.7%
Severely Cost Burdened	112	24.5%	237	9.9%
Overcrowded	17	3.7%	7	0.3%
Severely Overcrowded	0	0.0%	2	0.1%
Substandard*	0	0.0%	52	2.2%
Lead Paint	332	72.6%	1,568	65.7%

Sources: 2000, 2010 Census; ESRI; Urban Decision Group; Bowen National

Notes: Some housing issues overlap with other issues; Lead Paint estimates are based on year built

*Incomplete Kitchen and Incomplete Bath have been added together

As illustrated in the preceding table, excluding the number of households potentially impacted by lead based paint, the greatest housing issue facing residents appears to be associated with cost burden. The high share of cost burdened households indicates that many area residents are paying a disproportionately high share of their income towards housing costs, which is likely due to a lack of affordable housing.

D. Economics

As economic conditions and trends can influence the need for housing within a particular market, the following is an overview of various economic characteristics and trends within Essex County.

The distribution of employment by industry sector in Essex County is compared with Vermont in the following table.

NAICS Group	Employment by Industry (Employees)			
	Essex County		Vermont	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	65	5.6%	4,769	1.7%
Mining	8	0.7%	877	0.3%
Utilities	4	0.3%	999	0.4%
Construction	65	5.6%	16,858	6.1%
Manufacturing	163	14.1%	23,068	8.3%
Wholesale Trade	32	2.8%	9,861	3.6%
Retail Trade	82	7.1%	34,918	12.6%
Transportation & Warehousing	74	6.4%	7,800	2.8%
Information	6	0.5%	8,913	3.2%
Finance & Insurance	9	0.8%	7,077	2.6%
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	7	0.6%	5,106	1.8%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	41	3.6%	17,093	6.2%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	0	0.0%	170	0.1%
Administrative, Support, Waste Management & Remediation Services	78	6.8%	16,245	5.9%
Educational Services	138	12.0%	25,947	9.4%
Health Care & Social Assistance	68	5.9%	37,197	13.4%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	18	1.6%	4,798	1.7%
Accommodation & Food Services	67	5.8%	17,636	6.4%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	54	4.7%	14,090	5.1%
Public Administration	173	15.0%	23,180	8.4%
Total	1,152	100.0%	276,602	100.0%

*Source: 2010 Census; ESRI; Urban Decision Group; Bowen National Research

E.P.E. - Average Employees Per Establishment

Note: Since this survey is conducted of establishments and not of residents, some employees may not live within the County. These employees, however, are included in our labor force calculations because their places of employment are located within the County.

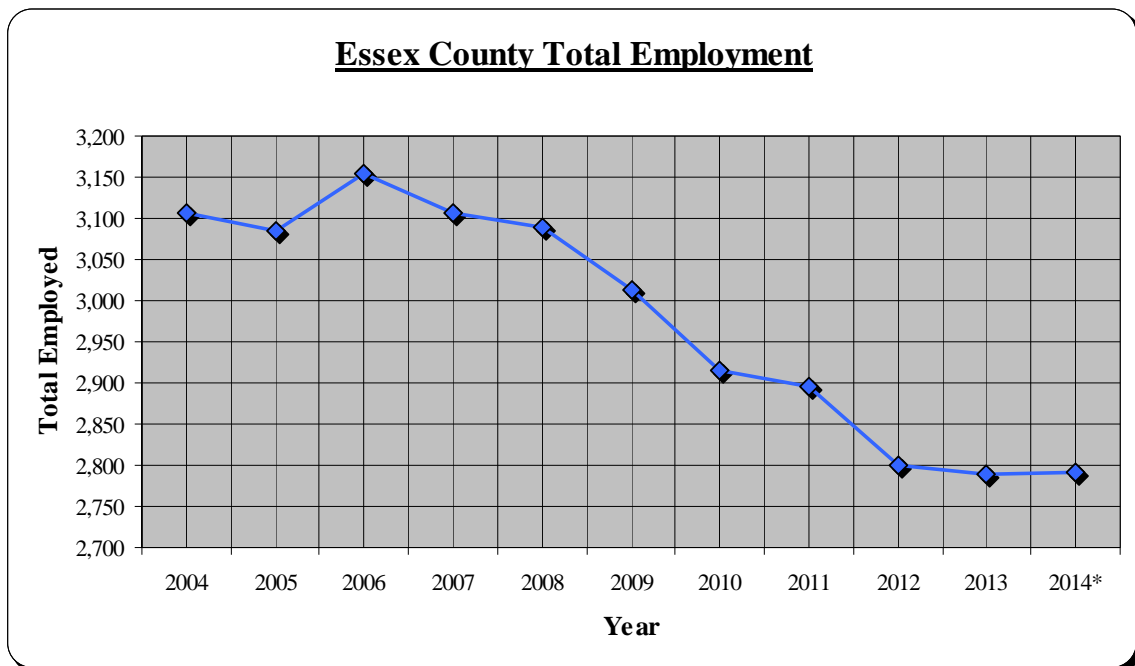
The labor force within the county is very diversified and balanced with no industry sector representing more than 15.0% of the overall county's employment base. The largest employment sectors in the county are within Public Administration (15.0%), Manufacturing (14.1%), and Educational Services (12.0%). With more than one-fourth of the employment within government and education, the area is more resistant to economic downturns. This adds to the economic stability of the area.

The following illustrates the total employment base for Essex County, Vermont and the United States.

Year	Total Employment					
	Essex County		Vermont		United States	
	Total Number	Percent Change	Total Number	Percent Change	Total Number	Percent Change
2004	3,106	-	334,188	-	139,967,126	-
2005	3,085	-0.7%	336,583	0.7%	142,299,506	1.7%
2006	3,155	2.3%	343,149	2.0%	145,000,043	1.9%
2007	3,106	-1.6%	341,282	-0.5%	146,388,369	1.0%
2008	3,089	-0.5%	341,692	0.1%	146,047,748	-0.2%
2009	3,013	-2.5%	334,922	-2.0%	140,696,560	-3.7%
2010	2,916	-3.2%	336,823	0.6%	140,457,589	-0.2%
2011	2,896	-0.7%	338,341	0.5%	141,727,933	0.9%
2012	2,801	-3.3%	338,261	0.0%	143,566,680	1.3%
2013	2,790	-0.4%	336,038	-0.7%	144,950,662	1.0%
2014*	2,792	0.1%	337,297	0.4%	146,735,092	1.2%

Source: Department of Labor; Bureau of Labor Statistics

*Through August



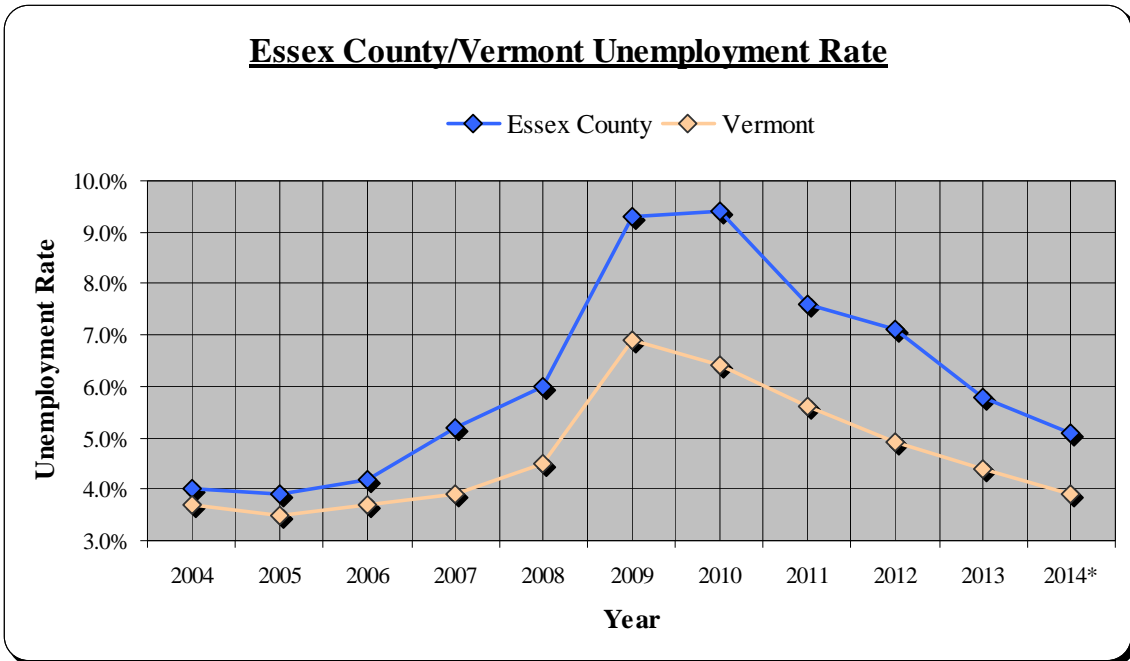
Essex County experienced a decline in annual employment from 2007 to 2013, though most of the declines were nominal. It appears that the employment base has stabilized in the past 18 months.

