



Comprehensive Housing Analysis

Washington County, Virginia

Prepared for:

**Mayana Rice
Appalachian Highlands Housing Partners**

August 2025



▪ S. PATZ & ASSOCIATES, INC. ▪
▪ REAL ESTATE CONSULTANTS ▪



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▪ REAL ESTATE CONSULTANTS ▪

August 21, 2025

Mayana Rice
Director
Appalachian Highlands Housing Partners
851 French Moore Jr. Blvd., Suite 110-Box 25
Abingdon, Virginia 24210

Dear Ms. Rice,

Enclosed is our comprehensive housing study for Washington County, prepared for Appalachian Highlands Housing Partners. The report provides a clear assessment of current housing conditions and outlines a roadmap for strategic investment over the next five years. It is designed to support sound, data-driven decision-making and includes analyses of market performance, pricing benchmarks, recommended housing products, and practical implementation steps.

The analysis finds that Washington County faces a significant shortage of modern, appropriately priced housing for both renters and homeowners. Market-rate rental vacancies are extremely low, affordable rental units operate at full occupancy with long waitlists, and the for-sale market offers few attainable options for first-time buyers or downsizing seniors. A considerable share of renters are rent-burdened, spending an outsized portion of their income on housing due to limited affordable alternatives.

In light of these challenges, the County has the capacity to support at least 550 new housing units over the next five years. The recommended mix includes patio homes, townhomes, single-family homes, and both market-rate and income-restricted apartments. Several vacant parcels with strong development potential have been identified, many located near major employers and services. While some properties will require rezoning or subdivision, the analysis shows that land availability is not expected to be a barrier to achieving the recommended development targets.

The study outlines strategies to align new housing with market demand, including pricing targets matched to local incomes and phasing designed to manage risk and maintain absorption. With coordinated planning, public-private collaboration, and targeted use of incentives and financing tools, Washington County can expand housing choices, meet workforce needs, and strengthen long-term community growth.

We appreciate the opportunity to support Appalachian Highlands Housing Partners in this effort and thank local leaders and stakeholders for their valuable input throughout the

process. We remain available to assist with the next steps required to move these recommendations toward implementation.

Sincerely,

Ariel Goldring

Ariel Goldring, President
S. Patz & Associates, Inc.

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Introduction

This comprehensive housing study provides an in-depth assessment of current housing conditions while also identifying opportunities for new residential development in Washington County, including the towns of Abingdon, Damascus, Glade Spring, and portions of Saltville. The region's housing challenges are shaped by multiple factors, such as workforce retention pressures, an aging population, and limited diversity in housing types and price points.

Many older adults are aging in place in homes that no longer meet their needs. With few existing or planned developments offering features such as ground-floor master bedrooms, single-level layouts, or accessible bathrooms, seniors have limited local options to downsize or relocate. Consequently, they remain in their current homes longer, which reduces the supply of available housing for other households, particularly families with children.

At the same time, very few speculative homes (homes built for sale without a specific buyer) are being constructed, particularly at prices within reach for most first-time homebuyers or working families with modest incomes. There is also a significant shortage of townhomes, duplexes, and smaller single-family homes, which could provide more attainable ownership opportunities and better meet the needs of a broader range of households. The supply of rental units, both market-rate and income-restricted, has failed to keep pace with demand, placing upward pressure on rents. This combination of limited for-sale and rental housing options constrains population growth, undermines workforce retention, and slows broader economic development.

As detailed in this report, persistently low vacancy rates, affordability data, and demographic trends demonstrate strong demand for modern rental housing, attainable entry-level homes, senior-oriented housing, and housing across a wider range of designs and price points. However, the existing supply remains insufficient across all of these categories.

Addressing these challenges will require strategies that reduce development costs. Potential approaches include state and federal development incentives, such as Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), Virginia Housing programs, and funding from the Virginia

Department of Housing and Community Development. Such measures can help facilitate more cost-effective residential production.

Despite these challenges, evolving market dynamics and the availability of several well-located sites create opportunities for new housing. This study focuses on translating that potential into achievable outcomes by identifying actionable strategies that reflect documented needs and current market conditions.

The report is organized into eight sections, each providing a clear framework for understanding existing conditions and offering guidance for practical, evidence-based housing development efforts.

- **Section I: Washington County Setting:** This section provides an overview of Washington County, describing its geographic setting, transportation infrastructure, and regional linkages. These elements are essential for understanding the County's physical context and accessibility, both of which influence the potential for housing development.
- **Section II: Economic Overview:** This section offers an economic overview of Washington County. Its purpose is to illustrate the level and type of job growth occurring in the region, as well as the potential for future employment expansion. The analysis includes data on at-place employment trends, employment, and labor force changes, current economic development initiatives, and regional employment growth that could drive future housing demand.
- **Section III: Demographic Analysis:** This section presents a comprehensive demographic analysis of Washington County. It includes an evaluation of the regional population, household composition by tenure and income, and demographic shifts among older adults. The analysis also examines the number of rent-overburdened households and the extent of substandard housing, two key indicators supporting the case for affordable housing development. Additionally, it examines trends in housing unit development, the age of currently occupied housing, and tenure patterns based on the year households moved into their homes. Together, these factors help to quantify the level of pent-up demand for various types of new housing.
- **Section IV: Housing Market Overview:** This section analyzes both the for-sale and rental housing markets in Washington County, with a focus on workforce housing and market-rate apartment development. It presents data on professionally managed rental communities in the area, including information on construction periods, income restrictions, rent levels, and occupancy rates. It also examines apartment developments currently in the pipeline. The for-sale market analysis includes data on home sales rates, trends in median sales prices, the availability of housing inventory, and subdivisions with

lots ready for residential development. Notably, there is no identified senior-oriented for-sale housing market in Washington County. However, the feasibility of establishing such a market is evaluated in this section, as demographic data show a sizable and well-established older adult population.

- **Section V: Development Incentives and Program-Eligible Areas:** This section evaluates federal and state programs that can help support new housing development in Washington County. These programs often designate specific geographic areas as eligible for targeted incentives, such as tax credits, reduced-interest financing, direct subsidies, or flexible underwriting. These tools are intended to facilitate residential investment in communities facing economic challenges or historically limited access to capital.
- **Section VI: Project BAUD: A Model for Blight Mitigation and Redevelopment:** This section of the study assesses the Town of Marion's Project BAUD (Blighted, Abandoned, Underutilized, and Derelict) model. The analysis considers the project's potential for adaptation and implementation in Washington County and its towns. The model is presented as a possible strategy for repurposing underperforming or neglected properties and reintegrating them into the local housing supply.
- **Section VII: Development and Redevelopment Properties:** This section identifies existing buildings and vacant parcels in Washington County that are suitable for new residential development or redevelopment.
- **Section VIII: Conclusions and Recommendations:** This final section presents the study's conclusions and outlines a series of strategic recommendations to support residential development across Washington County. These recommendations address optimal site locations, target sales prices and rental rates, appropriate housing sizes and types, and the intended target markets for new units.

Section I: Washington County Setting

Washington County is an expansive, predominantly rural community spanning approximately 561 square miles. It is bordered by Smyth County to the northeast, Grayson County to the east-southeast, Scott County to the west, Russell County to the northwest, and two Tennessee counties: Johnson County to the south-southeast and Sullivan County to the southwest. It also shares a border with the independent City of Bristol to the southwest.

While this study focuses specifically on Washington County, it acknowledges the close functional relationship with the independent City of Bristol. This report proceeds from the premise that Washington County and the City of Bristol operate as an integrated housing market, a relationship demonstrated by significant commuting patterns and economic interdependence. The specific linkages between these jurisdictions are analyzed in detail in the following paragraphs and reinforced in this report.

Data from the U.S. Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES) provide key insights into the employment relationship between these jurisdictions. Approximately six percent of jobs located in Washington County are filled by residents of the City of Bristol, indicating a degree of cross-jurisdictional commuting.

In contrast, over 21 percent of jobs in the City of Bristol are filled by residents of Washington County, making Washington County the second most common residence for Bristol workers, after Sullivan County, Tennessee. Furthermore, fewer than 15 percent of jobs in the City of Bristol are filled by city residents, underscoring that over 85 percent of the City's workforce commutes from a regional labor pool.

Commuting patterns further illustrate this interdependence. Nearly 17 percent of employed residents of Bristol commute to Washington County for work, while more than 10 percent of Washington County residents commute to jobs in Bristol. These patterns emphasize the close integration between the two areas in terms of both employment and housing, reinforcing

the need to consider regional dynamics when assessing housing market conditions in Washington County.

Washington County includes a mix of agricultural land, open space, and growing town centers. According to data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the County is home to over 1,500 operational farms that span more than 176,000 acres. This acreage accounts for approximately 49 percent of the County's total land area. The County also includes extensive natural resources, such as portions of the Jefferson National Forest, Mount Rogers National Recreation Area, the Hidden Valley Wildlife Management Area, the Clinch Mountain Wildlife Management Area, and Channels State Forest. These protected areas together account for nearly 43,000 acres.

The County is home to several incorporated towns, each with its own history and character. These towns and their surrounding areas represent the primary centers of both economic activity and housing stock in Washington County. Each is briefly described below:

- **Abingdon:** The county seat of Washington County, Abingdon is one of the most historic towns in the region. It is known for its well-preserved historic buildings, including several 18th- and 19th-century homes, as well as its vibrant arts and cultural scene. The town and surrounding areas are home to much of the County's commercial and residential development. Most of the region's apartment properties are located within the town limits.

Abingdon is served by several major roadways, including I-81, which runs along the eastern side of the Town. U.S. Route 11 also runs through Abingdon and provides a direct route through the downtown area. Additionally, U.S. Route 19 serves as a primary north-south connector, linking Abingdon to other nearby communities.

- **Damascus:** Damascus is a small town located in the southern part of Washington County and is recognized for its scenic beauty. The Town is a popular destination for outdoor enthusiasts, offering numerous opportunities for hiking, camping, and fishing in the nearby national forest. Its housing stock is predominantly older.

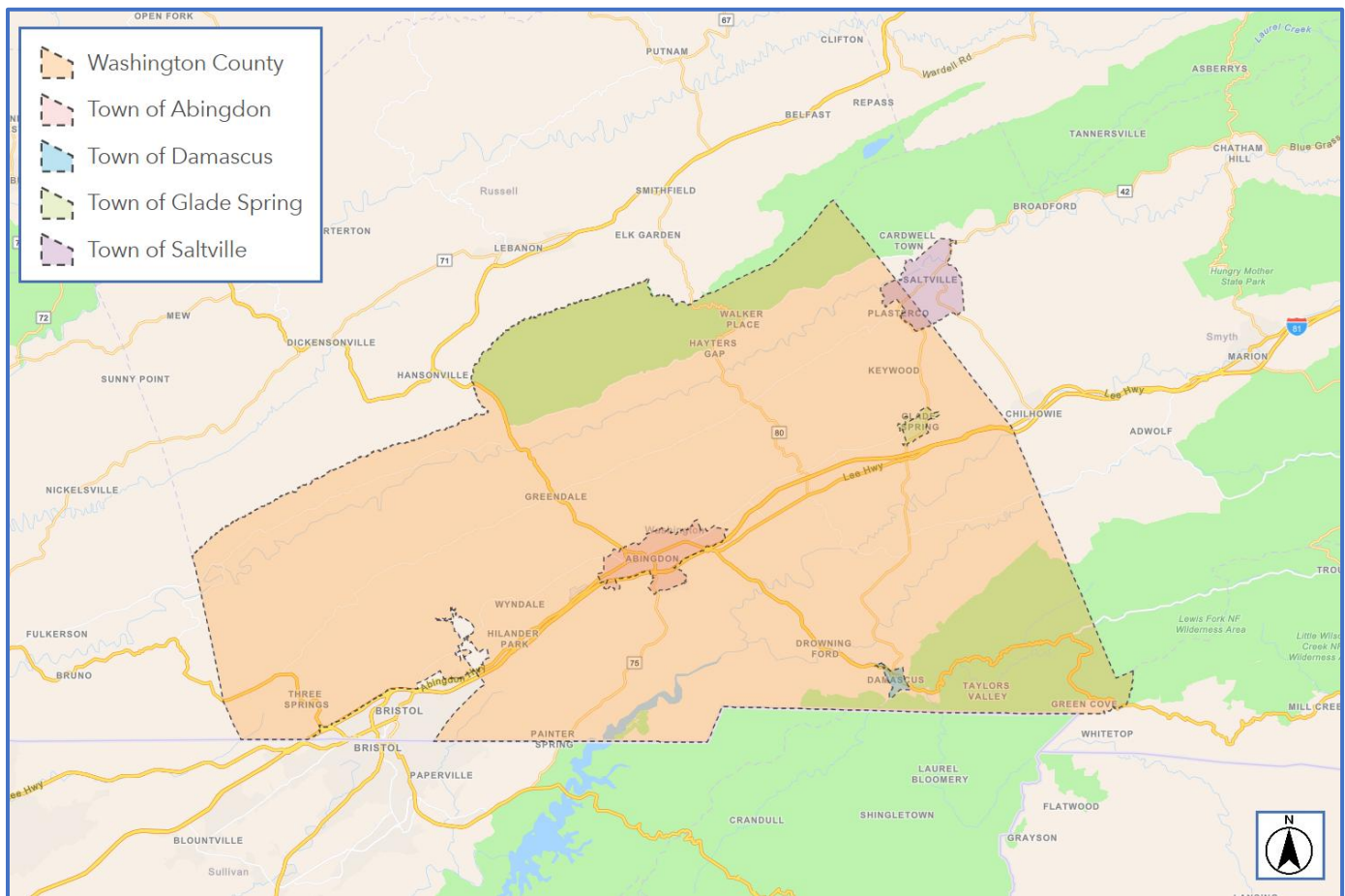
Damascus is located at the junction of U.S. Route 58 and Virginia State Route 91. U.S. Route 58, which runs east to west, connects Damascus to the communities of Bristol and Abingdon to the west and to the Town of Independence to the east. Route 91 runs north to south and connects Damascus to Mountain City, Tennessee, to the south, and to the Town of Glade Spring to the north.

- **Glade Spring:** Glade Spring is a small town located in the northern part of Washington County. It is known for its historic downtown, which features 19th-century buildings and homes, and is surrounded by scenic rolling hills and farmland. The Town's setting may appeal to those seeking a rural lifestyle.

Several major roadways serve Glade Spring. I-81 runs along the eastern edge of the Town. U.S. Route 11 passes through the center of town and connects to nearby communities, including Marion and Abingdon. State Route 91 runs along the western edge of Glade Spring and connects the town to Damascus to the south.

- **Saltville:** This small town lies in both Smyth County and Washington County. Most commercial and residential development is situated on the Smyth County side of the Town. Saltville is primarily served by Route 91 and Route 107. Route 91 runs north to south through the Town, while Route 107 runs east-west. Additionally, I-81 is located approximately 10 miles west of Saltville.

Map A below shows the location of Washington County.



Map A - Washington County, Virginia

Map A also shows the regional context of Washington County, with I-81 serving as the primary transportation artery through the area. In Washington County, the interstate runs through the central portion of the County in a northeast to southwest direction. As a vital component of the transportation network, I-81 supports regional connectivity by facilitating the movement of goods, services, and people.

In addition to the interstate, the map highlights Washington County's primary and secondary road network. Major roadways include U.S. Route 11, U.S. Route 58, and Alternate U.S. Route 58.

U.S. Route 58 runs east to west through the southern portion of the County, with Alternate U.S. Route 58 splitting from the main route at Abingdon, looping northward, and rejoining Route 58 in Jonesville, located in Lee County. U.S. Route 58 also serves Damascus, which is located approximately 14 miles southeast of Abingdon.

U.S. Route 11 passes through the central part of the County, running through the communities of Abingdon, Emory, and Meadowview. It serves as a key transportation corridor, offering access to many of the County's major employers and economic centers. U.S. Route 11 connects Washington County to other highways and interstates, reinforcing its role in the regional transportation network.

Together, these routes form a transportation system that provides residents with reliable access to employment centers, essential services, and neighboring jurisdictions. This level of connectivity supports the local housing market by enabling commuting and increasing accessibility to goods and services.

Section II: Economic Overview

This section provides an economic overview of Washington County. It is intended to illustrate the scope and character of local job growth, as well as to assess the area's potential for future employment expansion. This focus is grounded in the understanding that the region's economic and demographic stability is closely tied to broader trends in employment growth, labor force participation, and both private and public investment.

The primary focus of this analysis is Washington County, but it also incorporates relevant economic data from the City of Bristol. As established earlier, this analysis treats the Washington County-Bristol area as a single, functional economic region. The economies of these jurisdictions are closely intertwined, with significant overlap in employment, commuting patterns, and retail and service activity. This is supported by evidence of a shared regional labor pool, with many businesses drawing employees from both areas.

A substantial portion of Bristol's workforce resides in Washington County, and many Washington County residents regularly commute into Bristol for work, shopping, health care, and other services. This economic interdependence also extends to shared infrastructure, such as transportation corridors and public utilities, as well as collaborative development initiatives. As a result, including Bristol in the economic analysis provides a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of local and regional market conditions.