Unemployment rates for Essex County, Vermont and the United States are illustrated as follows:

Year	Unemployment Rate		
	Essex County	Vermont	United States
2004	4.0%	3.7%	5.6%
2005	3.9%	3.5%	5.2%
2006	4.2%	3.7%	4.7%
2007	5.2%	3.9%	4.7%
2008	6.0%	4.5%	5.8%
2009	9.3%	6.9%	9.3%
2010	9.4%	6.4%	9.7%
2011	7.6%	5.6%	9.0%
2012	7.1%	4.9%	8.1%
2013	5.8%	4.4%	7.4%
2014*	5.1%	3.9%	6.5%

Source: Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics
 *Through August

The unemployment rate in Essex County reached 9.3% in 2009 and 9.4% in 2010 as a result of the national recession. The county's unemployment rate, while higher than the state average, has declined in each of the past four years. This is an indication of a strengthening economy.



Essex County is one of three counties to make up Vermont's "Northeast Kingdom." The area, comprised of Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans Counties, refers to the corner of the state that abuts the Canadian Border and upper Connecticut River. Much of the region's economy is anchored in manufacturing, health care, agriculture, and tourism. Economically, Essex is the smallest of the three, with just 115 business establishments (as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau), and many residents of the Northeast Kingdom commute to nearby New Hampshire for employment.

Most of the employers within the Northeast Kingdom are small and according to 2012 data produced by the Census Bureau, just 53 businesses within the three-county region employed 50 or more workers. In Essex County, only one or two employers had a workforce of 50 or more, while more than 70% employed four or fewer. That said, the county is not without a few noteworthy employers and Dirigo Paper and Ethan Allen are among its largest.

Ethan Allen operates a facility in Beecher Falls (in addition to one in neighboring Orleans County). While a significant employer and one that invests in new equipment and technology, Ethan Allen has significantly downsized its Essex County presence in recent years. In 2001, it closed its Island Pond plant, putting 130 people out of work. More recently in 2009, it announced the elimination of 260 positions in Beecher Falls when much of its production was shut down. While some of the affected employees were transferred to the larger Orleans facility, most were left jobless. Earlier the same year, the company announced a combined layoff of 110 at the Orleans and Beecher Falls locations. Still, its Vermont plants continue to produce \$380,000 in furniture daily.

Aside from Ethan Allen's downsizings and closure (noted above), news of other Essex County layoffs has been limited. That said, cuts elsewhere in the Northeast Kingdom (i.e., Caledonia and Orleans Counties) tend to affect the entire three-county region.

On a more positive note, Connecticut-based Sweet Tree Holdings recently purchased the former Ethan Allen facility in Island Pond. After sitting vacant since 2000, renovations of the 82,000 square foot building are underway. Once complete, Sweet Tree will hire up to 20 to 30 employees to work in the maple syrup processing operation.

Aside from manufacturing, tourism plays a role in the Northeast Kingdom's economy. Driven in part by the conservation acquisition of the former Champion lands by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, as well as permanent conservation easements on the remainder of the Champion lands, eco-tourism has become a growing trend in the county.

Other positive economic development and infrastructure announcements include a \$33,100 USDA Rural Community Facility Award to the Brighton Fire Department for the acquisition of turnout gear (i.e., helmets, hoods, gloves, boots, jackets, and pants) for 19 firefighters, along with a \$12,000 USDA grant to the Lunenburg Fire District

No. 2, which will assist in the preparation of plans to replace an unreliable wastewater pump station and sewer main. Also to note, Versatile Communications recently acquired GreenPages Technology Solutions. Headquartered in Massachusetts, Versatile, an IT infrastructure solutions provider, operates a local office in Brighton, Vermont. The acquisition signifies continued growth and stability within the company.

The Model Neighborhood Project will transform the region into a hub for wood pellet heat use, which will lower heating costs for residents and businesses in the Northeast Kingdom. Under the program, families and businesses in Essex County's East Haven will be eligible to convert their heating systems. Separately, broadband and high-speed wireless has been launched throughout the region, with further expansions anticipated in 2015.

E. Housing Supply

This housing supply analysis considers both rental and owner for-sale housing. Understanding the historical trends, market performance, characteristics, composition, and current housing choices provide critical information as to current market conditions and future housing potential. The housing data presented and analyzed in this section includes primary data collected directly by Bowen National Research and from secondary data sources including American Community Survey (ACS), U.S. Census housing information and data provided by various government entities and real estate professionals.

While there are a variety of housing alternatives offered in Essex County, we focused our analysis on the most common alternatives. The housing structures included in this analysis are:

- **Rental Housing** – Multifamily rentals, typically with three or more units were inventoried and surveyed. Additionally, rentals with fewer than three units, which were classified as non-conventional rentals, were identified and surveyed.
- **Mobile Homes** – Mobile home units located within designated mobile home parks were aggregated and evaluated.
- **Owner For-Sale Housing** – We identified attached and detached for-sale housing, which may be part of a planned development or community, as well as attached multifamily housing such as condominiums. Both historical (homes sold between January of 2010 and October of 2014) and available for-sale homes were evaluated.
- **Senior Care Housing** – Facilities providing housing for seniors requiring some level of care, such as residential care facilities, assisted living facilities and nursing homes, were surveyed and analyzed.

For the purposes of this analysis, the housing supply information is presented for Essex County and compared with the state of Vermont. This analysis includes secondary Census housing data, Bowen National Research’s survey of area rental alternatives and senior care facilities, and owner for-sale housing data (both historical sales and available housing alternatives) obtained from secondary data sources (Multiple Listing Service, REALTOR.com, and other on-line sources) and mobile home parks (Vermont Department of Housing & Community Development and Bowen National Research). Finally, we contacted local building and planning departments to determine if any residential units of notable scale were currently planned or under review by local government. Any such units were considered in the housing gap estimates included later in this section.

Based on research conducted by Bowen National Research and secondary data sources, a total of seven (7) multifamily (apartment) rental properties, one (1) non-conventional rental, two (2) mobile home parks and 175 currently available (for-sale) units were identified and analyzed in the county. No senior care facilities were identified within the county.

Housing Supply Overview						
Housing Type	Projects	Units	Vacant Units	Vacancy	Price Range	Median Price
Apartment Rentals	7	77	0	0.0%	N/A	N/A
Non-Conventional Rentals	1	1	-	-	\$450	\$450
Mobile Home Parks	2	42	3	7.1%	\$198-\$445	-
Owner Housing (For-Sale)**	-	175	-	-	\$14,000-\$775,000	\$129,900
Senior Care Facilities	0	0	0	N/A-RC	-	-
	0	0	0	N/A-AL	-	-
	0	0	0	N/A-NH	-	-

RC-Residential Care; AL-Assisted living; NH-Nursing Home

*Price range illustrates the lowest to highest, regardless of bedroom type; Mobile Home Park price range is the base lot rent (2013) to the highest rent identified for a mobile home unit

**Units is the total number of active listings

Of the 120 total rental housing units (multifamily, non-conventional and mobile home parks) surveyed in the county, a total of three (3) units were vacant, yielding an overall vacancy rate of 2.5%. The lowest vacancy rate (0.0%) is among the multifamily supply while the highest vacancy (7.1%) is among the mobile home park supply. The rental rates range from \$198 among the mobile home park supply to \$450 among the non-conventional rental supply. Currently available for-sale housing ranges in price from \$14,000 to \$775,000, with a median price of \$129,900.



a. Rental Housing

Multifamily Rental Housing

From August to October of 2014, Bowen National Research surveyed (both by telephone and in-person) a total of seven multifamily rental housing properties within Essex County. The only projects identified, inventoried, and surveyed operate under HUD programs. Definitions of each housing program are included in *Addendum D: Glossary of the Vermont Housing Needs Assessment*.

Managers and leasing agents for each project were surveyed to collect a variety of property information including vacancies, rental rates, design characteristics, amenities, utility responsibility, and other features. Projects were also rated based on quality and upkeep, and each was mapped as part of this survey.

Bowen National Research identified and personally surveyed seven multifamily rental housing projects containing a total of 77 units within Essex County. All 77 of these units are government-subsidized. There were no market-rate or Tax Credit multifamily apartments in the county. The distribution of surveyed rental housing supply by bedroom is illustrated in the following table:

Multifamily Rental Housing Supply				
Program Type	Projects Surveyed	Total Units	Vacant Units	Occupancy Rate
Government-Subsidized	7	77	0	0.0%

As the preceding table illustrates, these rentals have a combined occupancy rate of 100.0%. This is an extremely high occupancy rate and an indication that there is no availability among multifamily apartments in Essex County. In fact, these projects have wait list ranging from two to 40 households, which provides evidence that there is pent up demand for multifamily rental housing in the Essex County area. Given that there are no market-rate or Tax Credit multifamily projects identified and surveyed in the county, indicates that moderate income households who do not qualify for government-subsidized housing must choose from other housing alternatives such as non-conventional rentals or mobile homes..

The distribution of units and vacancies by bedroom type among government-subsidized projects in Essex County is summarized as follows.

Government-Subsidized					
Bedroom	Baths	Units	Distribution	Vacancy	% Vacant
Studio	1.0	2	2.6%	0	0.0%
One-Bedroom	1.0	48	62.3%	0	0.0%
Two-Bedroom	1.0	14	18.2%	0	0.0%
Three-Bedroom	1.0	9	11.7%	0	0.0%
Four-Bedroom	1.0	1	1.3%	0	0.0%
Four-Bedroom	1.5	3	3.9%	0	0.0%
Total Subsidized		77	100.0%	0	0.0%

The seven surveyed government-subsidized projects in Essex County operate under the HUD Section 8 program. Nearly two-thirds of the subsidized housing supply consists of studio and one-bedroom units, the lack of availability and long wait lists indicate that individuals including seniors have no units readily available. The market has a disproportionately low share of two-bedroom or larger units, indicating that there are limited options for very low-income families.

The following is a distribution of multifamily rental projects and units surveyed by year built for Essex County:

Year Built	Projects	Units	Vacancy Rate
Before 1970	0	0	-
1970 to 1979	2	24	0.0%
1980 to 1989	2	32	0.0%
1990 to 1999	1	11	0.0%
2000 to 2004	2	10	0.0%
2005 to 2009	0	0	-
2010	0	0	-
2011	0	0	-
2012	0	0	-
2013	0	0	-
2014*	0	0	-

*As of September

The identified and surveyed multifamily product was built between 1970 and 2004, with the largest number of units constructed between 1980 and 1989. Regardless of development period, all multifamily housing is fully occupied. There has been virtually no new product added to the county over the past decade.

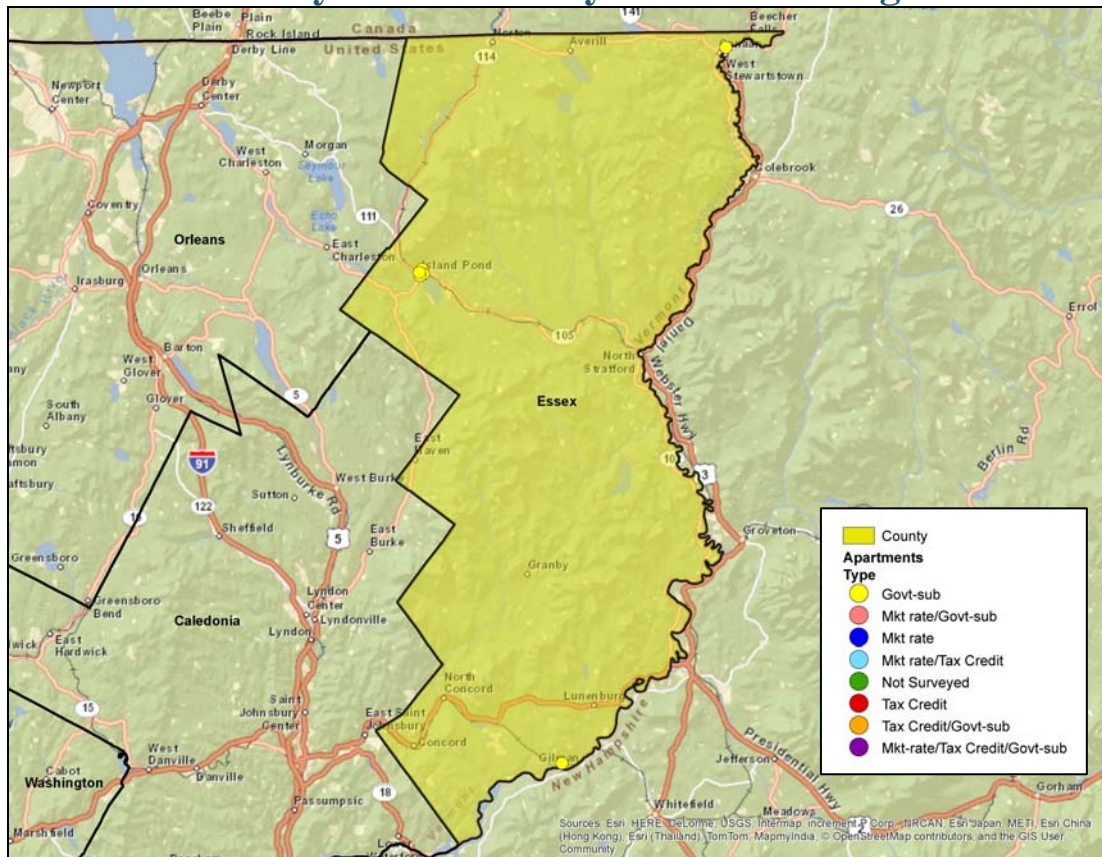
Representatives of Bowen National Research personally visited each of the surveyed rental projects within Essex County and rated the quality of each property. We rated each property surveyed on a scale of "A" (highest) through "F" (lowest). All properties were rated based on quality and overall appearance (i.e. aesthetic appeal, building appearance, landscaping and grounds appearance).

The following is a distribution by quality rating, units, and vacancies for all surveyed rental housing product in Essex County.

Government-Subsidized			
Quality Rating	Projects	Total Units	Vacancy Rate
A-	1	6	0.0%
B+	2	16	0.0%
B	4	55	0.0%
B- or Lower	0	0	-

Vacancies are generally low among all program types and quality levels. More importantly, there does not appear to be a direct correlation between quality level and vacancy rates. This is not unusual in markets with limited available product.