The analysis evaluates three core economic indicators: at-place employment trends, labor force participation, and active or planned development initiatives that may contribute to job creation. In addition, the review incorporates data from Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) notices, which identify recent or forthcoming layoffs. These indicators are critical to assessing the region's economic resilience and its capacity to support new investment, including residential development.

A core premise of this analysis is that sustained job growth drives population increases and household formation, which in turn fuels demand for a wide range of housing types.

Therefore, assessing the strength and stability of the local and regional economy is fundamental to understanding the long-term potential for housing development.

In Washington County, new housing demand is expected to be influenced by a combination of factors, including pent-up demand from current residents, localized employment growth, and an aging population. Additional pressure on the housing market may arise from nearby economic activity, particularly in adjacent areas of Tennessee that are projected to generate new job opportunities in the near term.

Although these neighboring areas are also experiencing housing shortages, their economic expansion may have spillover effects. Washington County could absorb some of this demand due to its proximity, relatively lower cost of living, and availability of developable land.

II.1: Employment by Place of Work (At-Place Employment)

At-place employment refers to jobs physically located within a defined geographic area, in this case, Washington County and the City of Bristol. According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the combined region supported approximately 29,140 at-place jobs in 2019, down from 30,207 in 2015. This reflects a net regional loss of 1,067 jobs over the five-year period. Approximately 70 percent of these jobs were in Washington County, which experienced a net decline of 325 jobs. The City of Bristol experienced a larger contraction, losing 742 jobs during the same period.

As shown in **Table 1**, data disclosure limitations exist for several sectors in the City of Bristol due to small employer counts that do not meet state or federal confidentiality thresholds. This is a common issue in smaller or rural jurisdictions, where data suppression can obscure employment shifts at the industry level. Despite these gaps, clear trends are evident when examining available data at the regional scale.

Between 2015 and 2019, the region experienced a steady decline in employment, with average annual losses of approximately 270 jobs. Several high-profile mass layoffs contributed significantly to this trend. In Washington County, Range Resources–Pine Mountain cut 158 jobs

in 2015, and Bristol Compressors International conducted three rounds of layoffs between 2016 and 2018, eliminating a total of 650 jobs. In the City of Bristol, significant employment losses stemmed from the closure of Ball Corporation's beverage packaging plant (-200 jobs), the Office Depot customer service center (-143 jobs), and Sandvik's manufacturing facility (-49 jobs). These layoffs played a central role in the Manufacturing sector's overall regional decline of 899 jobs, including a loss of 561 in Washington County and 338 in Bristol.

Despite the broader contraction, the Retail Trade sector remained the region's largest employment category. As of 2019, the sector supported 4,795 jobs, with 3,351 in Washington County and 1,444 in Bristol. Retail employment was concentrated in commercial nodes such as The Highlands Shopping Center, The Shops at Bristol Commons, Old Dominion Marketplace, and Abingdon Town Center. Between 2015 and 2019, the sector expanded by 362 jobs region-wide, a gain driven entirely by growth in Washington County, while Bristol recorded a loss of 153 retail jobs during the same period.

Manufacturing continued to play an essential role in the regional economy, despite declining employment. In 2015, the sector accounted for nearly 17 percent of all jobs in the region. By 2019, that share had dropped to just over 15 percent. Employers such as Electro-Mechanical Corporation, Shearer's, and Strongwell remain significant in the City of Bristol, while Washington County's six industrial parks continue to serve as hubs for manufacturing activity. The sector's decline indicates a gradual shift away from industrial employment as a primary economic base.

Health Care was the third-largest employment sector in the region in 2019, accounting for 3,297 jobs, or approximately 11 percent of total employment. Johnston Memorial Hospital, located just east of Abingdon, is a major health care employer. The hospital comprises a 116-bed, 309,170-square-foot facility completed in 2011, with an adjacent 115,600-square-foot medical office building. From 2015 to 2019, the sector experienced a net regional loss of 200 jobs, stemming from a decline of 320 jobs in Washington County and a gain of 120 jobs in Bristol.

Several other sectors recorded modest gains over the five-year period. Administrative and Waste Services grew by 178 jobs region-wide, including 117 in Washington County and 61 in

Bristol. Other Services increased by 181 jobs, while Finance and Insurance grew by 35. Small gains were also observed in the Information sector, which added 23 jobs, and the Federal Government, which grew by eight jobs. Local Government employment rose by 110 jobs, the majority of which were in Bristol.

Only seven sectors recorded job growth between 2015 and 2019: Retail Trade, Administrative and Waste Services, Other Services, Finance and Insurance, Information, Local Government, and Federal Government. In contrast, eleven sectors experienced job losses. Manufacturing saw the steepest decline, followed by Management of Companies, which lost 206 jobs. The Accommodation and Food Services sector lost 122 jobs, and smaller declines were observed in Real Estate (-20), Professional and Technical Services (-26), and Arts and Entertainment (-32).

Overall, these employment trends suggest a region that was already undergoing structural shifts before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The data reflect a movement away from traditional manufacturing and company management jobs, with modest growth in administrative services, health care, and retail. These trends also preceded several major job announcements in the region, which are expected to influence future growth patterns and will be addressed in the following section.

Table 1: At-Place Employment by Industry — Washington County and City of Bristol, VA (2015–2019)

Industry	2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		Net Change	
	Wash.	Bristol	Wash.	Bristol	Wash.	Bristol	Wash.	Bristol	Wash.	Bristol	Wash.	Bristol
Agriculture	136	ND	144	ND	141	ND	138	ND	148	ND	12	--
Mining	162	ND	97	ND	70	ND	57	ND	42	ND	-120	--
Utilities	79	ND	83	ND	41	ND	40	ND	42	ND	37	--
Construction	535	ND	513	ND	566	ND	550	ND	563	ND	28	--
Manufacturing	3,806	1,436	3,692	1,235	3,502	1,087	3,568	1,069	3,245	1,098	-561	-338
Wholesale Trade	646	ND	600	ND	625	ND	626	ND	633	ND	-13	--
Retail Trade	2,989	1,597	3,182	1,679	3,419	1,533	3,376	1,531	3,351	1,444	362	-153
Transport./Warehousing	979	ND	1,035	ND	980	ND	949	ND	915	366	-64	--
Information	145	213	145	206	142	180	140	172	148	165	3	20
Finance/Insurance	405	268	389	298	396	309	397	314	412	303	7	35
Real Estate	160	45	159	50	144	51	143	30	149	25	-11	-20
Professional/Technical	586	168	528	162	586	137	611	134	600	142	14	-26
Mgmt. of Companies	522	272	526	213	476	159	539	159	623	66	101	-206
Administrative/Waste	404	165	521	153	567	168	586	146	521	226	117	61
Education	427	67	425	67	434	63	444	65	419	68	-8	1
Health Care	2,755	742	2,821	762	2,601	846	2,498	836	2,435	862	-320	120
Arts/Entertainment	272	40	265	23	287	19	301	9	297	8	25	-32
Accommodations/Food	1,723	1,818	1,725	1,764	1,758	1,710	1,778	1,716	1,718	1,701	-5	-117
Other Services	415	375	464	377	652	336	665	326	596	288	181	-87
Local Government	2,389	1,139	2,392	1,168	2,373	1,190	2,365	1,205	2,322	1,249	-67	110
State Government	882	276	890	279	790	293	747	301	733	300	-38	24
Federal Government	119	103	116	103	117	103	113	108	117	111	2	8
Total	20,431	9,776	20,645	9,498	20,706	9,085	20,684	9,082	20,106	9,034	-325	-742
Total (Combined)	30,207		30,143		29,791		29,766		29,140		-1,067	

Notes: ND = Data do not meet BLS or State agency disclosure standards.

Source: United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Table 2 presents employment changes in Washington County and the City of Bristol from 2019 to 2024, a period significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. These data capture both the immediate employment disruptions in 2020 and 2021 and the gradual recovery observed through 2024. As shown, total at-place employment across the two jurisdictions declined sharply between 2019 and 2020, falling from 29,140 to 27,268 jobs. This reflects a net regional loss of 1,872 jobs, or approximately 6.4 percent. Washington County accounted for 1,856 of those job losses, while Bristol’s net decline was smaller at only 16 jobs.

Washington County experienced significant reductions in sectors typically vulnerable to economic shocks, including Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, and Health Care. Between 2019 and 2020, Retail Trade employment declined by 403 jobs, Accommodation and Food Services dropped by 278, and Health Care lost 20 jobs. Manufacturing experienced the most considerable single-year loss, shedding 906 jobs, a decrease of 28 percent. This was in stark contrast to Bristol, which reported an increase in manufacturing jobs during the same period.

The region's employment began to stabilize in 2021, followed by more consistent recovery beginning in 2022. By 2024, total combined employment had rebounded to 30,779 jobs, surpassing pre-pandemic levels by 1,639 jobs, or roughly 5.6 percent. This recovery was largely driven by job growth in Bristol, which saw a net gain of 1,332 jobs, while Washington County contributed 307.

Key drivers of this recovery included the Construction and Health Care sectors. In Washington County, Construction employment increased from 563 in 2019 to 779 in 2024, a gain of 216 jobs, or 38 percent. Health Care employment rose by 317 jobs in Washington County and by 202 jobs in Bristol, totaling a regional increase of 519 jobs, or 15.7 percent. These gains were influenced by increased health care demand and construction activity tied to both public and private investments following the pandemic.

The Manufacturing sector demonstrated a mixed recovery. Washington County regained 227 of the 906 jobs lost in 2020, ending 2024 with 2,472 manufacturing jobs, which remains 773 below its 2019 total. In contrast, Bristol recorded a substantial gain of 486 manufacturing jobs over the five-year period, increasing from 1,098 to 1,584. This shift suggests a possible relocation or expansion of operations into the City, or changes in how employment is reported by location or industry classification. Overall, the data indicate a modest redistribution of manufacturing employment between the two jurisdictions, though regional totals have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels.

Transportation and Warehousing was among the region's strongest-performing sectors. In Washington County, employment in this sector grew from 915 jobs in 2019 to 1,092 in 2024, an increase of 177 jobs, or 19.4 percent. Bristol added 228 jobs over the same period, reaching 594 in 2024. Together, the two jurisdictions experienced a combined increase of 405 jobs, or approximately 27 percent, in this sector, reflecting growth in logistics, e-commerce, and regional distribution operations.

Other sectors that contributed to employment gains included Administrative and Waste Services, Education, and Real Estate. Administrative and Waste Services added 84 jobs in Washington County, and 76 in Bristol. Education gained 99 jobs in Washington County and 24 in

Bristol. The Finance and Insurance sector experienced a smaller but positive gain of 31 jobs across both jurisdictions.

Not all sectors fully recovered. Retail Trade continued to decline, losing a total of 315 jobs between 2019 and 2024. Washington County accounted for 268 of these job losses, while Bristol lost 47. This 6.6 percent decrease suggests a lasting shift in retail dynamics, potentially influenced by changes in consumer behavior, e-commerce expansion, and business closures that followed the pandemic. The Information sector also declined, with a loss of 72 jobs across the two jurisdictions. While Arts and Entertainment employment grew in Bristol, it remained below pre-pandemic levels for the region as a whole.

In summary, employment changes between 2019 and 2024 reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, followed by a gradual recovery shaped by structural shifts in the regional economy. While total job numbers have surpassed pre-pandemic levels, the composition of employment has changed, with notable growth in construction, health care, and logistics, and continued challenges in retail and professional services.

Table 2: At-Place Employment by Industry — Washington County and City of Bristol, VA (2019–2024)

Industry	2019		2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		Net Change	
	Wash.	Bristol	Wash.	Bristol	Wash.	Bristol	Wash.	Bristol	Wash.	Bristol	Wash.	Bristol	Wash.	Bristol
Agriculture	148	ND	154	ND	175	ND	195	ND	228	ND	265	ND	117	--
Mining	42	ND	41	ND	41	ND	68	ND	59	ND	64	ND	22	--
Utilities	42	ND	45	ND	43	ND	43	ND	44	ND	66	ND	24	--
Construction	563	ND	589	ND	585	ND	645	ND	743	ND	779	ND	216	--
Manufacturing	3,245	1,098	2,339	1,373	2,499	1,343	2,722	1,486	2,631	1,605	2,472	1,584	-773	486
Wholesale Trade	633	ND	561	312	547	293	576	ND	635	ND	663	ND	30	--
Retail Trade	3,351	1,444	2,948	1,574	2,997	1,640	2,945	1,720	3,096	1,353	3,083	1,397	-268	-47
Transport./Warehousing	915	366	1,024	ND	1,072	ND	1,045	443	1,036	537	1,092	594	177	228
Information	148	165	114	138	94	ND	225	107	262	107	282	93	134	-72
Finance/Insurance	412	303	410	243	396	231	411	241	405	263	425	272	13	-31
Real Estate	149	25	119	21	108	29	106	37	97	36	96	35	-53	10
Professional/Technical	600	142	568	174	567	194	551	209	550	205	566	187	-34	45
Mgmt of Companies	623	66	616	66	611	69	ND	85	ND	73	537	69	-86	3
Administrative/Waste	521	226	539	197	585	184	ND	209	ND	223	584	302	63	76
Education	419	68	372	74	502	87	483	98	518	99	517	92	98	24
Health Care	2,435	862	2,415	840	2,378	892	2,404	889	2,566	951	2,752	1,064	317	202
Arts/Entertainment	297	8	216	15	233	17	384	83	422	ND	424	ND	127	--
Accommodations/Food	1,718	1,701	1,440	1,433	1,584	1,431	1,728	1,552	1,846	ND	1,892	ND	174	--
Other Services	596	288	599	259	612	261	610	263	578	286	622	232	26	-56
Local Government	2,322	1,249	2,175	1,181	2,170	1,187	2,245	1,167	2,289	1,244	2,289	1,292	-33	43
State Government	733	300	750	300	725	300	742	310	709	335	691	328	-42	28
Federal Government	117	111	127	107	123	105	117	104	120	106	118	100	1	-11
Total	20,106	9,034	18,250	9,018	18,722	9,108	19,457	9,602	19,993	10,037	20,413	10,366	307	1,332
Total (Combined)	29,140		27,268		27,830		29,059		30,030		30,779		1,639	

Notes: ND = Data do not meet BLS or State agency disclosure standards.

Source: United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

II.1.a: Employment by Place of Work - Northeast Tennessee

Table 3 presents at-place employment data for Northeast Tennessee, specifically Carter County, Johnson County, Sullivan County, and Washington County (Tennessee), from 2019 to 2024. This information is included for comparative purposes, as a significant portion of Washington County, Virginia’s workforce commutes to jobs in this region, particularly to nearby Sullivan and Washington Counties in Tennessee. These Tennessee counties represent major employment centers that influence cross-border commuting patterns, wage competition, and the overall balance between jobs and housing availability in the region.

Between 2019 and 2024, Northeast Tennessee added a total of 5,394 at-place jobs, increasing from 145,182 to 150,576. Sullivan County recorded a gain of 2,086 jobs, while Washington County added 2,589 jobs, making them the primary contributors to regional job growth. Carter County grew by 687 jobs, and Johnson County added 32. These figures reflect a strong recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to a regional decline in employment in 2020. For example, total employment in Northeast Tennessee dropped by more than 4,400 jobs in 2020, before steadily rebounding in the years that followed.

In comparison, Washington County and the City of Bristol in Virginia added a combined total of 1,639 jobs over the same period, as shown in **Table 2**. While this represents a meaningful recovery at the local level, it underscores the larger scale of employment expansion in neighboring Tennessee counties.

Table 3: At-Place Employment by Industry — Northeast Tennessee (2019–2024)

(Includes Carter County, Johnson County, Sullivan County, and Washington County)

	<u>Carter County</u>	<u>Johnson County</u>	<u>Sullivan County</u>	<u>Washington County</u>	<u>Northeast Tennessee</u>
2019	11,357	4,255	68,327	61,243	145,182
2020	11,273	4,250	65,957	59,261	140,741
2021	11,629	4,312	66,266	61,682	143,889
2022	11,676	4,274	68,582	63,785	148,317
2023	11,841	4,306	69,302	64,992	150,441
2024	<u>12,044</u>	<u>4,287</u>	<u>70,413</u>	<u>63,832</u>	<u>150,576</u>
Net Change	687	32	2,086	2,589	5,394

Source: United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

II.2: Labor Force Characteristics

Employment and at-place employment are distinct metrics that provide different insights into regional workforce dynamics. Employment refers to the number of residents who are employed, regardless of where their jobs are physically located. In contrast, at-place employment reflects the number of jobs located within the geographic boundaries of the region. When employment totals exceed at-place employment figures, it indicates a net outflow of workers to neighboring counties and cities, particularly to the greater Bristol and Wytheville areas.

Table 4 presents labor force, employment, and unemployment trends for Washington County and the City of Bristol from 2019 to 2024, covering both the initial economic disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the region’s subsequent recovery. In 2020, the pandemic had a marked effect on the local labor market.

In Washington County, resident employment declined sharply from 23,506 in 2019 to 22,345 in 2020, a loss of 1,161 jobs. Unemployment rose to 1,544, raising the unemployment rate to 6.5 percent, nearly double the 2019 rate of 3.5 percent. The City of Bristol experienced a similar shock. Employment fell from 7,252 to 7,018, while the unemployment rate jumped from 3.6 percent to 7.7 percent, the highest in the six-year period. These trends reflect widespread job loss

and economic uncertainty, mirroring national and regional conditions during the early months of the pandemic.

Beginning in 2021, both jurisdictions began to recover. By 2022, Washington County's unemployment rate had declined to 3.0 percent, and resident employment rebounded to 23,372. The City of Bristol also showed improvement, with its unemployment rate dropping to 3.2 percent and employment reaching 7,207. While growth slowed slightly in 2023 and 2024, the recovery trend generally held steady. By 2024, Washington County's unemployment rate stood at 3.1 percent, and total resident employment reached 23,954. Bristol's unemployment rate was 3.6 percent, with employment holding at 7,316. These outcomes indicate a relatively stable post-pandemic labor market in both jurisdictions, characterized by low unemployment and a return to near pre-pandemic employment levels.

Over the six-year period, Washington County's labor force increased by 348 people, while the City of Bristol's expanded by 65. Similarly, total employment across the region rose by 512 during the same period, resulting in a lower combined unemployment rate of 3.2 percent in 2024, compared to 3.5 percent in 2019. This resident employment growth of 512 jobs stands in stark contrast to the at-place employment gain of 1,639 jobs shown in **Table 2**. This divergence suggests that a significant portion of the new job growth in the region was filled by workers who live outside the area, a trend that may indicate a constraint in the local housing market.

**Table 4: Labor Force, Employment, and Unemployment Trends —
Washington County and City of Bristol, VA (2019–2024)**

	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Percent Unemployed
<u>Washington County</u>				
2019	24,369	23,506	863	3.5%
2020	23,889	22,345	1,544	6.5%
2021	23,456	22,564	892	3.8%
2022	24,085	23,372	713	3.0%
2023	24,690	23,958	732	3.0%
2024	24,717	23,954	763	3.1%
(Net Change)	(348)	(448)	(-100)	(-0.4%)
<u>City of Bristol</u>				
2019	7,521	7,252	269	3.6%
2020	7,605	7,018	587	7.7%
2021	7,345	7,007	338	4.6%
2022	7,442	7,207	235	3.2%
2023	7,575	7,316	259	3.4%
2024	7,586	7,316	270	3.6%
(Net Change)	(65)	(64)	(1)	(0.0%)
<u>Combined</u>				
2019	31,890	30,758	1,132	3.5%
2020	31,494	29,363	2,131	6.8%
2021	30,801	29,571	1,230	4.0%
2022	31,527	30,579	948	3.0%
2023	32,265	31,274	991	3.1%
2024	32,303	31,270	1,033	3.2%
Net Change	413	512	-99	-0.3%
Source: United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics				

II.3: Local Economic Development Activity

Recent and ongoing economic development initiatives in Washington County and the surrounding area reflect modest but meaningful growth across the industrial, energy, and commercial sectors. Projects currently underway are expected to create several hundred new jobs over the next one to three years, excluding temporary construction and induced employment.

- **Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Bristol**: Construction began in January 2023 on a new 300,000-square-foot casino in the City of Bristol, which opened in fall 2024. The facility includes a 303-room luxury hotel, spa, indoor and outdoor pools, and gaming areas with over 1,500 slot machines and 75 table games. Additional features include the Hard Rock Sportsbook, multiple dining venues, retail space, and the Hard Rock Live entertainment venue with 2,000 seats. The casino currently employs approximately 1,300 people, with annual wages ranging from \$38,000 to \$75,000. About half of these positions pay over \$50,000.

- **Home2Suites and Tru by Hilton:** Construction was completed in spring 2025 on two new hotels at The Village at Exit 7 in the City of Bristol. The six-story structure includes a 90-room Home2 Suites for extended stays and a 70-room Tru by Hilton hotel.
- **Skyline National Bank:** The bank plans to open a new location in the historic Mary Bickley Hurt House at 201 W. Main Street in Abingdon. The office will offer financial and mortgage services and will share space with Callebs Realty, which currently occupies part of the building.
- **Workforce and Child Development Hub:** Completed in August 2024, this 25,000-square-foot facility is in the former Kmart building near Exit 17 in Abingdon. Operated by Ballad Health System, the childcare center serves children aged one to four and employs 70 staff. The site also includes a catering kitchen and mini-grocery store for training purposes. An additional 60,000 square feet of space houses office suites, including those of the United Way of Southwest Virginia.
- **Bristol Humane Society:** In summer 2025, plans were submitted to expand the existing 6,077-square-foot facility at 16222 Lee Highway in Washington County. The project includes a 9,301-square-foot addition to accommodate expanded services. The facility currently employs 25 people and expects to add at least five more staff members after completion.
- **SPIG Industry:** This manufacturer of highway guardrails and end terminals announced in November 2020 that it would expand operations at the Bristol-Washington Industrial Park in Washington County. The company committed to hiring 113 employees and has added 26 positions to date.
- **Appalachian Highlands Community Dental Center:** A new 2,400-square-foot dental center at 616 Campus Drive in Abingdon opened in April 2025 that produces crowns, bridges, and dentures for Southwest Virginia patients.
- **State of Franklin Primary Care:** Construction was completed in April 2024 on this primary care facility located at 117 Cook Street in Abingdon.
- **HMG Urgent Care at Abingdon:** Holston Medical Group completed construction in November 2024 on a new urgent care facility at 631 Campus Drive in the former HMG Primary Care at Abingdon location. HMG Primary Care at Abingdon is now located across the parking lot in the newly constructed 22,000-square-foot facility.

In addition to the above are several recent retail openings since 2024, including Seventy2 Capital Wealth Management (June 2025), Firestone Complete Auto Care (March 2025), Holston Mountain Artisans and Antiques (March 2025), Roots Hair Co. (November 2024), Powerhouse Community Wellness and Resource Center (November 2024).

These announcements likely represent a conservative estimate of future job growth, as they rely solely on public disclosures and do not capture organic growth among existing businesses or informal openings, particularly in the retail and service sectors. Additionally, the figures do not account for indirect or induced employment expected from major developments such as the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino. As a result, total employment impacts are likely higher than currently reported.

Additionally, the Washington County Industrial Development Authority announced in January 2023 that it would donate land in the Oak Park Center for Business and Industry as a prospective site for a new inland port, which refers to an intermodal location where freight is transferred between trucks and trains or vice versa. A feasibility study conducted in 2022 by the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and Port of Virginia determined that the region satisfies “enough market-driven and physical conditions to warrant additional assessment.” Upon completion, the port is expected to generate 1,370 new permanent jobs (675 directly at the inland port and 695 indirect jobs). However, there is currently no set timeline for this development.

II.4: WARN Notices (Layoffs and Closures)

WARN Notices (Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification notices) are federally mandated under the WARN Act and apply to qualifying employers in Virginia. The Act requires employers to provide advance notice of plant closures or mass layoffs, allowing affected employees time to prepare for significant employment transitions.

A review of WARN notices filed over the past two years found no announcements of plant closures or mass layoffs affecting Washington County or the City of Bristol. This absence of notices suggests relative short-term stability in large-scale employment across the region during this period.

II.5: Economic Overview Summary

The economic landscape of Washington County and the City of Bristol experienced significant shifts between 2015 and 2024, influenced by both pre-pandemic trends and the impact of COVID-19. From 2015 to 2019, the region saw a net loss of 1,067 at-place jobs, primarily driven by declines in the manufacturing sector due to several high-profile layoffs. Despite this contraction, Retail Trade consistently remained the largest employment category.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a severe impact on the local labor market in 2020, resulting in a sharp decline in at-place employment and a significant rise in unemployment. However, a recovery followed from 2021 to 2024. By 2024, total at-place employment surpassed pre-pandemic levels by 1,639 jobs, reaching 30,779. Key drivers of this recovery included strong growth in Construction, Health Care, and Transportation and Warehousing. While Manufacturing showed a mixed recovery, with gains in Bristol offsetting some losses in Washington County, the Retail Trade sector continued its decline, suggesting a lasting shift in consumer behavior and retail dynamics.

The analysis of labor force characteristics indicates a stable post-pandemic environment with low unemployment rates and resident employment returning to near pre-pandemic levels. Importantly, the faster growth of at-place employment compared to resident employment suggests that an increasing share of jobs within the region are being filled by non-residents. This trend is consistent with a housing market where supply constraints may be a factor. This imbalance may, in turn, place upward pressure on housing demand, particularly for both workforce and market-rate housing.

Recent and ongoing economic development initiatives, including the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Bristol, SPIG Industry's industrial expansion, and a series of health care and retail openings, are projected to create ongoing job growth in the near term. The potential development of an inland port in Washington County could also generate substantial long-term job growth. These economic trends, marked by a diversifying employment base and continued job creation, are critical indicators of sustained population growth and increased demand for a wide range of housing types in the Washington County and Bristol housing market.

Section III: Demographic Analysis

This section provides a demographic overview of Washington County, focusing on population and household trends, income levels, housing tenure, rent-overburdened households, and households living in substandard housing. The analysis also examines trends in housing units, the age of the occupied housing stock, and tenure based on the year households moved into their units.

Demographic forecasting in a low-growth or declining-growth market like Washington County presents several challenges. Projections are often difficult to establish due to past population declines observed in recent trend data. These declines are likely influenced by a combination of factors, including the limited availability of new housing across a range of types, an aging population, slower in-migration, and the outmigration of younger households. The fact that a considerable share of local employment growth is supported by commuters from outside the region further complicates these dynamics. Understanding these trends is therefore central to developing strategies that could stabilize or reverse them over time.

III.1: Population and Household Trends

Table 5 outlines population and household trends in Washington County between 2000 and 2024. During this 24-year period, the County's population experienced a slight overall increase, rising from 51,103 residents in 2000 to an estimated 53,369 in 2024. Although the population grew by approximately seven percent between 2000 and 2010, reaching 54,876, it subsequently declined by about 2.7 percent between 2010 and 2020, and is projected to have declined by a further one percent between 2020 and 2024.

Much of this shift may be linked to structural demographic forces, such as an aging resident population, outmigration of younger households, and slower rates of in-migration. These changes are reflected in the decline in average household size, which dropped from 2.36 persons per household in 2000 to 2.24 in 2024, a decrease of roughly five percent. This trend suggests that despite population losses, household formation is still occurring, contributing to an ongoing demand for housing units even as average household size shrinks.

The towns of Abingdon, Damascus, Glade Spring, and Saltville experienced varied population trends between 2000 and 2020. Abingdon grew steadily, from 7,780 in 2000 to 8,376 in 2020, a gain of approximately eight percent. In contrast, Damascus, Glade Spring, and Saltville each experienced population decline over the same period.

Damascus fell from 981 to 788 residents (a 20 percent decline), Glade Spring from 1,374 to 1,367 (a negligible change), and Saltville from 2,204 to 1,824 (a drop of 17 percent). While not all towns experienced population loss, the broader trend across the County's smaller municipalities leans toward decline. These localized changes suggest that most of the County's recent demographic contraction is occurring outside of Abingdon, which may continue to serve as the County's primary population and employment center.

Other key points from **Table 5** include the following:

- **Group Quarters Population:** The group quarters population falls outside the traditional housing market and includes individuals residing in hospitals, nursing homes, correctional facilities, group homes, and college dormitories. In Washington County, a significant share of this population is comprised of students living in on-campus housing at Emory & Henry University. According to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), 914 out of 1,311 enrolled students lived in on-campus housing as of Fall 2024, up from just 593 in 2015. This represents a 54 percent increase over a nine-year period and suggests a growing reliance on institutional housing for the student population.

The group quarters population is subtracted from the total population to calculate the household population, which serves as the basis for estimating housing unit demand. Despite a growing senior population, there has been little or no increase in the group quarters population outside of student housing since 2010.

- **Households:** The number of households in Washington County increased from 21,056 in 2000 to an estimated 23,113 in 2024. This represents a net gain of 2,057 households, or approximately 10 percent over the 24-year period. While the County's total population declined slightly during this time, household formation has continued, suggesting shifts in household composition and demographic structure.

Most of the growth occurred between 2000 and 2010, when nearly 1,800 households were added. In contrast, the number of households declined slightly between 2010 and 2020, then began rising again by 2024. These shifts reflect broader demographic and economic forces, including aging population cohorts, local employment trends, and migration patterns.

Average household size declined steadily over the same period, falling from 2.36 persons per household in 2000 to 2.24 in 2024. This five percent reduction is consistent with national trends and likely reflects several contributing factors, such as an increase in single-person households, delayed family formation, and the growing share of older adults living alone or in smaller households.

The combination of declining household size and modest household growth helps explain why housing demand has remained relatively stable even as population growth has slowed. This trend suggests that future housing planning in Washington County will need to account for smaller household sizes and evolving living arrangements, particularly those that accommodate aging residents and non-family households.

- **Housing Tenure: Renters vs. Owners:** Washington County has remained a predominantly owner-occupied housing market over the past two decades, though the share of renter households has grown gradually. In 2000, 77.2 percent of occupied housing units were owner-occupied, compared to 22.8 percent renter-occupied. By 2024, the ownership share had declined slightly to 74.0 percent, while the renter share rose to 26.0 percent. This represents a 3.2 percentage point shift toward rental occupancy over the 24-year period.

The number of renter households increased from 4,801 in 2000 to 6,012 in 2024, a net gain of 1,211 renter households, or roughly 25 percent growth. By contrast, the number of owner households increased from 16,255 to 17,101, a gain of only 846 households, or about 5 percent. These figures indicate that nearly 60 percent of net household growth in Washington County since 2000 has been driven by renters.

This gradual increase in the renter share may reflect a combination of factors, including rising home prices, tighter lending standards, shifting lifestyle preferences, and an aging population seeking housing with fewer maintenance responsibilities. The trend also suggests growing demand for rental options that serve a broader range of household types, income levels, and age cohorts.

Together, these trends indicate a gradual shift in the demographic landscape of Washington County. Modest household growth, a rising share of renter households, and declining household size suggest that population change alone does not fully account for local housing needs. Instead, evolving household composition, an aging population, and affordability pressures are increasingly shaping demand for both housing type and tenure.

Table 5: Population and Household Trends — Washington County, VA (2000-2024)				
	2000	2010	2020	2024
Washington County Population	51,103	54,876	53,935	53,369
Town of Abingdon	7,780	8,182	8,376	--
Town of Damascus	981	814	788	--
Town of Glade Spring	1,374	1,455	1,367	--
Town of Saltville ¹	2,204	2,077	1,824	--
Group Quarters Population	1,342	1,627	1,655	1,670
Household Population	49,761	53,249	52,280	51,699
Persons per Household	2.36	2.33	2.31	2.24
Total Households	21,056	22,843	22,616	23,113
Renter Households	4,801	5,811	5,835	6,012
Percent Renter Households	22.8%	25.4%	25.8%	26.0%
Owner Households	16,255	17,032	16,781	17,101
Percent Owner Households	77.2%	74.6%	74.2%	74.0%
¹ Partly in Smyth County.				
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Ribbon Demographics; Easy Analytic Software, Inc. (EASI); Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service; S. Patz & Associates, Inc.				

III.2: Owner Households by Income and Size

Table 6 provides a breakdown of owner-occupied households in Washington County by household size and income level. The data indicate a homeowner population that is heavily concentrated among smaller households, particularly two-person homes, with fewer larger families and a wide range of income levels.

Two-person households make up the largest share of owner-occupied units in Washington County, totaling 7,150 out of 17,101 households, or roughly 42 percent of all owner households. One-person households account for an additional 4,124 units (approximately 24 percent). Together, these smaller households represent 66 percent of all owner-occupied homes in the County. In contrast, households with four or more people total just 3,149 (about 18 percent), suggesting a relatively limited presence of larger families among owner households.

From an income perspective, the largest group of homeowners earn between \$60,000 and \$100,000 per year. This includes 4,145 households, or roughly 24 percent of the total. The most common income bracket is \$75,000 to \$100,000, with 2,397 households, many of which are three-

, four-, or five-person families. This segment represents about 14 percent of all owner households and reflects a significant portion of the County's working middle class.

At the lower end of the income scale, 2,416 households earn less than \$30,000 annually, making up approximately 14 percent of the total. The majority of these are one-person households, likely consisting of older residents or individuals on fixed incomes. These households may be more vulnerable to housing cost burdens, including property maintenance, utilities, and taxes.

Higher-income households earning more than \$100,000 annually account for 6,701 households, or nearly 40 percent of the total. This group is spread across a range of household sizes, with a notable number of three- to five-person families in the \$150,000 to \$200,000 and \$200,000+ brackets. These households likely include dual-income earners and professionals with greater financial flexibility and purchasing power.

Overall, the data in **Table 6** show that Washington County's owner households are primarily smaller in size and fall across a wide income range, with a significant share concentrated in the middle and upper-middle income brackets. While many households appear financially stable, those in lower income groups, particularly single-person households, may require targeted support to maintain safe and affordable homeownership.