Surveyed Multifamily Rental Housing



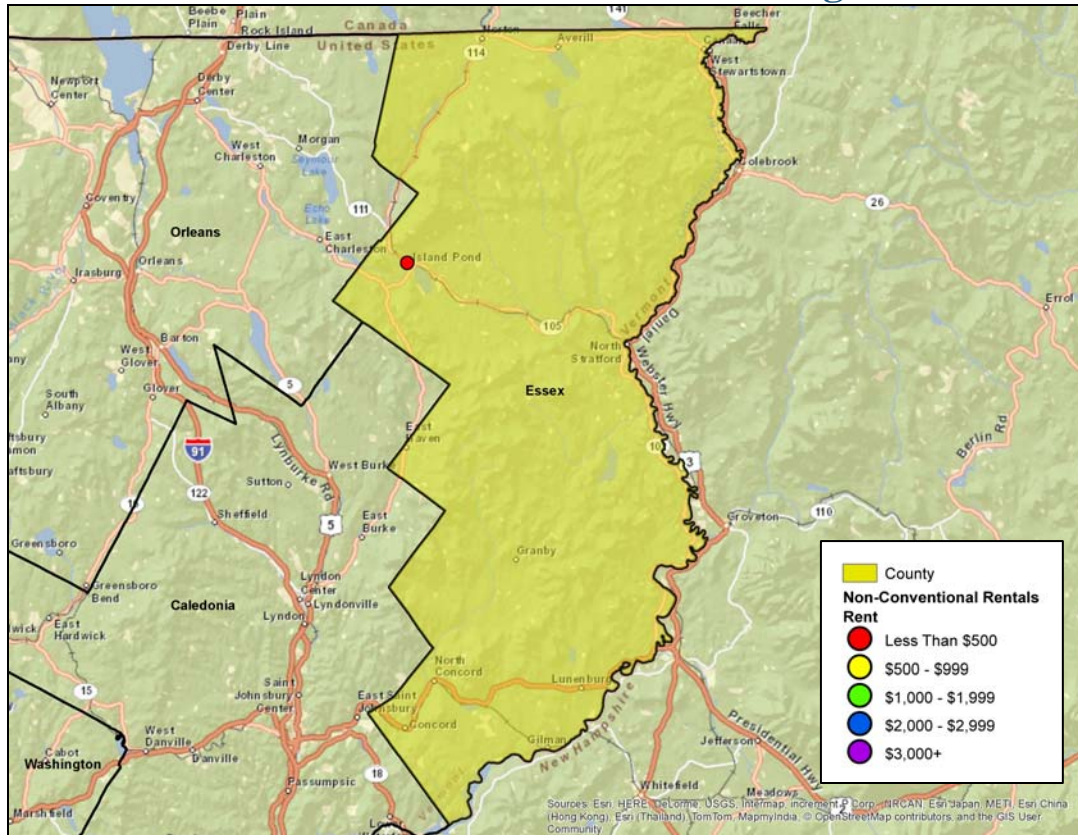
Non-Conventional Rental Housing

Based on demographic estimates, Essex County is one of the least populated counties within the state of Vermont. Naturally, the relatively low population warrants a lower number of housing alternatives relative to more populous counties. Further, data from American Community Survey (ACS) estimates indicate only 16.8% of the Essex County housing stock is classified as renter-occupied compared to the 28.6% statewide average. Therefore, it can be reasonably concluded that there are limited rental housing options available within the county, relative to other areas of the state. To that point, our preceding analysis of multifamily rental housing yielded only 77 conventional rental units and all were located within government-subsidized projects containing 22 units or less.

In an effort to identify and survey non-conventional rental properties (detached single-family homes, duplexes, units over storefronts, etc.) we researched classified ads, internet listings and interviewed local real estate agents. Unfortunately, our efforts only produced one (1) non-conventional rental unit. The only non-conventional unit identified was a one-bedroom single-family home that rents for \$450 per month.

Additional data was obtained from the American Community Survey (ACS) to provide an approximate estimate of renting a non-conventional property within Essex County. According to this data, the median rent asked for all rental units within Essex County is \$525. One-bedroom units are estimated to rent for a median asking price of \$295, two-bedrooms are estimated to rent for a median asking price of \$472 and three-bedroom units (or larger) are estimated to rent for a median asking price of \$563.

Non-Conventional Rental Housing



b. Mobile Home Parks

Statewide, approximately 7.0% of all housing units are mobile home units. This share is more prominent in the more rural areas of Vermont. According to American Community Survey, 14.2% of all housing units in Essex County are mobile homes. Based on data maintained by the Vermont Department of Housing & Community Development’s Housing Division, there are two mobile homes parks with a total of 42 mobile home units within Essex County. As such, mobile home parks only accommodate 10.5% of all mobile homes estimated to be in the county.

The following table summarizes the mobile homes parks by the year the park was established.

Mobile Home Parks by Year Established				
Year Established	Mobile Home Parks	Total Lots	Vacant Lots	Vacancy Rate
<1960	-	-	-	-
1960-1969	1	24	3	12.5%
1970-1979	1	18	0	0.0%
Total	2	42	3	7.1%

Source: DHCD Housing Division and Bowen National Research, LLC

As the preceding table illustrates, the mobile home parks were established between 1960 and 1979. According to data provided by DHCD’s Housing Division, there are a total of three (3) vacant lots, yielding an overall vacancy rate of 7.1%. Relative to the overall state’s mobile home park vacancy rate of 5.0%, the vacancy level within Essex County is higher.

The median base lot rent within mobile home parks for each of the past five years is illustrate in the following table.

Base Lot Rents by Year		
Year	Median Lot Rent	% Change
2009	\$188	-
2010	\$188	0.0%
2011	\$193	2.6%
2012	\$195	1.3%
2013	\$198	1.3%

Source: DHCD Housing Division and Bowen National Research, LLC

Median base lot rents within mobile home parks in Essex County have trended upward, increasing up to 2.6% annually between 2009 and 2013. These fees only include lot rentals. While many mobile home residents own their homes, rental rates for the actual mobile homes are around \$445.

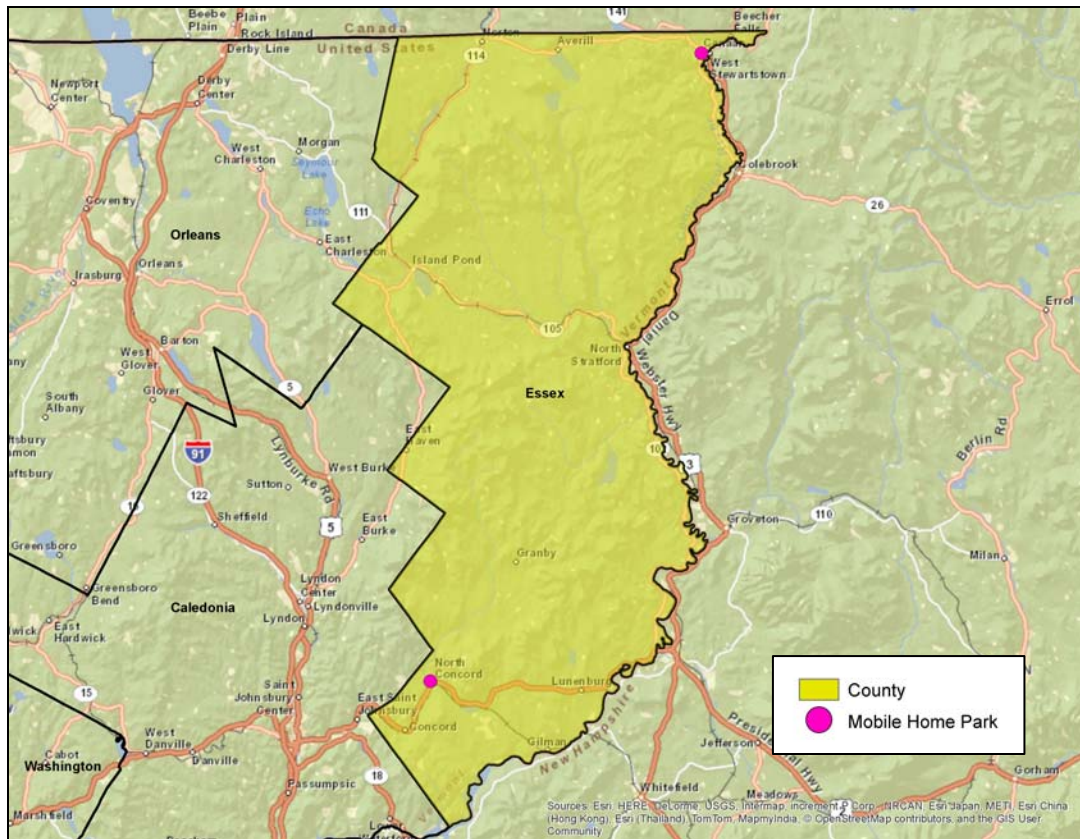
As the quality of mobile home parks and their surrounding area can have an affect on occupancy and rent levels achieved at these properties, representatives of Bowen National Research physically visited a majority of the mobile home parks in Vermont and rated each one based on the quality of the mobile home park and the quality of its surrounding area/neighborhood separately. Therefore, each project received two ratings. The mobile home parks were rated on their general aesthetic appeal, property upkeep, type of surface lots, landscaping and signage, while the surrounding neighborhoods were rated on general appeal and upkeep.