Table 6: Owner Households by Income and Size — Washington County, VA (2024)

	<u>1-Person Household</u>	<u>2-Person Household</u>	<u>3-Person Household</u>	<u>4-Person Household</u>	<u>5-Person Household</u>	<u>Total</u>
\$0-\$10,000	374	53	40	8	30	505
\$10,000-\$20,000	621	219	33	23	19	915
\$20,000-\$30,000	575	349	30	35	7	996
\$30,000-\$40,000	443	689	129	76	38	1,375
\$40,000-\$50,000	400	478	137	104	78	1,197
\$50,000-\$60,000	302	654	157	120	34	1,267
\$60,000-\$75,000	288	784	307	243	126	1,748
\$75,000-\$100,000	273	1,151	408	465	100	2,397
\$100,000-\$125,000	212	861	536	224	149	1,982
\$125,000-\$150,000	171	621	423	107	123	1,445
\$150,000-\$200,000	183	468	302	266	250	1,469
\$200,000+	<u>282</u>	<u>823</u>	<u>176</u>	<u>312</u>	<u>212</u>	<u>1,805</u>
Total	4,124	7,150	2,678	1,983	1,166	17,101

Source: Ribbon Demographics

III.3: Renter Households by Income and Size

Table 7 presents an overview of renter households in Washington County by household size and income level. The data show a renter population that is predominantly composed of one-person households and is heavily concentrated in lower income brackets, with relatively few high-income renters or large renter households.

One-person households make up the majority of the County's renter households, accounting for 2,856 out of 6,012 total units, or nearly 48 percent of all renter households. Two-person households are the next most common, with 1,591 units (26 percent). Altogether, these smaller renter households represent 74 percent of the total. Larger renter households, including those with four or more people, account for only 805 units, or roughly 13 percent, underscoring the limited presence of larger families in the rental market.

Income data further emphasize the concentration of renters at the lower end of the economic spectrum. A total of 1,975 renter households, or about 33 percent, earn less than \$30,000 per year. The largest single income bracket is \$30,000 to \$40,000, which includes 793 households, followed closely by the \$10,000 to \$20,000 range with 746 households. These groups are predominantly composed of one- and two-person households.

The middle-income segment, earning between \$40,000 and \$75,000 annually, includes 1,315 renter households, or approximately 22 percent of the total. This group spans a variety of household sizes but remains skewed toward smaller units. These renters may be financially stable but could face affordability constraints depending on the availability of appropriately priced rental housing.

Higher-income renters earning above \$75,000 annually represent a sizable portion of the market, totaling 1,929 households, or about 32 percent. Most of these households are still composed of one or two people, though there are a number of larger families present in the \$75,000 to \$100,000 and \$150,000 to \$200,000 ranges. Some of these households may have the capacity to purchase homes but are currently remaining in the rental market, possibly due to housing availability, lifestyle preferences, or other financial considerations.

Overall, the data in **Table 7** highlight a rental market in Washington County that is dominated by small, lower-income households, with limited representation among larger families. While a sizable share of renters have moderate to high incomes, the concentration of low-income, one-person households suggests a continued need for affordable and accessible rental options, particularly for older adults, single individuals, and those living on fixed incomes.

Table 7: <u>Renter Households by Income and Size — Washington County, VA (2024)</u>						
	<u>1-Person Household</u>	<u>2-Person Household</u>	<u>3-Person Household</u>	<u>4-Person Household</u>	<u>5-Person Household</u>	<u>Total</u>
\$0-\$10,000	357	64	63	22	13	519
\$10,000-\$20,000	554	108	70	11	3	746
\$20,000-\$30,000	334	212	103	32	29	710
\$30,000-\$40,000	304	165	193	71	60	793
\$40,000-\$50,000	193	70	105	15	38	421
\$50,000-\$60,000	143	122	42	71	52	430
\$60,000-\$75,000	143	208	57	7	49	464
\$75,000-\$100,000	117	200	32	76	60	485
\$100,000-\$125,000	208	76	13	51	7	355
\$125,000-\$150,000	140	130	26	59	9	364
\$150,000-\$200,000	201	138	27	15	12	393
\$200,000+	<u>162</u>	<u>98</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>332</u>
Total	2,856	1,591	760	451	354	6,012
Source: Ribbon Demographics						

III.4: Rent-Overburdened Households

Renter households are considered rent-overburdened if they spend more than 35 percent of their gross income, or 40 percent for seniors, on gross rent, including both rent and utilities. This threshold is widely used to measure housing affordability and is commonly applied to identify households that may be financially strained or at risk of housing instability. While rent burden is most common among lower-income households, it can also affect moderate-income renters, particularly in areas with limited affordable options or rising rental costs.

This metric serves as a key indicator of the need for affordable rental housing within the region. As shown in **Table 8**, 1,111 renter households in Washington County, or 20.8 percent of all renter households, are classified as rent-overburdened. This means that just over one in five renters spend more than 35 percent of their income on rent and utilities, highlighting ongoing affordability challenges, even in a market with generally modest rental prices.

Rent burden is heavily concentrated among households earning less than \$35,000 per year. Among those earning under \$10,000 annually, 241 of 450 households (54 percent) are rent-overburdened. In the \$10,000 to \$19,999 bracket, 381 of 580 households (66 percent) are similarly affected. Together, these two income groups account for 622 rent-overburdened households, or 56 percent of all such cases in the County.

An additional 444 rent-overburdened households earn between \$20,000 and \$34,999. Combined, households earning less than \$35,000 account for 1,066 of the 1,111 rent-overburdened households, or more than 95 percent of the total. This distribution confirms that rent burden is overwhelmingly concentrated among the lowest-income segments of the renter population.

The data also show that rent burden drops off substantially at higher income levels. Only 39 households earning between \$35,000 and \$49,999 are classified as rent-overburdened, representing just 6.3 percent of renters in that income group. There are only 6 rent-overburdened households in the \$50,000 to \$74,999 range and none among households earning \$75,000 or more. This pattern reflects both the relatively low cost of market rents in Washington County and the greater financial resilience of higher-income households.

Overall, **Table 8** demonstrates that rent burden in Washington County is a concentrated issue, affecting primarily low-income households earning below \$35,000 per year. The County's overall rent-overburden rate of 20.8 percent is below the national average, but it remains a meaningful indicator of housing need and points to ongoing demand for affordable rental housing targeted to the County's lowest-income residents.

**Table 8: Rent-Overburdened Households by Income —
Washington County, VA**

	Total Households	Share of Total
Less Than \$10,000	450	8.4%
Less than 35.0 Percent	10	0.2%
More than 35.0 Percent	241	4.5%
Not Computed	189	3.5%
\$10,000 To \$19,999	580	10.8%
Less than 35.0 Percent	133	2.5%
More than 35.0 Percent	381	7.1%
Not Computed	66	1.2%
\$20,000 To \$34,999	1,323	24.7%
Less than 35.0 Percent	689	12.9%
More than 35.0 Percent	444	8.3%
Not Computed	190	3.6%
\$35,000 To \$49,999	620	11.6%
Less than 35.0 Percent	509	9.5%
More than 35.0 Percent	39	0.7%
Not Computed	72	1.3%
\$50,000 To \$74,999	1,010	18.9%
Less than 35.0 Percent	850	15.9%
More than 35.0 Percent	6	0.1%
Not Computed	154	2.9%
\$75,000 To \$99,999	621	11.6%
Less than 35.0 Percent	575	10.8%
More than 35.0 Percent	0	0.0%
Not Computed	46	0.9%
\$100,000 Or More	744	13.9%
Less than 35.0 Percent	704	13.2%
More than 35.0 Percent	0	0.0%
Not Computed	40	0.7%
Total	5,348	100.0%
More than 35.0 Percent	1,111	20.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2023 (5-Year Estimates)

III.5: Households in Substandard Housing

Table 9 provides an overview of households in Washington County living in substandard housing, based on two key criteria: the presence of complete plumbing facilities and the degree of household overcrowding. Occupancy is categorized using HUD guidelines: 1.00 or fewer occupants per room, 1.01 to 1.50 occupants per room, and more than 1.50 occupants per room.

For this analysis, substandard housing includes any household that either lacks complete plumbing or is considered overcrowded. Overcrowding is defined as having more than 1.00 occupants per room. According to **Table 9**, 292 households in Washington County meet one or both criteria, representing 1.3 percent of the County's 22,118 total households.

Of the 292 substandard households, 130 are renter-occupied, which accounts for 2.4 percent of all renter households. These renter households are more likely to experience substandard conditions related to both plumbing and crowding. Specifically, 48 renter households lack complete plumbing facilities, and 82 are overcrowded: 41 with 1.01 to 1.50 occupants per room, and 41 with more than 1.50 occupants per room.

The remaining 162 substandard households are owner-occupied, representing 1.0 percent of all owner households. Among these, 17 households lack complete plumbing, and 145 are overcrowded. Of the overcrowded owner households, 118 fall into the 1.01 to 1.50 range, while 27 exceed 1.50 occupants per room. While substandard conditions are less common among owner households, the presence of overcrowding indicates that some homeowners may be constrained by limited space or affordability pressures.

Overall, the vast majority of both owner and renter households in Washington County meet minimum housing standards in terms of plumbing and occupancy. However, renters remain significantly more likely to live in substandard conditions. This disparity may reflect factors such as an older or lower-quality rental housing stock, deferred maintenance, or a shortage of affordable, appropriately sized rental units.

Table 9: Households in Substandard Housing — Washington County, VA

	Total Households	Share of Total
<u>Owner Occupied</u>		
Complete Plumbing Facilities:	16,753	75.7%
1.00 Or Less Occupants Per Room	16,608	75.1%
1.01 To 1.50 Occupants Per Room	118	0.5%
1.51 Or More Occupants Per Room	27	0.1%
Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities:	17	0.1%
1.00 Or Less Occupants Per Room	17	0.1%
1.01 To 1.50 Occupants Per Room	0	0.0%
1.51 Or More Occupants Per Room	0	0.0%
<i>(Subtotal)</i>	<i>(16,770)</i>	<i>(75.8%)</i>
<u>Renter Occupied</u>		
Complete Plumbing Facilities:	5,300	24.0%
1.00 Or Less Occupants Per Room	5,218	23.6%
1.01 To 1.50 Occupants Per Room	41	0.2%
1.51 Or More Occupants Per Room	41	0.2%
Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities:	48	0.2%
1.00 Or Less Occupants Per Room	44	0.2%
1.01 To 1.50 Occupants Per Room	0	0.0%
1.51 Or More Occupants Per Room	4	0.0%
<i>(Subtotal)</i>	<i>(5,348)</i>	<i>(24.2%)</i>
Total	22,118	100.0
Lacking Complete Plumbing	65	0.3%
With Plumbing but Overcrowded	227	1.0%
Total Substandard Housing	292	1.3%
Owner Substandard Housing	162	1.0%
Rental Substandard Housing	130	2.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2023 (5-Year Estimates)

III.6: Senior Population and Household Trends

Table 10 outlines trends in the senior population and senior-headed households in Washington County, distinguishing between renter and owner households.

Unlike many rural counties that have experienced overall population decline, Washington County's total population remained relatively stable between 2000 and 2024, fluctuating modestly from 51,103 in 2000 to an estimated 53,369 in 2024. Over the same period, the number of total households grew from 21,056 to 23,113, an increase of roughly 10 percent. This modest growth has occurred alongside a significant demographic shift: a growing senior population and an increase in the number of senior-headed households.

The senior population, defined here as residents aged 62 and older, increased from 9,433 in 2000 to 17,158 in 2024. This represents a gain of 7,725 individuals, or approximately 82 percent. Seniors made up 18.5 percent of the total population in 2000; by 2024, that share had grown to 32.2 percent. This substantial increase reflects broader aging trends across the region and highlights the rising prominence of older adults within the County's demographic profile.

Similar growth occurred in the number of senior-headed households. Between 2000 and 2024, senior households increased from 6,173 to 11,374, a gain of 5,201 households, or about 84 percent. Over that same period, the share of all households headed by seniors rose from 29.3 percent to 49.2 percent, indicating that nearly half of all households in the County are now led by individuals aged 62 or older. This growth is notable not only for its magnitude but also because it occurred concurrently with modest overall household growth, meaning that senior households are accounting for a growing proportion of total household formation.

This trend is evident across both owner and renter households, although the rates of growth differ. Senior owner households rose from 5,335 in 2000 to 9,326 in 2024, an increase of 3,991 households, or 75 percent. As a share of all owner households, senior owners grew from 32.8 percent to 54.5 percent over this period. This trend highlights the increasing prevalence of older residents aging in place and maintaining homeownership well into later life, a pattern with significant implications for accessibility, maintenance, and housing turnover.

Growth among senior renters was also significant. The number of senior renter households increased from 838 in 2000 to 2,048 in 2024, a gain of 1,210 households, or 144 percent. The share of all renter households headed by seniors rose from 17.5 percent to 34.1 percent, indicating that the rental market is becoming increasingly important for older residents. This may reflect both financial considerations and the desire for housing arrangements that require less upkeep or offer proximity to services and amenities.

As the senior share of both the population and households continues to grow, Washington County will face increasing demand for age-appropriate housing, including accessible rental

units, one-level homes, and developments with support services. Meeting these needs will be critical to ensuring that older adults can remain in the County as they age.

**Table 10: Senior Population and Household Trends —
Washington County, VA (2000–2024)**

	2000	2010	2020	2024
<u>Washington County</u>				
Total Population	51,103	54,876	53,935	53,369
Total Households	21,056	22,843	22,616	23,113
Total Owner Households	16,255	17,032	16,781	17,101
Total Renter Households	4,801	5,811	5,835	6,012
<u>Senior Demographics (62+)</u>				
Senior Population	9,433	12,056	15,512	17,158
Share of Total Population	18.5%	22.0%	28.8%	32.2%
Senior Households	6,173	7,992	10,283	11,374
Share of Total Households	29.3%	35.0%	45.5%	49.2%
Senior Owner Households	5,335	6,788	8,517	9,326
Share of Owner Households	32.8%	39.9%	50.8%	54.5%
Senior Renter Households	838	1,204	1,766	2,048
Share of Renter Households	17.5%	20.7%	30.3%	34.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Ribbon Demographics; Easy Analytic Software, Inc. (EASI); Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service; S. Patz & Associates, Inc.

III.7: Senior Households by Income and Size

Table 11 details the distribution of senior renter households in Washington County, defined as those headed by individuals aged 62 and over, by income level and household size. As of 2024, there are 2,048 such households, accounting for just over one-third of all renter households in the County. This reflects both the County’s aging population and the increasing reliance on rental housing among older adults.

Senior renter households in Washington County are overwhelmingly small in size. One-person households make up 1,472, or approximately 72 percent of the total. Two-person households account for another 364 units, or nearly 18 percent. Combined, one- and two-person households comprise 90 percent of all senior renter households. This concentration underscores that most senior renters live alone or with a spouse or partner, rather than in multigenerational or extended family households.

Larger senior renter households are relatively uncommon. There are 130 three-person households, 32 four-person households, and 50 five-person households, together making up just under 11 percent of the total. These households may reflect seniors living with adult children, grandchildren, caregivers, or other family members, but they remain the exception rather than the norm.

In terms of income distribution, most senior renters in Washington County fall within lower to moderate income brackets. A total of 866 households, or 42 percent of the total, earn less than \$30,000 per year. This includes 116 households earning under \$10,000, 443 between \$10,000 and \$20,000, and 307 between \$20,000 and \$30,000. These income levels suggest a high reliance on fixed incomes, such as Social Security or modest retirement savings, and limited ability to absorb increased housing costs.

Another 131 households earn between \$30,000 and \$40,000, and 147 earn between \$40,000 and \$50,000. While some seniors fall into higher income categories, most remain in small households. There are 669 households reporting incomes of \$75,000 or more, comprising approximately 33 percent of the total. Even among these higher-income groups, the majority are one- and two-person households, reinforcing the broader trend toward aging in place in smaller living arrangements.

Overall, the data in **Table 11** indicate that senior renters in Washington County are predominantly low-income and live in smaller households. As the senior population continues to grow, there will be increasing demand for affordable, accessible rental housing designed for one- and two-person households. Housing providers and planners should consider incorporating universal design, service-enriched environments, and affordability strategies that address the distinct needs of older adults aging in place.

Table 11: Senior Renter Households by Income and Size — Washington County, VA (2024)

	<u>1-Person Household</u>	<u>2-Person Household</u>	<u>3-Person Household</u>	<u>4-Person Household</u>	<u>5-Person Household</u>	<u>Total</u>
\$0-\$10,000	95	9	1	1	10	116
\$10,000-\$20,000	406	15	18	2	2	443
\$20,000-\$30,000	163	112	25	3	4	307
\$30,000-\$40,000	98	21	8	2	2	131
\$40,000-\$50,000	117	19	4	3	4	147
\$50,000-\$60,000	62	43	13	2	1	121
\$60,000-\$75,000	71	19	11	2	11	114
\$75,000-\$100,000	89	17	11	5	4	126
\$100,000-\$125,000	69	17	6	3	3	98
\$125,000-\$150,000	82	28	15	2	3	130
\$150,000-\$200,000	96	33	5	5	2	141
\$200,000+	<u>124</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>174</u>
Total	1,472	364	130	32	50	2,048

Source: Ribbon Demographics

Table 12 presents data on senior owner households, defined as households headed by individuals aged 62 and over, in Washington County, segmented by income level and household size. As of 2024, there are 9,326 such households, underscoring the substantial role older adults play in the County's homeowner base.

As with senior renters, the majority of senior homeowners live in small households. One-person households number 3,357, or approximately 36 percent of all senior owner households. Two-person households account for 4,736, or just over 50 percent. Combined, one- and two-person households represent nearly 87 percent of the total. This reflects a common aging pattern in which individuals or couples remain in their homes after children have moved out or a spouse has passed away.

Larger senior owner households are less common but still notable. There are 768 three-person households (8.2 percent), 303 four-person households (3.2 percent), and 162 five-person households (1.7 percent). These households may reflect multigenerational living arrangements, seniors supporting adult dependents, or those providing care for grandchildren or other family members.

In terms of income, senior owner households are distributed across a broad range of income levels. A total of 2,023 households, or nearly 22 percent, earn less than \$30,000 per year.

This includes 370 households earning under \$10,000, 815 earning between \$10,000 and \$20,000, and 838 earning between \$20,000 and \$30,000. These lower-income homeowners may face financial pressures related to property taxes, home maintenance, energy costs, and unexpected health care expenses.

A substantial portion of senior homeowners fall within middle-income brackets. There are 949 households earning between \$30,000 and \$40,000, 869 earning between \$40,000 and \$50,000, and 793 earning between \$50,000 and \$60,000. These groups account for nearly 28 percent of all senior owner households. While generally more stable than those in the lowest income tiers, they may still be financially vulnerable to inflation, home repair needs, or long-term care requirements.

At the upper end of the income spectrum, 3,724 senior owner households, or approximately 40 percent of the total, report annual incomes above \$75,000. This includes 1,190 households earning between \$75,000 and \$100,000, 806 between \$100,000 and \$125,000, 460 between \$125,000 and \$150,000, 464 between \$150,000 and \$200,000, and 804 earning more than \$200,000. These higher-income households are more evenly distributed across household sizes, although most remain concentrated among one- and two-person homes.

In summary, the data in **Table 12** show that Washington County's senior owner population is composed largely of smaller households, with incomes ranging from fixed and limited to high and flexible. While many senior homeowners appear financially secure, a sizable share live on modest incomes and may be at risk of financial strain as they age in place.

Table 12: Senior Owner Households by Income and Size — Washington County, VA (2024)

	<u>1-Person Household</u>	<u>2-Person Household</u>	<u>3-Person Household</u>	<u>4-Person Household</u>	<u>5-Person Household</u>	<u>Total</u>
\$0-\$10,000	302	38	22	5	3	370
\$10,000-\$20,000	579	196	28	9	3	815
\$20,000-\$30,000	504	293	12	27	2	838
\$30,000-\$40,000	367	520	46	5	11	949
\$40,000-\$50,000	346	370	95	12	46	869
\$50,000-\$60,000	195	508	45	41	4	793
\$60,000-\$75,000	215	573	123	54	3	968
\$75,000-\$100,000	223	759	93	81	34	1,190
\$100,000-\$125,000	156	497	124	17	12	806
\$125,000-\$150,000	136	217	68	9	30	460
\$150,000-\$200,000	116	258	70	15	5	464
\$200,000+	<u>218</u>	<u>507</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>9</u>	804
Total	3,357	4,736	768	303	162	9,326

Source: Ribbon Demographics

III.8: Rent-Overburdened Senior Households

As previously noted, renter households are considered rent-overburdened if they spend more than 35 percent of their gross income, or 40 percent for seniors, on gross rent, including both rent and utility costs. Households that exceed this threshold are considered financially stretched and may require additional income or housing support to remain stably housed.

Data in **Table 13** show that 299 senior renter households in Washington County, or 20.8 percent of the total, spend more than 35 percent of their income on rent and utilities. A total of 254 households, or 17.6 percent, spend more than 40 percent of their income on gross rent. These figures indicate a substantial level of rent burden among older renters in the County, many of whom are likely living on fixed incomes.

Only 24.6 percent of senior renter households spend less than 20 percent of their income on housing, while another 32.0 percent fall into the moderately burdened range between 20.0 and 34.9 percent. This includes 8.3 percent paying 20.0 to 24.9 percent, 19.8 percent paying 25.0 to 29.9 percent, and 3.9 percent paying 30.0 to 34.9 percent. Although not classified as severely burdened, these households may still face budget constraints, particularly if they are managing health-related expenses or have limited access to transportation and services.

Notably, 22.6 percent of senior renter households fall into the “Not Computed” category, where gross rent as a share of income could not be estimated. Many of these cases likely represent renters with very low or irregular income, suggesting that the actual incidence of rent burden may be even higher than reported.

This level of cost burden places many older renters at risk of housing instability. Given their limited financial flexibility and the scarcity of age-appropriate, affordable rental housing in rural markets like Washington County, these seniors may struggle to remain housed without additional supports. The data underscore the ongoing need for deeply affordable rental housing targeted to older adults, particularly one- and two-person units with accessibility features, low-maintenance design, and predictable utility costs.

Table 13: Senior Households by Gross Rent as a Share of Income — Washington County, VA		
	Total Households	Share of Total
Householder 62 Years and Over:	1,439	100.0%
Less Than 20.0 Percent	354	24.6%
20.0 To 24.9 Percent	120	8.3%
25.0 To 29.9 Percent	285	19.8%
30.0 To 34.9 Percent	56	3.9%
35.0 Percent Or More	299	20.8%
Not Computed	325	22.6%
40.0 Percent or More	254	17.6%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2023 (5-Year Estimates); S. Patz & Associates		

III.9: Housing Unit Trends

Table 14 compares net housing unit changes between 2010 and 2020 for Washington County and other jurisdictions within the Mount Rogers Planning District. The data reflect a regional pattern of limited housing development and, in many cases, declining unit counts. These trends are consistent with broader demographic challenges, including population stagnation, economic headwinds, and an aging residential stock.

Between 2010 and 2020, Washington County experienced a net loss of 213 housing units, representing a 0.8 percent reduction in its overall housing inventory. This decline suggests limited new construction activity and may reflect the demolition of older, uninhabitable

structures. Although less severe than losses in some neighboring jurisdictions, the reduction contributes to a broader regional pattern of declining housing supply.

Nearly every jurisdiction in the Mount Rogers Planning District saw a net decline in housing units during the decade. Smyth County experienced the largest numerical loss, with 329 units removed from the housing stock (a 2.1 percent decrease). Grayson County followed closely with a 234-unit loss (2.6 percent), while the City of Galax recorded the steepest percentage decline at 3.0 percent. The City of Bristol lost 125 units (1.4 percent), and Bland County and Wythe County also posted modest losses. Only Carroll County experienced growth, with a minimal increase of 10 housing units, equivalent to a 0.1 percent gain.

Regionally, the Mount Rogers Planning District reported a net loss of 1,141 housing units between 2010 and 2020, equal to a 1.2 percent decline. This collective pattern underscores the structural housing and economic challenges facing much of Southwest Virginia. As populations decline or remain flat and aging housing stock becomes less viable, many communities are losing units faster than they are replacing them.

These findings confirm that Washington County's housing market is not isolated from broader regional trends. Modest but persistent declines in housing supply may reduce options for both new and existing residents and highlight the need for targeted investment in housing preservation, rehabilitation, and appropriately scaled new construction.

Table 14: Net Change in Housing Units — Washington County, VA and Neighboring Jurisdictions (2010-2020)				
	2010	2020	Net Change	Percent Change
Washington County	25,637	25,424	-213	-0.8%
Bland County	3,265	3,200	-65	-2.0%
Bristol City	8,795	8,670	-125	-1.4%
Carroll County	16,569	16,579	10	0.1%
Galax City	3,252	3,156	-96	-3.0%
Grayson County	9,158	8,924	-234	-2.6%
Smyth County	15,426	15,097	-329	-2.1%
Wythe County	14,079	13,990	-89	-0.6%
Mount Rogers Planning District	96,181	95,040	-1,141	-1.2%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau				

III.10: Occupied Housing Units by Year Structure Built

Table 15 illustrates the age distribution of Washington County's occupied housing stock and highlights long-standing patterns of limited recent residential development.

According to the most recent American Community Survey estimates, Washington County contains 22,118 occupied housing units. A significant portion of these homes, approximately 10,371 units or 46.9 percent, were built prior to 1980. This includes 1,702 homes constructed in 1939 or earlier, accounting for 7.7 percent of the total. Another 814 homes (3.7 percent) were built between 1940 and 1949, and 1,366 homes (6.2 percent) date to the 1950s.

The 1960s and 1970s were among the most active decades for residential development in the County. A combined total of 6,489 homes, or 29.3 percent of the current housing stock, were built between 1960 and 1979. This includes 2,019 homes from the 1960s and 4,470 homes from the 1970s, the largest single-decade figure in the dataset.

Housing production declined in the decades that followed. A total of 2,918 homes (13.2 percent) were built in the 1980s, followed by 4,343 homes (19.6 percent) in the 1990s. Between 2000 and 2009, 2,955 homes were added to the housing stock (13.4 percent), while 1,425 homes (6.4 percent) were built between 2010 and 2019. Since 2020, only 106 new occupied homes have been built, representing just 0.5 percent of the total.

These figures point to the aging nature of Washington County's housing stock and the limited level of new construction over the past two decades. With nearly half of occupied units built before 1980, many homes are likely to face increasing maintenance needs, deteriorating functionality, and energy inefficiency. The small number of newly constructed homes places additional pressure on the existing inventory, particularly as the County works to meet the housing needs of an aging population and shifting household dynamics.

Table 15: Occupied Housing Units by Year Structure Built — Washington County, VA		
	Homes	Share of Total
Built 2020 or Later	106	0.5%
Built 2010 to 2019	1,425	6.4%
Built 2000 to 2009	2,955	13.4%
Built 1990 to 1999	4,343	19.6%
Built 1980 to 1989	2,918	13.2%
Built 1970 to 1979	4,470	20.2%
Built 1960 to 1969	2,019	9.1%
Built 1950 to 1959	1,366	6.2%
Built 1940 to 1949	814	3.7%
Built 1939 or Earlier	1,702	7.7%
Total	22,118	100.0%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2023 (5-Year Estimates)		

III.11: Tenure by Year Household Moved Into Unit

Table 16 presents data on when current householders in Washington County moved into their occupied housing units, offering insight into residential turnover and tenure stability across both owner- and renter-occupied housing. These patterns help illustrate how stable or mobile the County's population is, particularly in relation to tenure and housing type.

Among owner households, the data show a strong tendency toward long-term residency. A total of 3,602 owner households, or 16.3 percent, moved in before 1990. An additional 3,088 (14.0 percent) moved in during the 1990s, and 3,550 (16.1 percent) between 2000 and 2009. More recently, 3,656 households (16.5 percent) moved in between 2010 and 2017, followed by 2,334 (10.6 percent) from 2018 to 2020. Only 546 owner households (2.5 percent) moved in during 2021 or later. In total, 75.8 percent of all households in Washington County are owner-occupied, and most have lived in their current homes for a decade or longer.

By contrast, turnover among renters is more recent and more frequent. A total of 1,627 renter households (7.4 percent) moved in between 2018 and 2020, and another 889 households (4.0 percent) have moved in since 2021. Combined, 11.4 percent of renter households have moved into their current homes within the past five years. Another 1,980 (9.0 percent) moved in between 2010 and 2017, and 543 (2.5 percent) between 2000 and 2009. Just 123 renter households (0.6 percent) have remained in place since before 1990, reflecting the typically shorter tenure of renter households compared to owners.

These patterns suggest a stable owner-occupied housing market, where many residents have aged in place or remained in their homes for extended periods. In contrast, the rental market is characterized by higher mobility, indicating ongoing demand for flexible, affordable, and modestly sized rental housing that can accommodate residents with changing needs.

Table 16: Tenure By Year Householder Moved Into Unit — Washington County, VA		
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Share of Total</u>
<u>Owner Occupied</u>		
Moved In 2021 Or Later	546	2.5%
Moved In 2018 To 2020	2,334	10.6%
Moved In 2010 To 2017	3,650	16.5%
Moved In 2000 To 2009	3,550	16.1%
Moved In 1990 To 1999	3,088	14.0%
Moved In 1989 Or Earlier	<u>3,602</u>	<u>16.3%</u>
(Subtotal)	(16,770)	(75.8%)
<u>Renter Occupied</u>		
Moved In 2021 Or Later	889	4.0%
Moved In 2018 To 2020	1,627	7.4%
Moved In 2010 To 2017	1,980	9.0%
Moved In 2000 To 2009	543	2.5%
Moved In 1990 To 1999	186	0.8%
Moved In 1989 Or Earlier	123	0.6%
(Subtotal)	<u>(5,348)</u>	<u>(24.2%)</u>
Total	22,118	100.0%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2023 (5-Year Estimates)		

III.12: Demographic Analysis Summary

Washington County is undergoing a long-term demographic transition marked by population plateau, an aging population, and declining household size. Between 2000 and 2010, the County added approximately 3,800 residents, but the population has since declined to an estimated 53,369 by 2024. Despite the overall population loss, the number of households has

continued to rise modestly, increasing from 21,056 in 2000 to 23,113 in 2024. Over the same period, average household size declined from 2.36 to 2.24, reflecting national trends and indicating a growing share of one- and two-person households, particularly among older adults.

The County's aging population is one of its most significant demographic trends. The number of residents aged 62 and older grew by more than 80 percent since 2000 and now accounts for 32.2 percent of the total population. Nearly half of all households (49.2 percent) are now headed by someone aged 62 or older, up from 29.3 percent in 2000. This shift has occurred among both owners and renters, with many seniors aging in place as homeowners, and others opting for smaller, lower-maintenance rental units. These trends are shaping demand for housing that is accessible, affordable, and designed to support aging in place.

While population growth has slowed, renter household growth has continued. The number of renter households rose from 4,801 in 2000 to 6,012 in 2024, accounting for nearly 60 percent of the County's net household growth during that period. This trend reflects increased demand from younger adults, seniors downsizing, and students attending Emory & Henry University. Growth in the Group Quarters population, driven in part by on-campus student housing, reinforces this dynamic.

Affordability remains a key challenge for many renter households. Among all renters, 20.8 percent spend more than 35 percent of their income on rent and utilities. For seniors, 17.6 percent exceed the 40 percent rent burden threshold, and nearly one-quarter spend more than 35 percent. Additionally, 22.6 percent of senior renter households fall into the "not computed" category for rent burden, likely reflecting extremely low or irregular incomes. These figures suggest that affordability challenges may be understated, particularly for vulnerable older adults living on fixed incomes.

Washington County's housing stock is aging. Nearly 47 percent of occupied homes were built before 1980, and residential construction has slowed significantly in recent decades. Only 106 new occupied homes have been built since 2020. Between 2010 and 2020, the County experienced a net loss of 213 housing units, contributing to a regional trend of declining or

stagnant housing supply. As the housing stock continues to age, maintenance needs and energy inefficiency will become growing concerns.

Owner-occupied housing is characterized by long-term tenure, with the majority of owner households having moved into their homes before 2010. This reflects aging in place and limited turnover in the ownership market. In contrast, the rental market is more dynamic. Over 20 percent of renter households moved into their current homes since 2018, highlighting the need for flexible and affordable rental options that can serve residents with a range of housing timelines and needs.

These trends underscore the importance of future housing strategies that prioritize senior-friendly development, housing preservation, and a broader mix of rental and ownership options. Planning efforts should emphasize small-scale infill development, accessible one-level homes, and affordable rental units that align with the County's evolving demographics and support both aging residents and new households.

Section IV: Housing Market Overview

This subsection provides a detailed analysis of the components that comprise the regional housing market. The for-sale housing segment is examined by home type, including single-family homes, townhomes, factory-built homes, and patio homes.

The data indicate that resales dominate the for-sale housing market. Very few new homes have been built on a speculative basis since the Great Recession. Most new construction in recent years has consisted of single-family homes, although some townhomes and patio homes have been successfully marketed on a smaller scale.

One contributing factor to the limited development of higher-density housing is the region's historic zoning restrictions. These policies have constrained opportunities for multi-unit or attached housing in many jurisdictions.

There are currently no age-restricted subdivisions in the region, although site work is underway for one small patio home development. In general, most active subdivisions are marketing vacant lots rather than completed homes, which limits the availability of move-in ready housing for buyers who are unwilling or unable to manage the construction process themselves.

The rental market in the region includes both market-rate and affordable properties. Most market-rate rental housing consists of older developments managed by local or regional property owners. Professionally managed apartment communities with on-site amenities or on-site staff are rare. The market-rate stock is largely made up of small, mature properties, many of which have limited capacity to meet current demand.

The region's affordable rental housing stock is sizable and generally well-maintained. Two housing authorities serve the area: Beyond Housing (formerly the Bristol Redevelopment and Housing Authority) and the Abingdon Redevelopment and Housing Authority. Most of the units they own and manage serve households earning less than 30% of the Area Median Income

(AMI). These properties are typically fully occupied and have long waitlists, which reflects persistent demand and limited turnover.