Mobile Home Parks by Quality Ratings		
Quality Rating	Mobile Home Park	Surrounding Neighborhood
A	0	0
B	1	1
C	1	1
D or Lower	0	0

Source: Bowen National Research, LLC

As illustrated above, the mobile home parks were rated as a “B” or “C”, indicating that the mobile home parks in Essex County are considered to be in good to fair condition. Similarly, the quality ratings of the neighborhoods have also been rates as a “B” or “C”, indicating the surrounding neighborhoods are also in good to fair condition.

Mobile Home Parks



c. Owner For-Sale Housing

Bowen National Research, through a review of the Multiple Listing Service information for Essex County, identified both historical (sold since 2010) for-sale residential data and currently available for-sale housing stock.

There were 302 homes sold since 2010 and 175 homes currently available in Essex County. Approximately, an average of 62 homes is sold each year within Essex County. The 175 available homes in Essex County represent only 2.0% of all identified available for sale homes in Vermont. The following table summarizes the available and recently sold (since January 2010) housing stock for Essex County. Please note that the statewide average difference between list price and actual sales price is around 6.4%, representing the typical discount in list prices.

Owner For-Sale/Sold Housing Supply		
Type	Homes	Median Price
Available	175	\$129,900
Sold	302	\$95,000

Source: Multiple Listing Service-NNEREN and Bowen National Research, LLC

The historical data includes any home sales that occurred within the county from January 2010 to October 2014. It is our opinion that an evaluation of sales activity after 2009 is representative of true market conditions following the recession.

The following table includes a summary of annual for-sale residential transactions that occurred within Essex County since 2010. It should be noted that the 2014 sales data is only through October of that year.

Essex County				
Owner For-Sale Housing by Year Sold				
Year	Units Sold		Median Price Sold	
	Number	Change	Price	Change
2010	56	-	\$80,783	-
2011	53	-5.4%	\$107,000	32.5%
2012	66	24.5%	\$86,250	-19.4%
2013	72	9.1%	\$102,500	18.8%
2014*	55	-	\$98,500	-

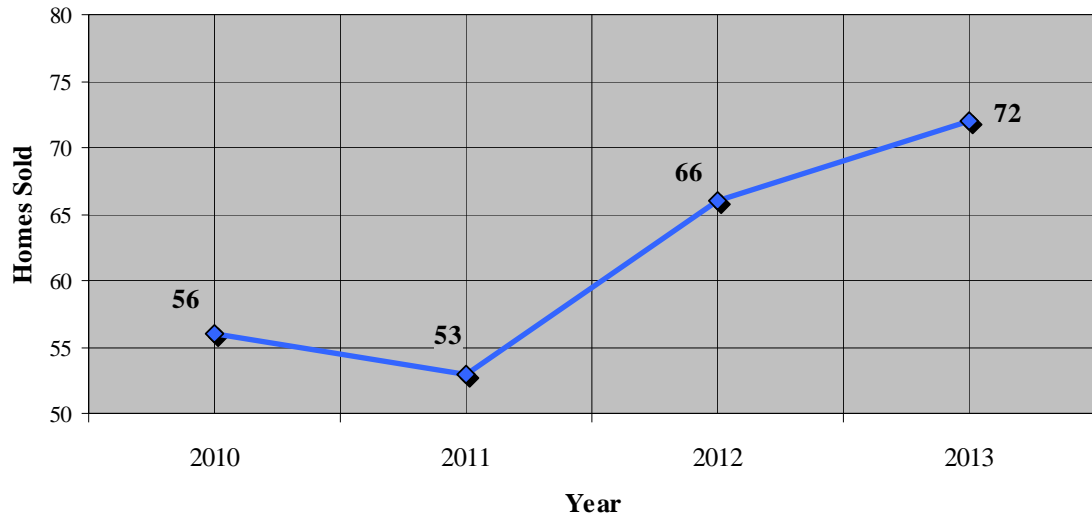
Source: Multiple Listing Service-NNEREN and Bowen National Research, LLC

* Through October

Excluding the partial year of 2014, annual residential for-sales activity within the county has ranged between 53 in 2011 and 72 in 2013. The annual sales activity has grown each of the past two full years. The county is currently on pace to sell approximately 70 residential units for all of 2014. Sales prices have fluctuated noticeably over the past three years, but have overall trended upward. This may be attributed, in part, to the limited number of transactions within the county. The 2013 median price represents an 18.8% increase over the preceding year. Overall, Essex County's for-sale housing market is considered to be stable.

The following graphs illustrate the overall annual number of homes sold and median sales prices over the past four years for Essex County from 2010 to 2013 (2014 was excluded due to the fact that only partial year data is available):

Essex County Annual Home Sales (2010-2013)



Essex County Annual Median Sales Price (2010-2013)



The following table summarizes the inventory of available for-sale housing in Essex County and Vermont.

	Available Owner For-Sale Housing						Average Days On Market
	Total Units	% Share of State	Low List Price	High List Price	Average List Price	Median List Price	
Essex County	175	2.0%	\$14,000	\$775,000	\$164,245	\$129,900	266
Vermont	8,691	100.0%	\$7,900	\$12,500,000	\$355,875	\$245,000	208

Source: Multiple Listing Service-NNEREN and Bowen National Research, LLC

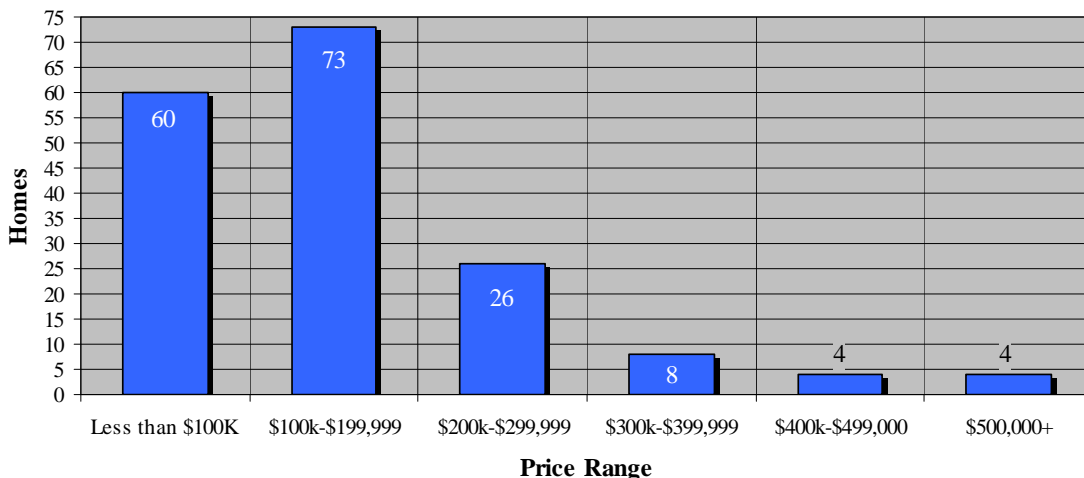
Within Essex County, the available homes have a median list price of \$129,900, which is almost half of the Vermont median list price of \$245,000. The average number of days on market for available product in Essex County is 266, which is longer than the Vermont average of 208.

The table below summarizes the distribution of available for-sale residential units by price point for Essex County.

List Price	Available Owner For-Sale Housing by Price Point					
	Essex County			Vermont		
	Median Price	Units	Share	Median Price	Units	Share
<\$100,000	\$69,500	60	34.3%	\$76,750	774	8.9%
\$100,000 - \$199,999	\$145,000	73	41.7%	\$159,000	2,682	30.9%
\$200,000 - \$299,999	\$233,500	26	14.8%	\$249,900	2,142	24.6%
\$300,000 - \$399,999	\$349,400	8	4.6%	\$350,000	1,142	13.1%
\$400,000 - \$499,999	\$449,500	4	2.3%	\$450,000	615	7.1%
\$500,000+	\$695,000	4	2.3%	\$750,000	1,336	15.4%