This section also addresses the housing impacts of Hurricane Helene, which reached the region as a post-tropical cyclone in September 2024. The storm caused extensive flooding and wind damage, particularly in southeastern Washington County. The Town of Damascus experienced the most severe housing impacts. More than 100 homes were repaired, and new units, including tiny homes, were developed to accommodate displaced residents. Recovery efforts were led by nonprofit groups and local officials, with a focus on stabilizing existing housing conditions rather than initiating new residential construction.

While Abingdon, Glade Spring, and Saltville were largely unaffected, the widespread repair needs in storm-impacted areas have influenced both short-term housing availability and longer-term development priorities.

IV.1: Characteristics of the For-Sale Housing Market

This subsection examines Washington County's for-sale housing market. It focuses on annual home sales, pricing trends, and the status of existing subdivisions with remaining available lots.

It also provides an overview of townhome, patio home, and manufactured housing activity, a review of residential building permit trends, an analysis of currently listed homes for sale, and a summary of new subdivisions that are either under construction or in active planning.

IV.1.a: Trends in Annual Home Sales

The data in **Table 17** illustrate trends in annual home sales for Washington County and the City of Bristol from 2016 through April 2025. Washington County is the primary focus of this analysis, but the City of Bristol is included due to its close integration within the same housing market. These figures help contextualize local housing activity over time, reflecting both cyclical

patterns and broader economic influences, including the COVID-19 pandemic and recent regional developments.

Washington County experienced a general upward trend in home sales between 2016 and 2024, increasing from 393 sales in 2016 to a peak of 478 in 2024. After a modest decline of 3.1 percent in 2017, sales rose by 11.5 percent in 2018 and 2.8 percent in 2019. The onset of the pandemic in 2020 slowed this momentum, with sales increasing by just 0.9 percent. The market recovered modestly in 2021, with a 5.0 percent gain, but declined again in 2022 and 2023, falling by 20.3 percent and 18.4 percent, respectively.

In 2024, home sales in Washington County increased by 58.8 percent, the largest single-year gain during the period. This surge is likely tied to the opening of the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Bristol in November 2024, which spurred job creation and renewed economic activity in the surrounding area. Although the casino is in the City of Bristol, its economic impact appears to have extended into Washington County, contributing to stronger housing demand and increased resale activity.

The City of Bristol exhibited a more volatile sales pattern over the same period, consistent with its smaller market size. Home sales rose sharply in 2017 and 2018, increasing by 66.7 percent and 8.6 percent, followed by a 10.5 percent gain in 2019. In 2020, sales rose again by 20.2 percent, then increased by 37.3 percent in 2021 before declining by 9.8 percent in 2022. In 2023, sales dropped significantly by 31.3 percent.

Bristol experienced its most dramatic change in 2024, with home sales rising from 57 to 218, a 282.5 percent increase. Unlike growth driven by new construction, this surge was almost entirely due to resales, as no significant expansion in new home inventory occurred. As in Washington County, the spike likely reflects the economic stimulus generated by the opening of the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino. Increases in employment and local investment likely drove demand across the shared housing market.

From January through April 2025, Washington County recorded 107 home sales, representing approximately 22 percent of the 2024 total. This may suggest a return to more typical seasonal patterns or a cooling following last year's surge. The City of Bristol has reported 76 sales so far this year, already accounting for more than one-third of its 2024 total. This could indicate sustained demand or an ongoing response to recent economic growth. Region-wide, 183 homes have been sold year-to-date, suggesting a still-active housing market that may be stabilizing after several volatile years.

Table 17: Trends in Annual Home Sales Pace — Washington County-City of Bristol, VA (2016-2025 YTD)						
	Washington County		City of Bristol		Region-Wide	
	Home Sales	Percent Change	Home Sales	Percent Change	Home Sales	Percent Change
2016	393	--	42	--	435	--
2017	381	-3.1%	70	66.7%	451	3.7%
2018	425	11.5%	76	8.6%	501	11.1%
2019	437	2.8%	84	10.5%	521	4.0%
2020	441	0.9%	67	20.2%	508	-2.5%
2021	463	5.0%	92	37.3%	555	9.3%
2022	369	-20.3%	83	-9.8%	452	-18.6%
2023	301	-18.4%	57	-31.3%	358	-20.8%
2024	478	58.8%	218	282.5%	696	48.6%
2025 YTD ¹	107	--	76	--	183	--
¹ January – April 2025						
Source: Virginia REALTORS						

IV.1.b: Trends in Home Sales Prices

Table 18 presents monthly trends in median home sales prices for Washington County and the City of Bristol from January 2019 through December 2024. These data provide important context for the sales volume patterns shown in **Table 17**, helping to clarify underlying market conditions and shifts in buyer behavior during the same period.

In Washington County, median home prices generally trended upward over the six-year period, though there was some year-to-year volatility. The 2019 average was \$161,161, which declined to \$147,508 in 2020. This dip corresponds with the initial disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and aligns with the slowdown in home sales during that year, as noted in **Table 17**.

Prices began to recover in 2021, with the County's annual average rising to \$158,096. Growth continued into 2022, when the average increased to \$171,774. In both 2023 and 2024, prices rose sharply. The average reached \$193,503 in 2023 and climbed to \$224,071 in 2024. The 15.8 percent increase between 2023 and 2024 was the largest annual gain during the period.

This price surge aligns with the sharp rebound in sales volume in 2024 and likely reflects heightened demand driven by regional economic growth. A major contributing factor was the opening of the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Bristol in November 2024. Although the facility is in the City of Bristol, the resulting job growth and economic activity extended into Washington County, contributing to rising prices and increased buyer competition.

In the City of Bristol, median home prices followed a more erratic pattern. The 2019 average was \$128,285, which fell sharply to \$100,292 in 2020. This nearly 22 percent decline suggests a shift toward lower-priced transactions, possibly driven by a concentration of sales in more affordable segments during the early months of the pandemic.

This volatility may also reflect the smaller size of Bristol's housing market. With fewer transactions occurring each year, the median price is more sensitive to variation in the types and values of homes sold. Even modest changes in the sales mix can produce large swings in annual averages.

Prices rebounded in 2021 to \$123,248, then declined slightly in 2022 to \$110,136. In 2023, the average fell again to \$108,379, even as home sales dropped to their lowest level since 2016. This trend suggests that affordability pressures and limited housing supply continued to constrain the local market.

Bristol experienced a dramatic shift in 2024. The median home price rose to \$153,796, a 41.9 percent increase from the previous year. This coincided with a 282.5 percent surge in home sales, as shown in **Table 17**. This growth was not driven by new construction but was almost entirely due to resales. It likely reflects increased listings and buyer activity in response to the economic momentum generated by the casino opening.

Together, **Tables 17** and **18** show that although the Washington County–Bristol housing market experienced pandemic-related disruptions in both sales and pricing, it rebounded strongly in 2024. The simultaneous rise in sales volume and home values across both jurisdictions points to a tightening market, driven by renewed economic opportunity, improved consumer confidence, and increased housing demand.

Table 18: Monthly Trends in Median Home Sales Prices — Washington County-City of Bristol, VA (2019-2024)

	<u>Median Sales Price – Washington County</u>	<u>Median Sales Price – City of Bristol</u>
2019 - Jan	\$152,750	N/A
2019 - Feb	\$169,000	N/A
2019 - Mar	\$153,000	\$123,500
2019 - Apr	\$154,000	\$145,000
2019 - May	\$144,676	\$156,000
2019 - Jun	\$165,000	\$79,600
2019 - Jul	\$159,000	\$54,300
2019 - Aug	\$159,000	\$157,750
2019 - Sep	\$175,000	\$129,000
2019 - Oct	\$150,000	\$122,750
2019 - Nov	\$181,250	\$224,950
2019 - Dec	\$171,250	\$90,000
2019 Average	\$161,161	\$128,285
2020 - Jan	\$125,400	\$147,500
2020 - Feb	\$140,000	\$27,250
2020 - Mar	\$145,000	\$59,000
2020 - Apr	\$131,500	\$61,250
2020 - May	\$175,400	\$120,000
2020 - Jun	\$144,750	\$105,000
2020 - Jul	\$160,000	\$108,000
2020 - Aug	\$172,100	\$83,500
2020 - Sep	\$145,500	\$204,250
2020 - Oct	\$151,200	\$129,000
2020 - Nov	\$161,000	\$98,750
2020 - Dec	\$118,250	\$60,000
2020 Average	\$147,508	\$100,292
2021 - Jan	\$208,500	\$133,250
2021-Feb	\$160,000	\$122,750
2021-Mar	\$147,900	\$127,000
2021 - Apr	\$145,000	\$90,000
2021 - May	\$145,000	\$123,250
2021 - Jun	\$150,000	\$115,000
2021 - Jul	\$149,500	\$65,125
2021 - Aug	\$150,000	\$127,425
2021 - Sep	\$174,750	\$120,000
2021 - Oct	\$149,000	\$165,900
2021 - Nov	\$142,500	\$85,000
2021 - Dec	\$175,000	\$204,275
2021 Average	\$158,096	\$123,248
2022 - Jan	\$121,250	\$100,000
2022 - Feb	\$193,250	\$186,000
2022 - Mar	\$180,000	\$183,925
2022 - Apr	\$175,285	\$89,203
2022 - May	\$190,000	\$100,000
2022- Jun	\$165,000	\$83,000
2022 - Jul	\$179,000	\$127,400
2022 - Aug	\$178,000	\$80,750
2022- Sep	\$187,500	\$85,000
2022- Oct	\$185,000	\$119,350
2022- Nov	\$152,000	\$93,000
2022- Dec	\$155,000	\$74,000
2022 Average	\$171,774	\$110,136
2023- Jan	\$145,000	\$89,900
2023- Feb	\$179,000	\$103,000
2023- Mar	\$224,900	\$90,750
2023- Apr	\$168,000	\$84,900
2023- May	\$145,000	\$68,450
2023- Jun	\$231,389	\$88,500
2023- Jul	\$209,000	\$121,500
2023- Aug	\$233,000	\$160,000
2023- Sep	\$183,000	\$110,500
2023- Oct	\$220,000	\$171,050
2023- Nov	\$185,000	\$115,750
2023- Dec	\$198,750	\$96,250
2023 Average	\$193,503	\$108,379
2024- Jan	\$180,000	\$153,000
2024- Feb	\$240,000	\$127,500
2024- Mar	\$245,000	\$136,750
2024- Apr	\$180,500	\$174,000
2024- May	\$253,950	\$145,000
2024- June	\$235,000	\$159,900
2024- July	\$220,000	\$167,500
2024- Aug	\$220,000	\$127,000
2024- Sep	\$217,500	\$148,000
2024- Oct	\$194,400	\$169,900
2024- Nov	\$237,500	\$144,000
2024- Dec	\$265,000	\$193,000
2024 Average	\$224,071	\$153,796
Source: Virginia REALTORS		

IV.1.c: Characteristics of Existing Subdivisions

There are currently six subdivisions in the region with recent new home sales activity and undeveloped residential lots available for purchase. All six subdivisions are in Washington County, in and around the Town of Abingdon, and are detailed in **Table 19**.

As shown in **Table 19**, the six subdivisions collectively account for 502 approved lots, with 231 sold as of July 2025. This represents an overall absorption rate of approximately 46 percent. While this pace of sales may appear slow, it is important to note that most homes in these subdivisions have resulted from individual lot purchases followed by custom home construction, or from speculative homes built and sold prior to the Great Recession.

As a result, the observed sales pattern does not necessarily reflect weak demand. Instead, it reflects a development model shaped by private construction activity and limited speculative building in recent years.

The subdivisions differ significantly in age, with initial development dates ranging from 1997 to 2022. This time span reflects the long-term, incremental nature of residential growth in this part of Washington County. However, many subdivisions experienced their most active periods of construction and sales prior to the economic downturn in the late 2000s and have seen limited new activity since that time.

Most of the lots are designated for single-family homes. However, two subdivisions, Abingdon Heights and Deer Run Estates, include both single-family and duplex options. These subdivisions have comparatively higher sales volumes, which may reflect broader market appeal due to greater housing flexibility, lower entry price points, or a wider target demographic.

Across all six subdivisions, the data suggest a measured pace of development, shaped more by individual builder preferences than by large-scale subdivision activity.

Overall, the data indicate a stable but gradual rate of lot absorption. This pattern is consistent with a local market where construction is typically initiated by the buyer rather than by a developer. Each subdivision is described in the following paragraphs.

- **Olde South Estates**: Olde South Estates is one of the newer active subdivisions in the Bristol region. It includes 15 lots, ten of which are located adjacent to the Virginia Creeper Trail. The subdivision is located along Old S Way, south of Watauga Road, approximately six miles southeast of the Town of Abingdon. The lots became available for purchase in November 2022 and are being marketed solely as individual lot sales. Lot sizes range from 0.692 to 0.948 acres. Covenants restrict new homes to a maximum size of 1,800 square feet, and all utility lines must be installed using underground service connections. To date, two lots have been sold, and two homes are under construction. The most recent sale was for a 0.68-acre vacant lot in September 2023, which sold for \$85,000, reduced from its original listing price of \$100,000 in July 2023.
- **The Heritage at Abingdon**: The Heritage at Abingdon is an 80-acre subdivision located off Exit 14 of I-81, just south of the Town of Abingdon. It includes lots ranging from 0.7 to 1.7 acres, priced between \$75,000 and \$112,500 depending on size. Covenants require all homes to be two-story structures of at least 2,800 square feet. Manufactured and mobile homes are not permitted. As of July 2025, 44 lots have been sold, with the first home built in 2015. Recent home sales have ranged from \$500,000 to \$900,000. A five-bedroom, 3,250-square-foot home built in 2022 is currently listed for \$948,850. Available lots are currently priced between \$75,000 and \$107,500, and site work is ongoing on three lots. Overall, homes in this subdivision are upscale in both design and price.
- **Olde Homestead**: Olde Homestead is one of the largest subdivisions in the region. It is located along Old Homestead Way near Virginia Highlands Airport, just west of Abingdon. The subdivision was approved for 120 homes in 2009, but development has progressed slowly. Only six single-family homes have been built, including three constructed between 2009 and 2012. Homes in the subdivision are generally valued in the mid- to upper-\$500,000s or higher. Two 0.75-acre lots are currently listed for \$70,000. No homes are under construction, but one custom home is planned and listed for \$849,900. The proposed residence will be a three-bedroom, four-bathroom, 2,782-square-foot home on a 1.17-acre lot. No speculative homes have been built in this subdivision to date. Homes in Olde Homestead are among the most expensive in the region.
- **Abingdon Heights**: Abingdon Heights is a 68-lot subdivision located along Destiny Lane, Northwoods Trail, and Fortunes Way, on the north side of I-81, roughly midway between the Town of Abingdon and the City of Bristol. Thirty-three lots have sold since 2005, including several developed as duplex units. This is one of the more modestly priced subdivisions in the region. Recent home sales have ranged from the low \$200,000s to the upper \$300,000s. A newly built, three-bedroom, two-bathroom modular home measuring 1,750 square feet is currently listed for \$359,750. A patio home built in 2006 is pending for \$225,000 after being on the market for fewer than 20 days. It has more than doubled in value since its last sale in 2014. A 0.57-acre lot is also listed for \$39,900. Abingdon Heights

is currently the most active subdivision in the region, with six homes recently built or under construction. All but one are single-level, three-bedroom modular homes from Clayton Homes.

- **Meadows of Emory**: Meadows of Emory is a single-family home subdivision located along Harvard Lane, north of Oxford Avenue, near Emory & Henry University. It is approved for 54 lots, 20 of which have been sold to date. Development has progressed slowly since the subdivision became active in 2001. There have been few home sales in recent years, with recent sale prices in the upper \$300,000s. No vacant lots are currently listed on the MLS. One new home is listed for sale: a five-bedroom, four-bathroom custom-built residence measuring 2,427 square feet, priced at \$569,900. The home was built in 2024. Despite the slow pace of development, four new stick-built single-family homes are currently under construction.
- **Deer Run Estates**: Deer Run Estates is an established subdivision located south of the Town of Abingdon, along Meadowbrook Road, Deer Run Drive, and Bonnycastle Drive. The community offers a mix of townhomes and single-family homes. All homes include attached two-car garages, and the single-level townhome designs are especially attractive to senior buyers. Most resale activity has occurred at modest price points. Townhome units typically sell in the upper \$100,000s to low \$200,000s. Several units are reportedly tenant-occupied, with rents ranging between \$1,600 and \$2,100 per month. Since construction began in 1997, a total of 125 homes have been built, including 28 in the 1990s, 72 in the 2000s, and 25 since 2010. The newest section includes only single-family homes. Recent home sales have generally ranged from the low \$200,000s to the upper \$300,000s, depending on home type and size. Some townhomes have sold for under \$200,000. Two vacant 0.35-acre lots are currently for sale, priced at \$35,000 and \$40,000.

To summarize, **Table 19** highlights several key findings regarding residential development activity in Washington County. The region contains a small number of active subdivisions with available lots for new home construction. Specifically, six subdivisions, all located within Washington County, offer a total of 502 approved lots, 231 of which have been sold. This leaves 271 lots available for future development. The City of Bristol does not contain any active subdivisions with ten or more available lots.

The primary development model across these subdivisions is based on individual lot sales rather than speculative home construction. As a result, buyers are typically responsible for custom homebuilding, which increases upfront costs and extends the time to occupancy. This dynamic limits the ability to deliver new homes at more modest price points.

None of the subdivisions currently offer speculative housing priced below \$275,000. The absence of affordable, move-in-ready housing represents a significant gap in the local market, particularly for first-time buyers and households with moderate incomes.

Among the six subdivisions, only Abingdon Heights and Deer Run Estates offer a mix of home types, including both single-family homes and duplex units. However, recent construction in these subdivisions has consisted exclusively of single-family homes, suggesting that the available variety is not being utilized in current development activity.

None of the subdivisions include community amenities such as clubhouses, walking trails, or swimming pools. This absence is likely related to the relatively small scale of each development, as no subdivision contains more than 170 approved lots.

Another important observation is that none of the subdivisions specifically market to older, active adults, despite this group representing a growing segment of the local population. The absence of targeted design features or marketing strategies may limit the appeal of these communities to retirees or households seeking age-friendly environments.

In addition to the six organized subdivisions, numerous vacant residential lots are scattered throughout the region. However, the development potential of many of these parcels is limited by their proximity to homes in visible states of disrepair, which diminishes market appeal and may negatively affect surrounding property values.

Finally, none of the current subdivisions appear to be planned as phased developments or include provisions for future expansion. Given the relatively slow pace of home construction and the limited number of available lots, the region may face future supply constraints unless new subdivisions are approved or existing developments are expanded.

Table 19: Subdivisions with Available Lots — Washington County, VA (July 2025) ¹*(Includes only subdivisions with ten or more lots)*

	<u>Map B Key</u>	<u>Year Started</u>	<u>Home Types</u>	<u>Lots Approved</u>	<u>Lots Sold</u>
Olde South Estates	1	2022	SFH	15	2
The Heritage at Abingdon	2	2015	SFH	75	45
Olde Homestead	3	2009	SFH	120	6
Abingdon Heights	4	2005	SFH/ Duplex	68	33
Meadows of Emory	5	2001	SFH	54	20
Deer Run Estates	6	1997	SFH/ Duplex	<u>170</u>	<u>125</u>
Total				502	231

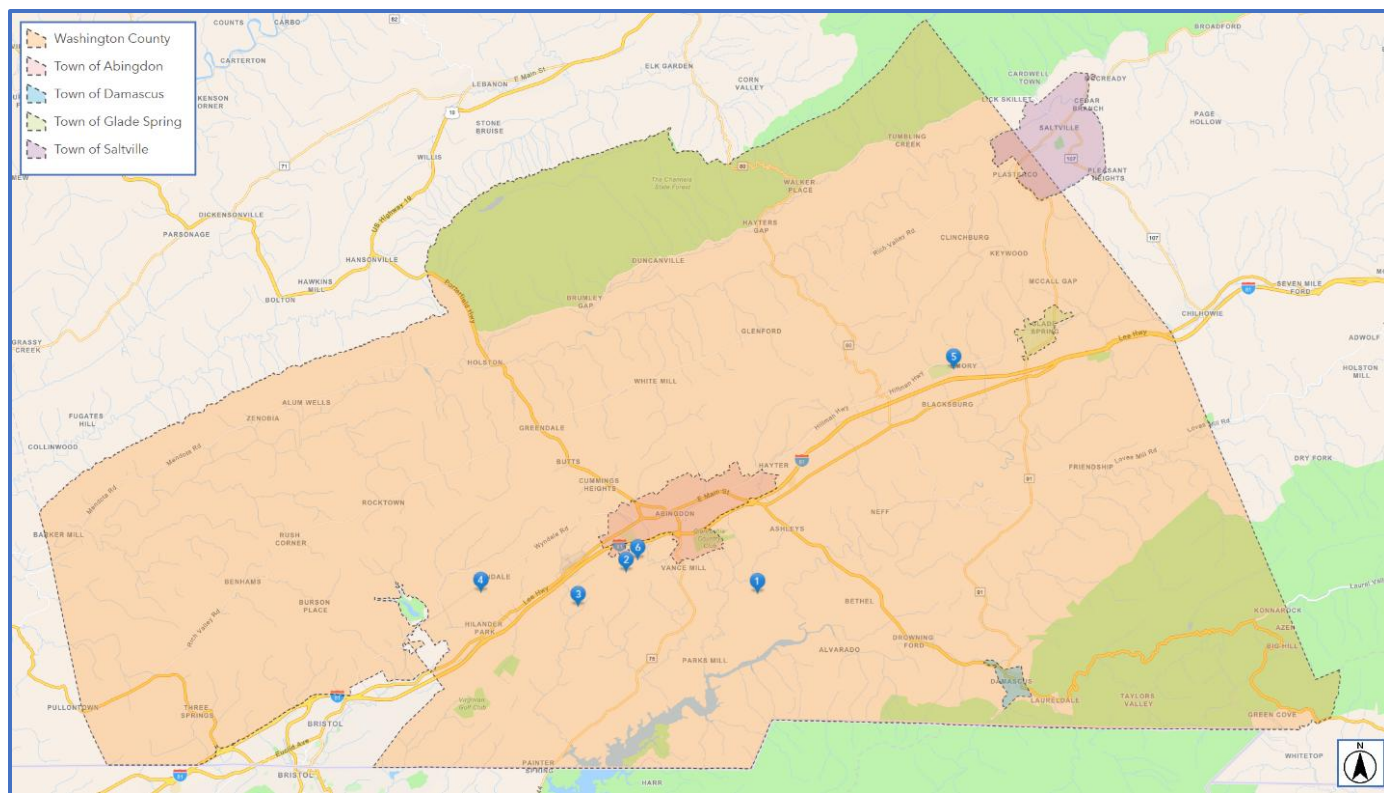
¹ Excludes The Virginian, with high-priced custom homes and lot sales.

Source: Washington County, VA Geographic Information System

Local realtors report demand for homes priced between \$250,000 and \$600,000 in the region. However, most prospective homebuyers can afford homes priced between \$180,000 and \$300,000, and demand is significantly lower for homes priced above \$325,000.

The subdivisions listed in **Table 19** do not adequately serve this segment of the market, as only a limited number of speculative homes have been built at prices accessible to most potential buyers. While homes in this price range are available elsewhere in the region, most are older properties that may require repairs and upgrades, which can deter buyers concerned about upfront costs.

Map B illustrates the locations of the six active subdivisions. Five are clustered near the eastern edge of Abingdon, all situated in unincorporated areas of Washington County south of I-81. The one exception is Meadows of Emory, which is located closer to the Emory & Henry University campus. Notably, there are no active subdivisions within the City of Bristol.



Map B - Locations of Active Subdivisions

The following photos show typical homes in the six subdivisions listed in **Table 19**. The Heritage at Abingdon, Olde South Estates, and Olde Homestead include relatively spacious single-family homes on large lots. Deer Run Estates and Abingdon Heights are the only subdivisions that offer a mix of home designs, including some that may appeal to senior households.

In these two subdivisions, most newer homes are single-family structures, while older homes consist of single-level duplex units with patio-style layouts. Abingdon Heights is also the only subdivision that incorporates modular home construction. However, recent sales indicate that these modular homes are selling for over \$300,000.



Olde South Estates



(Existing Home)



(Under Construction)

The Heritage at Abingdon



Olde Homestead



(Single-Family Home)



(Patio Home)

Abingdon Heights



(Existing)



(Under Construction)

Meadows of Emory



(Patio Homes)



(Single-Family Home)

Deer Run Estates

IV.1.d: Lot Sales and Speculative Home Sales

The data in **Table 19** suggest that most new home construction activity in the region involves the sale of undeveloped residential lots rather than the construction of speculative homes. This pattern is common in rural localities and reflects the perceived risk and uncertainty associated with speculative building in areas where demand is limited and financing may be more challenging to obtain. As a result, developers in the region are more likely to purchase land and subdivide it into individual lots for sale.

However, this development model has contributed to a shortage of housing options that are affordable to first-time buyers and households with modest incomes. Purchasing a lot and financing new construction can be prohibitively expensive and complex. In addition to higher upfront costs, buyers must manage design decisions, permitting processes, and construction timelines. These steps create significant barriers, especially for households with limited financial resources.

By contrast, speculative homes offer several advantages for entry-level buyers. These homes are typically available for immediate occupancy and eliminate the need for buyers to manage the construction process. They are also generally built by experienced contractors, which provides greater certainty about construction quality and completion timelines.

In summary, lot sales remain the dominant form of subdivision activity in Washington County. However, this model primarily serves higher-income buyers and does not adequately address the needs of lower- and moderate-income households. Speculative homes would offer a more accessible path to homeownership for many buyers, but few such opportunities currently exist in the region.

IV.1.e: Townhome Market

The region has seen minimal construction of for-sale townhomes in recent years, and most existing options consist of older properties. None of the subdivisions listed in **Table 19** currently include two-level townhome designs available for purchase. Townhomes can provide a more

affordable ownership option for young couples and families with modest incomes. Encouraging their development would support efforts to expand housing choice and affordability.

At present, the only for-sale townhome development in the pipeline is The Villages on Green Spring, a small upscale project located on Cummins Street in Abingdon. Units in this community are expected to be priced in the upper \$600,000s. These prices are well beyond the reach of most prospective homebuyers in the region.

By contrast, townhomes currently being developed in the Roanoke Region may offer a more feasible model for Washington County. These homes are built by R. Fralin Homes, a builder focused on moderately priced housing who has expressed interest in investing in the area. In Roanoke, new townhomes typically start in the upper \$200,000s or low-\$300,000s. They are two-level units with brick or vinyl exteriors and include single-car garages. Similar units could likely be developed at lower prices in Washington County, where land costs are lower and infill development sites are more readily available.

These examples highlight a promising strategy for expanding homeownership opportunities for working households. Moderately priced, newly built townhomes could help meet demand for quality starter homes and improve access to homeownership for middle-income buyers.



Village Green (Roanoke County)



Orchards (Roanoke County)

Neighboring areas in Northeast Tennessee, particularly Sullivan County and Washington County, offer relevant examples of townhome development that is likely to perform well in the Washington County housing market.

D.R. Horton is currently marketing new townhomes in three subdivisions in the region: The Arbor in Kingsport, Saylor's Place in Jonesborough, and Hudson Terrace in Bristol. These developments feature three- and four-bedroom, two-story townhomes with single-car garages. Unit sizes begin at approximately 1,381 square feet, with base prices starting around \$218,000. The homes are designed for families and offer practical, functional layouts.

Photos of typical units from these communities are included below. This product type, if appropriately priced and located, would likely be well received in the Washington County market.



The Arbors - Rendering (Kingsport, TN)



Saylor's Place (Jonesborough, TN)



Hudson Terrace (Bristol, TN)

IV.1.f: Patio Home Market

Data presented in **Table 10** show that Washington County's senior population is expanding. A growing number of older residents have home equity and retirement savings, and many express interest in remaining in the area if suitable housing options are available. However, most existing homes in the County are not designed for aging in place. These homes are often too large, lack first-floor bedrooms and bathrooms, or require substantial exterior maintenance.

Local employers and realtors confirm this trend, reporting an increasing number of retirees with both the financial resources and the desire to remain in the region, provided that appropriate housing is available. Many current listings involve seniors seeking to downsize, yet few local options meet their needs. As a result, some older homeowners are choosing to relocate outside of Washington County in search of more suitable alternatives. This unmet demand suggests that more seniors would list their homes and remain in the region if a wider range of downsizing options were readily available.

There is increasing demand across Virginia and the United States for patio homes, defined as single-story, attached residences with garages. These homes typically range from 1,250 to 1,800 square feet, require flat development sites, and have front widths between 30 and 40 feet. Their ground-level layout and low-maintenance design make them especially appealing to older adults.

Smaller versions of patio homes could also be developed as senior-oriented rental units, providing a cost-effective way to expand affordable housing options for older residents in Washington County. This housing type is strongly recommended. It can be incorporated into age-restricted communities or offered for general occupancy. The single-story design also appeals to empty-nesters and individuals with accessibility needs, allowing these units to serve both senior and non-senior populations.

With the exception of one small proposal to be discussed below (Lion's Edge Townhomes), no patio homes are currently being built or actively marketed along the I-81 corridor west of the Roanoke Valley. A small number have been constructed within the

subdivisions listed in **Table 19**. Images of recently built patio homes in Roanoke County are provided below and may serve as prototypes for similar development in Washington County.



Village Green Patio Homes (Roanoke County)

Few subdivisions in the region offer patio home designs. One of the only newer communities featuring this style is Millbrook Estates, a 40-unit development located on Millbrook Drive in Abingdon. Developed in the early 2000s, the community consists primarily of two- and three-bedroom homes ranging from 1,500 to 1,600 square feet.

Recent sales have been in the upper \$300,000s. Marketed toward seniors, Millbrook Estates includes single-level brick homes with two-car garages. The homeowners' association covers landscaping and snow removal. Home values have increased by approximately \$100,000 over the past decade. Three units were built and sold in 2022, and one additional unit was completed in 2023.

Adjacent to Millbrook Estates is Countryside Townhomes, a 30-unit community located on Countryside Drive. Built in the 1990s, the community includes seven quadplexes and one duplex, all with brick exteriors and single-car garages. The homes are primarily two-bedroom units with a 1.5-story layout.

The main living areas and primary bedroom are located on the first floor. The second level contains an additional bedroom, a full bathroom, and attic access. This upper level occupies only

part of the home's footprint, consistent with a traditional 1.5-story design. One unit is currently listed for \$247,000 and is under contract.

This housing type would likely perform well in the Washington County market if priced appropriately. Photos of each community are shown below.



Millbrook Estates (Abingdon)



Countryside Townhomes (Abingdon)

IV.1.g: Manufactured, Modular, and Mobile Homes

Manufactured, modular, and mobile homes make up a significant share of Washington County's housing stock and continue to serve as a critical source of affordable housing, particularly for lower- and moderate-income households in rural areas.

Manufactured homes are factory-built units constructed after June 15, 1976, under a national building code administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These homes are typically delivered in one or more sections on a permanent steel chassis and may be installed on either temporary or permanent foundations.

By contrast, mobile homes refer to units built prior to the implementation of the HUD Code in 1976. Although many of these older units remain in use, housing data often use the term "mobile home" more broadly to refer to both pre- and post-1976 units.

Modular homes are also constructed off-site in sections, but they are built to local or state building codes, the same standards that apply to site-built homes. Once placed on a permanent foundation, modular homes are generally indistinguishable from conventional single-family housing and are classified as such by the U.S. Census Bureau.

According to the 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, approximately 11.2 percent of Washington County's housing units are categorized as "mobile homes." This figure includes both mobile and manufactured homes but excludes modular homes, which are classified as traditional single-family housing.

This share is significantly higher than the national average of 5.7 percent and Virginia's statewide rate of 4.4 percent. In contrast, only 1.2 percent of housing units in the City of Bristol are classified as mobile homes. These figures reflect the County's rural character and the relative affordability of manufactured housing.

Most manufactured homes in Washington County are located in unincorporated areas, where lower land costs and fewer zoning restrictions support their placement on private parcels. While some are located within small manufactured housing communities, many are stand-alone units situated on family-owned land. The majority are owner-occupied, though a portion is likely rented informally.

According to U.S. Census Bureau data, nearly eight percent of homeowners in Washington County live in what HUD defines as mobile homes, compared to fewer than four percent of renters. Of the 2,470 occupied mobile homes in the County, over 70 percent are owner-occupied. This highlights the role of manufactured housing in promoting homeownership and, to a lesser extent, providing affordable rental options. Census estimates also underscore the affordability of this stock, with the median value of mobile homes in Washington County reported at just \$51,600. This suggests that manufactured housing remains one of the few affordable paths to homeownership in the region.

Much of the County’s manufactured and mobile home inventory is aging, raising concerns about livability, safety, and long-term durability. Deferred maintenance and outdated designs may limit functionality, particularly in older units.

Reinvestment in this housing stock, or replacement with modern manufactured or modular homes, could provide a cost-effective strategy for expanding affordable housing options. National HUD data indicate that the median age of owner-occupied manufactured homes exceeds 25 years, suggesting that a substantial portion of this inventory may be approaching functional obsolescence.

There has been growing local interest in modular construction due to its eligibility for traditional mortgage financing, compliance with current building codes, and relatively moderate pricing. While modular homes still represent a small share of the market, their presence appears to be growing.

Given Washington County’s affordability challenges and aging housing stock, manufactured and modular housing represent viable solutions when thoughtfully planned and appropriately sited. Targeted investment in modern manufactured home models, combined with efforts to integrate modular construction into planned subdivisions and infill development, could help diversify the County’s housing stock and support long-term affordability goals.

IV.1.h: Trends in Residential Building Permits

Table 20 summarizes trends in residential building permits issued in Washington County from 2022 through the first half of 2025. The data are categorized by housing type: single-family homes, modular homes, manufactured homes, and duplex or townhome units. Although overall development activity has remained moderate, the figures illustrate important patterns in residential construction. These patterns are shaped more by dispersed, owner-driven building than by coordinated, large-scale subdivision activity.