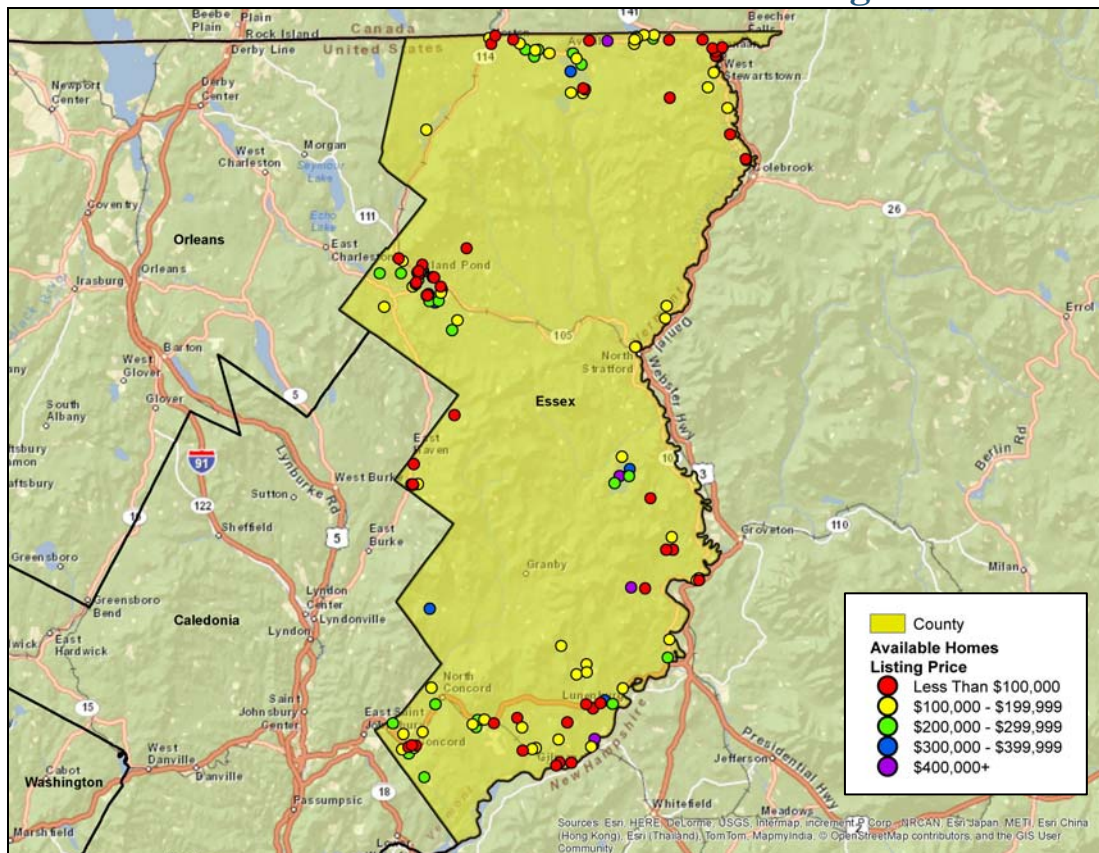
Source: Multiple Listing Service-NNEREN and Bowen National Research, LLC

Essex County Available For-Sale Housing by Price



Over 40% of the available for-sale supply in Essex County is priced between \$100,000 and \$200,000. As such, it appears that a good share of for-sale product is available to moderate income households making roughly \$60,000 to \$100,000 annually. Nearly one-third of the available product is priced below \$100,000, which would be generally affordable to households with incomes under \$30,000. This represents the highest *share* of product priced below \$100,000. Based on our on-site evaluation of the county's housing stock and an analysis of secondary data on such housing, it appears that much of the housing inventory was built prior to 1960 and of fair quality. As a result, while it may be deemed that there is an abundance of for-sale product available to lower-income households, such product likely requires additional costs for repairs, modernization and maintenance, which may be difficult for many low-income households to afford.

Available Owner For-Sale Housing



d. Senior Care Facilities

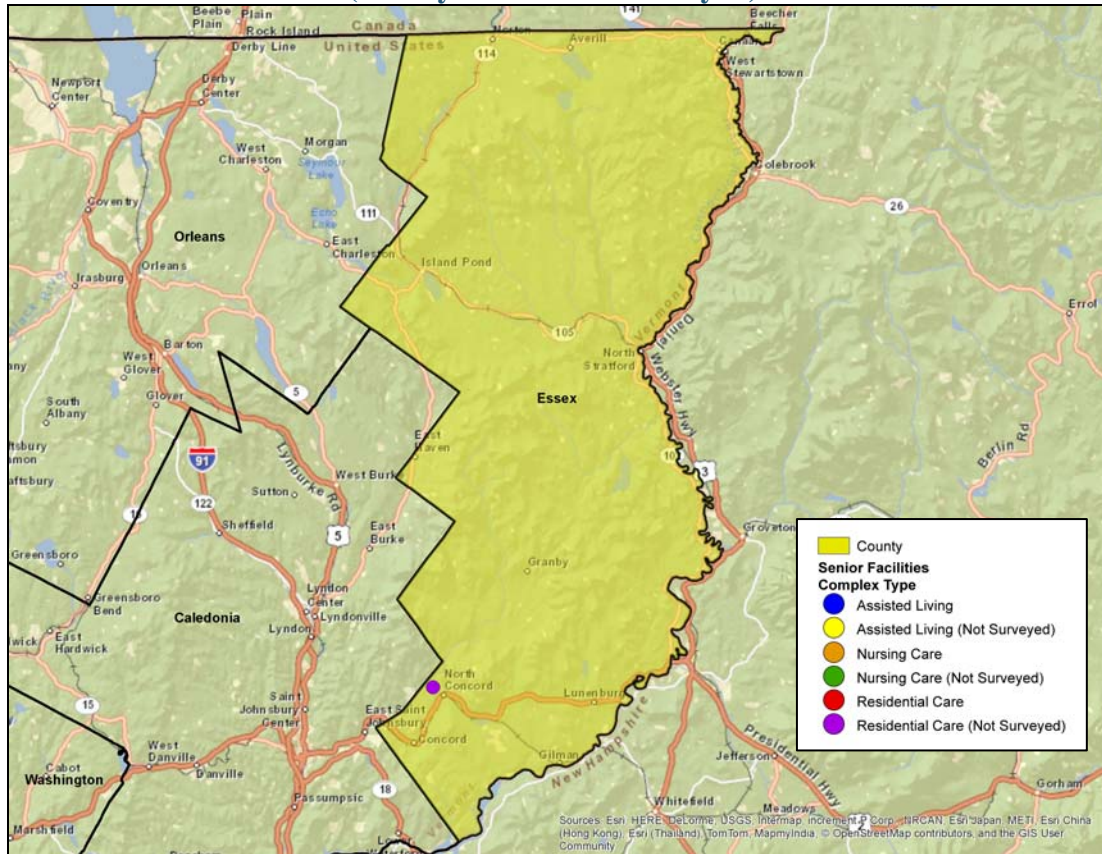
Vermont, like states throughout the country, has a large senior population that requires a variety of senior housing alternatives to meet its diverse needs. Among seniors age 75+, some individuals are either seeking a more leisurely lifestyle or need assistance with Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). As part of this analysis, we evaluated three levels of care that typically respond to older adults seeking, or who need, alternatives to their current living environment. They include residential care, assisted living, and nursing care. All of these facilities are licensed by the Vermont Division of Licensing and Protection, Department of Disabilities, Aging & Independent Living. While independent living age-restricted facilities may be offered in some markets, this type of housing was not included in this analysis of senior care facilities.

Residential care homes are state-licensed group living arrangements designed to meet the needs of people who cannot live independently and usually do not require the type of care provided in a nursing home. When needed, help is provided with daily activities such as eating, walking, toileting, bathing, and dressing. Residential care homes may provide nursing home level of care to residents under certain conditions. Daily rates at residential care homes are usually less than rates at nursing homes.

Assisted Living Facilities are state licensed residences that combine housing, health and supportive services to support resident independence and aging in place. While the services and characteristics of an assisted living facility are nearly identical to a residential care home, the primary difference between the two housing alternatives is the physical structure. At a minimum, assisted living residences shall offer, within a homelike setting, a private bedroom, private bath, living space, kitchen capacity, and a lockable door, while residential care facilities provide communal living with shared living and bathroom space. Assisted Living Facilities must meet the Licensing Regulations as well as the Residential Care Home Licensing Regulations which are designed to protect the welfare and rights of residents to ensure that residents receive quality care. These facilities generally offer limited care that is designed for senior citizens who need some assistance with daily activities but do not require nursing care. Nursing homes provide nursing care and related services for people who need nursing, medical, rehabilitation or other special services. These facilities are licensed by the state and may be certified to participate in the Medicaid and/or Medicare programs. Certain nursing homes may also meet specific standards for sub-acute care or dementia care.

Within Essex County, there was only one senior residential facility identified. This project, a residential care facility, has 16 beds. It was rated “C” both in terms of quality and neighborhood. As a result of the limited number of beds, senior residents in the county requiring senior care must choose from receiving home health care services or moving to other counties that offer facilities with senior care services.

Senior Care Facilities (Surveyed and Non-Surveyed)



e. Planned & Proposed Residential Development

In order to access housing development potential, we evaluated recent residential building permit activity and identified residential projects in the development pipeline for Essex County. Understanding the number of residential units and the type of housing being considered for development in the county can assist in determining how these projects are expected to meet the housing needs of the area.

The following table summarizes the number of residential building permits that were approved in Essex County for the past ten years:

Housing Unit Building Permits for Essex County:										
Permits	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Multifamily Permits	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Single-Family Permits	36	38	33	27	22	13	10	6	5	9
Total Units	36	38	33	27	22	13	10	6	5	9

Source: SOCDs Building Permits Database at <http://socds.huduser.org/permits/index.html>

Historically, relative to much of the state, residential building permit activity in Essex County has been minimal. As a result of the national recession, the number of new building permits issued in the county began to decline in 2007 and drop off noticeably in 2009. All residential building permit activity over the past decade has involved single-family dwellings.

According to area planning officials, there are currently no housing projects planned or under construction in Essex County.

F. Housing Gap/Needs Estimates

Pursuant to the State of Vermont’s Department of Housing and Community Development’s *Request for Proposal*, Bowen National Research conducted housing gap/need analyses for rental and for-sale housing for each county. The **housing needs** estimates include growth, cost burdened households, households living in substandard housing, and units in the development pipeline. These estimates are considered a broad evaluation of the needs of the each county. The **housing gap** analysis includes all of the same metrics used in the housing needs analysis except for cost burdened households. These households are excluded from this analysis as they are considered to have their housing needs met, even though they are paying a disproportionately high share of their income towards housing expenses. These estimates are considered a more conservative representation of the housing shortage in the county and indicative of the more immediate housing requirements of the county. Our estimates consider five income stratifications. These stratifications include households with incomes of up to 30% of Area Median Household Income (AMHI), households with incomes between 31% and 50% of AMHI, between 51% and 80% of AMHI, between 80% and 95% of AMHI, and from 95% to 120% of AMHI. This analysis was conducted for family households and seniors (age 55+) separately. This analysis identifies the housing gap/needs (the number of units that could potentially be supported) for the county between 2015 and 2020.

The demand components included in the housing gap/needs estimates for each of the two housing types (rental and for-sale) are listed as follows:

Housing Gap/Needs Analysis Components	
Rental Housing	Owner Housing
• Renter Household Growth	• Owner Household Growth
• Rent Overburdened Households**	• Cost Overburdened Households**
• Overcrowded Housing	• Overcrowded Housing
• Housing Lacking Complete Indoor Plumbing	• Housing Lacking Complete Indoor Plumbing
• Pipeline Development*	• Pipeline Development*

*Units under construction, permitted, planned or proposed

**Included in the housing needs estimates only

The demand factors for each housing segment at the various income stratifications are combined. Any product confirmed to be in the development pipeline is deducted from the various demand estimates, yielding a housing gap/needs estimate. This gap/needs

analysis is conducted for both renters and owners, as well as for seniors (age 55+) and non-senior family households. These estimates represent the number of new households that may need housing and/or the number of existing households that currently live in housing that needs replaced to relieve occupants of such things as housing cost-burdens, overcrowded or substandard housing conditions. Data used for these various demand components originates from the demographic analysis portion of this study.

Rental Housing Needs Analysis

The tables below summarize the rental housing needs estimates by the various income segments for family and senior households.

Demand Component	Rental Housing Needs Estimates – Family Households				
	Percent Of Median Household Income				
	<30% (<\$20,000)	30%-50% (\$20,000- \$40,000)	50%-80% (\$40,000- \$60,000)	80%-95% (\$60,000- \$70,000)	95%-120% (\$70,000- \$100,000)
New Households (2015-2020)	7	2	-3	1	2
Cost Burdened Households	160	20	5	1	1
Substandard Housing	10	5	4	1	3
Development Pipeline	0	0	0	0	0
Total Housing Needs	177	27	6	3	6

Demand Component	Rental Housing Needs Estimates – Senior Households				
	Percent Of Median Household Income				
	<30% (<\$20,000)	30%-50% (\$20,000- \$40,000)	50%-80% (\$40,000- \$60,000)	80%-95% (\$60,000- \$70,000)	95%-120% (\$70,000- \$100,000)
New Households (2015-2020)	11	2	-1	1	0
Cost Burdened Households	84	12	2	1	0
Substandard Housing	5	3	1	0	1
Development Pipeline	0	0	0	0	0
Total Housing Needs	100	17	2	2	1

Owner Housing Needs Analysis

The tables below summarize the *owner* housing needs estimates by the various income segments for family and senior households.

Demand Component	Owner Housing Needs Estimates – Family Households				
	Percent Of Median Household Income				
	<30% (<\$20,000)	30%-50% (\$20,000- \$40,000)	50%-80% (\$40,000- \$60,000)	80%-95% (\$60,000- \$70,000)	95%-120% (\$70,000- \$100,000)
New Households (2015-2020)	15	12	5	-3	-9
Cost Burdened Households	389	207	99	36	59
Substandard Housing	8	9	7	2	9
Development Pipeline	0	0	0	0	0
Total Housing Needs	412	228	111	35	59

Demand Component	Owner Housing Needs Estimates – Senior Households				
	Percent Of Median Household Income				
	<30% (<\$20,000)	30%-50% (\$20,000- \$40,000)	50%-80% (\$40,000- \$60,000)	80%-95% (\$60,000- \$70,000)	95%-120% (\$70,000- \$100,000)
New Households (2015-2020)	29	26	23	5	12
Cost Burdened Households	289	124	52	21	23
Substandard Housing	6	5	4	1	4
Development Pipeline	0	0	0	0	0
Total Housing Needs	324	155	79	27	39

Rental Housing Gap Analysis

The tables below summarize the rental housing gap estimates by the various income segments for family and senior households.

Demand Component	Rental Housing Gap Estimates – Family Households				
	Percent Of Median Household Income				
	<30% (<\$20,000)	30%-50% (\$20,000- \$40,000)	50%-80% (\$40,000- \$60,000)	80%-95% (\$60,000- \$70,000)	95%-120% (\$70,000- \$100,000)
New Households (2015-2020)	7	2	-3	1	2
Substandard Housing	10	5	4	1	3
Development Pipeline	0	0	0	0	0
Total Housing Gap	17	7	1	2	5

Demand Component	Rental Housing Gap Estimates – Senior Households				
	Percent Of Median Household Income				
	<30% (<\$20,000)	30%-50% (\$20,000- \$40,000)	50%-80% (\$40,000- \$60,000)	80%-95% (\$60,000- \$70,000)	95%-120% (\$70,000- \$100,000)
New Households (2015-2020)	11	2	-1	1	0
Substandard Housing	5	3	1	0	1
Development Pipeline	0	0	0	0	0
Total Housing Gap	16	5	0	1	1

Owner Housing Gap Analysis

The tables below summarize the *owner* housing gap estimates by the various income segments for family and senior households.

Demand Component	Owner Housing Gap Estimates – Family Households				
	Percent Of Median Household Income				
	<30% (<\$20,000)	30%-50% (\$20,000- \$40,000)	50%-80% (\$40,000- \$60,000)	80%-95% (\$60,000- \$70,000)	95%-120% (\$70,000- \$100,000)
New Households (2015-2020)	15	12	5	-3	-9
Substandard Housing	8	9	7	2	9
Development Pipeline	0	0	0	0	0
Total Housing Gap	23	21	12	-1	0

Demand Component	Owner Housing Gap Estimates – Senior Households				
	Percent Of Median Household Income				
	<30% (<\$20,000)	30%-50% (\$20,000- \$40,000)	50%-80% (\$40,000- \$60,000)	80%-95% (\$60,000- \$70,000)	95%-120% (\$70,000- \$100,000)
New Households (2015-2020)	29	26	23	5	12
Substandard Housing	6	5	4	1	4
Development Pipeline	0	0	0	0	0
Total Housing Gap	35	31	27	6	16

The greatest housing gap appears to be among housing that serves renter households with incomes below 30% of Area Median Household Income and among homeowners with incomes below 50% of AMHI.

G. Special Needs Housing

Besides the traditional demographics and housing supply evaluated on the preceding pages of this section, we also identified special needs populations within Essex County. This section of the report addresses demographic and housing supply information for the homeless population and the other special needs populations within the county.

The State of Vermont is located within two of HUD’s designated Continuums of Care (CoC) area known as *Burlington/Chittenden County CoC* and *Vermont Balance of the State CoC*. CoCs around the United States are required to collect data for a point-in-time in January of each year. The last published point-in-time surveys were conducted in January 2014. This includes count of persons who are classified as homeless, as well as an inventory of the housing specifically designated for the homeless population. According to the 2014 point-in-time survey for *Burlington/Chittenden County CoC* and *Vermont Balance of the State CoC*, there are approximately 1,556 persons who are classified as homeless on any given day that are not already housed in permanent supportive housing.

Based on the Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness, there are no persons classified as homeless within Essex County. The following tables summarize the sheltered and unsheltered homeless population, as well as the homeless housing inventory within the county.

Homeless Population – Essex County						
Total Homeless Persons	Chronically Homeless	Motel Vouchers	Unsheltered	Households	Singles	Children
0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness – Vermont 2014 Point-in-Time Annual Statewide Count of Homelessness

Homeless Housing Inventory – Essex County								
Project Type	Beds by Population Category					Seasonal Beds	*Overflow Beds	Total Beds
	Single Male/ Female and Households with Children	Single Male & Female	Veteran	Chronically Homeless	Youth			
Emergency Shelter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transitional Housing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent Supportive Housing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rapid Re-housing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Beds By Population	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness – 2014 Housing Inventory Count

*Includes Motel Voucher Beds

Chronically Homeless and Veteran Beds Duplicated

It should be noted that there are no emergency shelters, transitional housing, and/or permanent supportive housing options within Essex County. As such, there were no persons reported as being homeless in 2014 within Essex County and the fact that no persons remain unsheltered on a given night indicate that there is likely no need for homeless housing.

The following table summarizes the various special needs populations within the county that were considered in this report. It should be noted that county level data was not available for certain special needs groups, which is denoted as “N/A” in the following table.

Special Needs Populations			
Special Needs Group	Persons	Special Needs Group	Persons
HIV/AIDS	N/A*	Persons with Disabilities (PD)	1,183
Victims of Domestic Violence (VDV)	105	Elderly (Age 62+) (E62)	1,533
Persons with Substance Abuse (PSA)	1,042**	Frail Elderly (Age 62+) (FE62)	109
Adults with Severe Mental Illness (SMI)	228	Ex-offenders (Parole/Probation) (EOP)	14
Co-Occurring Disorders (COD)	N/A	Unaccompanied Youth (UY)	48***
New Immigrants/Refugees (NIR)	N/A	Migrant Farm Workers	0

*Aids/HIV numbers are not available due to Federal Privacy Laws- less than 5 cases cannot be reported

**Includes Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans counties

***Includes Caledonia/South Essex and Orleans/North Essex combined

The largest number of special needs persons is among those with disabilities, elderly, and person with substance abuse. According to our interviews with area stakeholders, housing alternatives that meet the distinct demands of the special needs population are limited. While there are no facilities located within Essex County for special needs populations, many seek services through Umbrella, Northeast Kingdom Community Action, Northeast Youth Services, AWARE Inc., Loch Lomond, and Northeast Kingdom Human Services. It should be noted that these organizations generally serve the Caledonia, Essex and Orleans regions. Regardless, there appears to be a lack of supportive service providers, in the immediate area due to the smaller population. As a result, rural area residents must travel further distances in order to seek service providers. According to various service providers, all special needs groups are

underserved in terms of housing. It should also be noted that stakeholders stated that it is hard to identify homeless persons in the area.

H. Stakeholder Survey & Interviews

Associates of Bowen National Research solicited input from nearly 90 stakeholders throughout the state of Vermont. Their input was provided in the form of an online survey and telephone interviews. Among the responses, six stakeholders are with organizations that serve Essex County. Considered leaders within their field and active in the community, they represent a wide range of industries. The purpose of these interviews was to gather input regarding the need for the type and styles of housing, the income segments housing should target, and if there is a lack of housing or housing assistance within the county. The following is a summary of the key input gathered.

Stakeholders were asked to rank the degree of overall housing demand in the county. Two of the six respondents indicated that there is a great need for housing. Specifically, respondents ranked the following types of housing as having the greatest need: rental, senior apartments (independent living), small family (1- and 2-bedrooms), large family (3+ bedrooms), senior care (assisted and nursing) and special needs. Respondents overwhelmingly indicated that the housing style most needed in the area is apartments, followed by detached houses. Respondents also believe that renovated or revitalized housing and new construction should be prioritized over adaptive reuse. When asked to rank the need for housing for each income level, respondents ranked incomes between \$25,000 to \$50,000 with the greatest need, closely followed by housing for incomes of less than \$25,000 and between \$50,000 to \$75,000. The most significant housing issues within Essex County, as indicated by respondents, were rent burdened/affordability, substandard housing and limited availability.

Respondents were asked to prioritize funding types that should be utilized or explored in Essex County. Tax Credit financing was given the highest priority, followed homebuyer assistance and project-based rental subsidy. Factors that are considered important as they relate to housing development in the county are the proximity schools, services and downtown/village areas, as well as the community's walkability. Multiple respondents commented that there is a need for more affordable and subsidized housing for families and seniors, and that it should be close to village centers and downtown areas. Respondents commented that there should be additional housing developed in downtown areas and that older homes in these areas should be thermal efficient and weatherized.

When asked what common barriers or obstacles exist as it relates to housing development in Essex County, the cost of land and labor/materials, as well as financing and the lack of infrastructure received the highest ranking. Suggestions for overcoming these obstacles included weatherization programs, lessened permitting costs, alternative infrastructure options, and the lessening of HUD's restrictions as they relate to the acquisition and development of projects.

If a respondent was knowledgeable about homelessness in Essex County, they were asked to rank the need for housing for various homeless groups. The most commonly indicated groups were homeless families and individuals. Respondents indicated that the most needed types of housing to serve the homeless population are Single-Room Occupancy (SRO) projects and increased Voucher assistance. One respondent indicated that it is difficult to identify where the homeless concentrations are, and that any homeless housing development should be near village centers and downtowns for their proximity to services.

If a respondent was knowledgeable about non-homeless and special needs groups in Essex County, they were asked to rank the need for housing for various special needs groups. The most commonly indicated groups were persons with physical and development disabilities, victims of domestic/dating violence/sexual assault/stalking and unaccompanied youth/youth aging out of foster care. Group homes, Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), emergency shelters and transitional housing were all ranked fairly evenly as the type of housing that would best serve these populations. The lack of community support/public perception was cited as a major obstacle to the development of special needs housing.

I. Conclusions

Overall demographic trends are projected to be relatively stable within Essex County over the next five years, which is expected to contribute to the continued strength of the housing market within the county during this time period. Some key findings based on our research of Essex County are summarized as follows:

- **Population** – Between 2015 and 2020, projected population growth of 1 (less than 0.1%).
- **Households** – Between 2015 and 2020, projected household growth of 26 (0.9%).
- **Household Heads by Age** – It is projected that by 2015, the largest share (24.1%) of households by age in Essex County will be within the 55 to 64 age cohort.
- **Rental Housing** – Essex County has an overall vacancy rate of 0.0% for all identified and surveyed rental housing.
- **Owner Housing (for-sale)** – As of October 2014, there are a total of 175 available for-sale homes in the county, with a median price of \$129,900.
- **Mobile Home Parks** – As of 2013, mobile home parks in the county reported an overall 7.1% vacancy rate.
- **Senior Care Facilities** – There were no senior care facilities identified within the county.

As shown in the Housing Gap Estimates, the greatest housing gap appears to be among housing that serves renter households with incomes below 30% of Area Median Household Income and among homeowners with incomes below 50% of AMHI. Priorities for future housing in the county should be focused on housing product and/or programs that meet the needs of these lower income households.

J. Sources

See the *Vermont Housing Needs Assessment* for a full listing of all sources used in this report.