Single-family homes consistently accounted for the largest share of new residential permits, ranging from 74 to 92 units per year between 2022 and 2024. As of June 2025, 60 single-

family permits had already been issued, suggesting that this category remains strong. Manufactured homes also represent a substantial portion of total permits. Permit activity in this category rose from 56 units in 2022 to a peak of 82 units in 2023, before declining to 60 units in 2024 and 30 units in the first half of 2025.

Modular homes made up a smaller but growing share of permit activity, with annual totals ranging from six to 16 units. Duplex and townhome permits were limited, fluctuating from six units in 2022 to 18 in 2023. Permit activity then declined to 14 units in 2024 and only four units by mid-2025.

Although both modular and manufactured homes are factory-built, they differ significantly in terms of regulation, placement, and financing. Manufactured homes are built to federal HUD Code standards and may be installed on either permanent or temporary foundations. Modular homes, by contrast, are constructed off-site to local or state building codes and must be placed on permanent foundations. These differences affect how the homes are classified in permit records and have important implications for financing options and long-term valuation.

Most permits issued during this period were for homes located outside of formal subdivisions. The majority were for custom-built homes on rural or previously undeveloped parcels, reflecting a landowner-driven approach to residential development. A smaller share consisted of infill construction within existing communities. Very few permits were issued within the County's incorporated towns, reinforcing a continued pattern of low-density, scattered development rather than compact urban or suburban growth.

Table 20: Trends in Residential Building Permits — Washington County, VA

	<u>Single-Family Homes</u> ¹	<u>Modular Homes</u>	<u>Manufactured homes</u>	<u>Duplex/ Townhomes</u>	<u>Total</u>
2022 ²	76 ³	6	56	6 ⁴	144
2023	74 ⁵	13	82	18 ⁶	187
2024	92 ⁷	16	60	14 ⁸	182
2025 YTD ⁹	60 ¹⁰	7	30	4 ¹¹	101

¹ Includes tiny homes, cabins, and barndominiums

² Excludes three-story, 24-unit student apartment building at 30198 Hillman Highway (Emory & Henry University Apartments)

³ Two tiny homes and three log homes

⁴ Patio home units are Millbrook Estates

⁵ Two cabins

⁶ Two patio homes at Millbrook Estates and six renter-occupied townhomes at 12150 Arbor Street in Meadowview

⁷ One tiny home, ten cabins, and two barndominiums

⁸ Two patio home units at 18493-18495 Keenland Lane (The Downs). 12 units at Villages on Green Spring.

⁹ January – June 2025. Excludes building permits issued for The Vue at Abingdon in 2025 (72-unit apartment community)

¹⁰ One cabin and four tiny homes

¹¹ Two patio home units at 18501-18505 Keenland Lane (The Downs). Two duplex units at 349-351 Whites Mill Road (Villas at White's Mill).

Source: Washington County, VA; Town of Abingdon, VA

IV.1.i: Current For-Sale Housing Inventory (Active and Pending Listings)

Table 21 provides an overview of active and pending home listings in Washington County as of July 2025. The data are segmented by the year homes were built, offering insight into a housing market that is dominated by older inventory and characterized by limited recent construction.

Of the 161 active listings, only 15 homes were built since 2020. These account for fewer than 10 percent of all listings. An additional seven homes from the 2010s are available, further emphasizing the limited presence of newer housing. In contrast, homes constructed between 1990 and 2009 make up 53 active listings, representing roughly one-third of the total. Homes built in 1979 or earlier comprise nearly half of the active inventory. This includes 18 homes constructed before 1940, as well as 41 homes built between the 1940s and 1960s. These figures underscore the aging nature of the County's housing stock.

Listing prices vary significantly based on the era of construction. Homes built between 2010 and 2019 have the highest average listing price, at \$743,411. Properties from the 1990s and 2000s follow, with average prices in the mid-\$540,000s. By contrast, homes built during or before

the 1960s are generally more affordable, with average prices under \$350,000. Many homes from this period are listed for less than \$300,000. Across all active listings, the countywide average listing price is approximately \$443,083. Prices range widely, from \$27,000 to \$2.5 million.

Pending and contingent listings also reflect this trend toward newer homes commanding stronger buyer interest. Of the 65 pending or contingent listings, 19 are for homes built since 2000, including 13 from the 2000 to 2009 period. Older homes, particularly those built before 1980, are less likely to be under contract. This pattern may reflect concerns about aging infrastructure, outdated layouts, or less desirable locations.

A closer review of the 19 recently constructed homes (built since 2020), which includes 15 active and four pending or contingent listings, shows price points ranging from just under \$250,000 to nearly \$950,000. Only two of these homes are priced below \$250,000, and both utilized modular construction. Two additional homes are listed just under \$300,000. The remaining homes are priced above this threshold, with ten of the 14 active listings priced over \$500,000. Two newly constructed townhomes are also on the market, each priced just under \$295,000.

Table 21: Characteristics of Active Home Listings — Washington County, VA (July 2025)				
Year Built	Active Listings	Pending/ Contingent	Price Range	Average Listing Price
2020+ ¹	15	4	\$247,900-\$948,850	\$533,076
2010-2019	7	2	\$239,000-\$2,299,000	\$743,411
2000-2009 ²	28	13	\$149,900-\$1,589,000	\$544,676
1990-1999 ³	25	9	\$169,900-\$2,500,000	\$546,210
1980-1989 ⁴	12	5	\$189,500-\$2,499,900	\$508,618
1970-1979 ⁵	24	10	\$89,500-\$1,245,000	\$346,931
1960-1969	14	9	\$27,000-\$598,500	\$276,548
1950-1959	9	4	\$127,500-\$595,000	\$295,315
1940-1949	9	2	\$75,000-\$635,000	\$295,646
Pre-1940	18	7	\$27,500-\$970,000	\$340,836
Total/ Average	161	65	\$27,000-\$2,500,000	\$443,083
¹ Includes two townhomes.				
² Includes one duplex and one patio home.				
³ Includes four townhomes.				
⁴ Includes one multi-family condo unit.				
⁵ Includes one townhome unit.				
Source: National Association of REALTORS				

The 65 pending and contingent listings offer additional insight into buyer behavior. Homes built since 2020 make up only a small share of these listings, with just six currently under contract. This reflects limited absorption of higher-priced new construction, which may be unaffordable to many buyers. Prices for these newer homes range from approximately \$310,000 to \$899,000, placing them out of reach for many working households.

In contrast, the majority of pending and contingent activity is concentrated among homes built between the mid-1990s and early 2000s. These homes are typically priced between \$200,000 and \$500,000, indicating strong demand for moderately priced, move-in-ready options.

There is also sustained interest in older housing stock. Approximately one-quarter of the homes currently under contract were built before 1970. These homes vary widely in price, ranging from below \$200,000 to more than \$500,000. Price differences largely reflect factors such as location, lot size, and condition. The distribution of pending activity across construction eras illustrates the shortage of affordable newer homes and suggests that many buyers are willing to consider older inventory, even when those homes may require repairs or updates.

The limited availability of modern, move-in-ready homes presents a barrier to attracting new residents and retaining younger households. Even among listings priced above \$500,000, most are older homes rather than newly built units. This pattern reinforces the scarcity of contemporary housing options, even at the upper end of the market.

Overall, Washington County's for-sale housing inventory remains heavily skewed toward older homes, particularly those built before 1980. The lack of newly constructed homes, limited speculative building, and minimal activity in active subdivisions hinder the County's ability to meet current housing demand.

Pending sales data point to sustained interest in homes priced under \$300,000. Approximately half of all pending transactions fall within this range, highlighting the need for additional affordable, move-in-ready housing that aligns with the budget constraints of local buyers.

IV.1.j: For-Sale Housing Pipeline

Table 22 presents an overview of the for-sale residential subdivision pipeline in Washington County and the City of Bristol. The data are divided into two categories: developments currently under construction and those that have received approval but are not yet underway. Across all projects, a total of 454 residential units are included, consisting of 328 single-family homes, 107 townhomes, and 19 patio homes.

Of the three subdivisions currently under construction, Sunny Valley accounts for the largest share, with 328 single-family homes. Villages on Green Spring and Island View Estates are contributing solely to the townhome segment, with 52 and 22 units, respectively. No patio home units are presently under construction.

All of the planned development activity consists of townhome and patio home units. No single-family homes are approved at this stage. Townes at Berry Creek and Lion's Edge Townhomes will add a combined total of 33 townhome units, while Villas at White's Mill will introduce 19 patio home units. All three projects have received development approval, but construction has not yet commenced.

Table 22: Characteristics of Residential Subdivision Pipeline — Bristol/ Washington County, VA (July 2025)

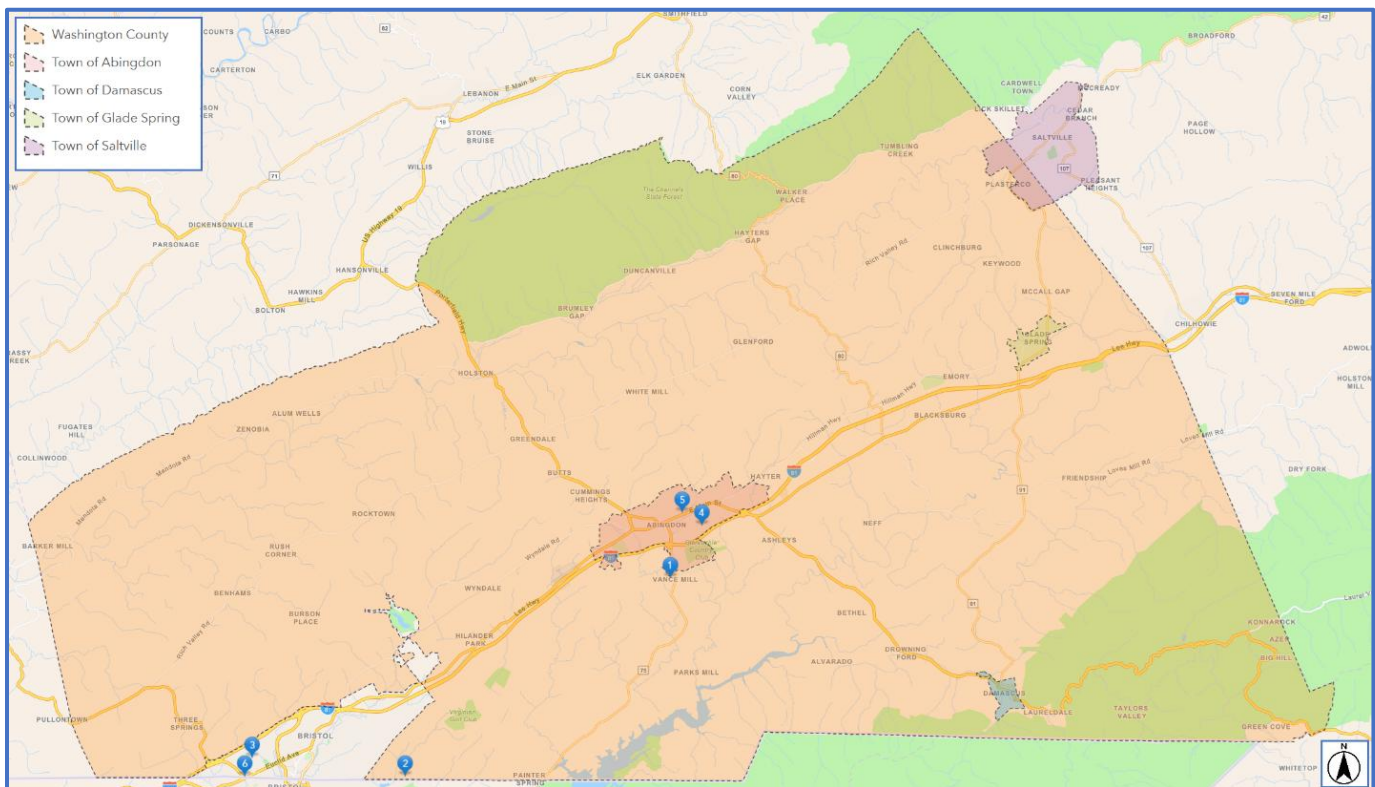
	<u>Map C Key</u>	<u>Single-Family Units</u>	<u>Townhome Units</u>	<u>Patio Home Units</u>	<u>Status</u>
<u>In Development</u>					
Villages on Green Spring	1	0	52	0	Marketing Begun
Sunny Valley	2	328	0	0	Sitework Ongoing
Island View Estates	3	<u>0</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>0</u>	Sitework Ongoing
(Subtotal)		(328)	(74)	(0)	
<u>Planned</u>					
Townes at Berry Creek	4	0	11	0	Approved
Villas at White's Mill	5	0	0	19	Approved
Lion's Edge Townhomes	6	<u>0</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>0</u>	Approved
(Subtotal)		(0)	(33)	(19)	
Total		328	107	19	

Source: S. Patz & Associates, Inc.

Map C displays the locations of residential subdivisions that are either under construction or in the planning stages. Two of these subdivisions, Island View Estates and Lion's Edge Townhomes, are located within the City of Bristol. In contrast, the large Sunny Valley subdivision

is situated just east of Bristol in an unincorporated area of Washington County near the Tennessee state line.

The remaining three subdivisions are planned within the Town of Abingdon. Townes at Berry Creek and Villas at White's Mill are located north of I-81, while Villages on Green Spring is planned for a site south of the interstate.



Map C - Locations of Pipeline Residential Subdivisions

The following paragraphs provide a brief overview of each of the residential developments currently under construction or planned in Washington County:

- **Villages on Green Spring:** Construction is underway on the initial phase of this 52-unit townhome development at 1036 Cummings Street in the Town of Abingdon. The upscale units are two stories, include two-car garages, and range from 2,650 to 3,100 square feet. Each home features three bedrooms, 3.5 bathrooms, and a ground-level primary bedroom. This planned, amenitized community will include a fitness center measuring 1,800 square feet, a 30-by-50-foot outdoor swimming pool with a large sundeck, and a shared outdoor space with a fire pit and covered grill area. The layout emphasizes walkability and includes tree-lined streets, five-foot sidewalks, and a black iron perimeter fence for

privacy and security. Homes are priced at the upper end of the market, starting in the upper \$600,000s, with a monthly HOA fee of \$200.

- **Townes at Berry Creek:** Cornerstone Homes, a Richmond-based developer, has proposed this 11-unit townhome project on the north side of Nicholas Street, east of Burkes Lane in the Town of Abingdon. The two-story homes will each offer 1,955 square feet, with three bedrooms, a loft, 2.5 bathrooms, and a two-car garage. All bedrooms will be located on the second floor. Pricing is expected to begin in the low \$300,000s. Town staff have approved the site plan and issued permits for site preparation. The developer is expected to submit building plans and complete the remaining applications required to begin construction.
- **Villas at White's Mill:** This 19-unit patio home community is also proposed by Cornerstone Homes and will be located at 351 White's Mill in the Town of Abingdon. The single-level homes will offer two bedrooms, two bathrooms, and range in size from 1,530 to 1,973 square feet. All homes will include two-car garages. Smaller units will be priced starting at \$409,900, with larger models starting at \$559,900. The development will be age-restricted to residents aged 55 and older. Design features will support aging in place and include zero-threshold entryways, raised-height vanities, and low- or no-threshold showers. Site plans have been approved, and grading and infrastructure permits have been issued.
- **Sunny Valley:** Sunny Valley is a large-scale residential subdivision planned by Ardent Development, based in Antioch, Tennessee. The project will include 328 homes on nearly 88 acres off King Mill Pike in western Washington County, just outside the City of Bristol near the Tennessee state line. It will be the first high-density R3 residential development in the County. The site is currently used for cropland and pasture and includes two houses and four mobile homes. The two houses will remain, and the mobile homes will be removed. Development will occur in four phases, each with approximately 75 to 80 homes. Stormwater and VDOT entrance permits are currently being finalized. Buildout of homes and infrastructure is expected to take about four years. The subdivision will include a mix of one- and two-level homes ranging from 1,200 to 3,400 square feet and priced between \$250,000 and \$375,000. An additional 60 homes will be larger and priced between \$400,000 and \$450,000.

The following paragraphs provide a brief overview of each of the pipeline residential proposals in the City of Bristol, which are expected to compete with residential developments in Washington County:

- **Island View Estates:** This proposed 48-unit townhome development at 615 Wagner Road in the City of Bristol is led by local builder Cook Contracting, LLC. The project will be built in four phases, with each phase delivering 12 units over a two-year period. Initial phases are targeted toward households earning between 80% and 120% of AMI, with most homes priced in the low \$300,000s. Later phases will include some units for households earning above 120 percent of AMI, including those in the 150 percent AMI bracket. All

homes will have a uniform exterior appearance, with no visible differences between income tiers.

- **Lion's Edge Townhomes:** Proposed by BDM Construction of Kingsport, Tennessee, this 22-unit townhome development is located at the intersection of Randolph Street and Monroe Street in the City of Bristol. The project will include ten two-bedroom homes at 1,750 square feet (with an optional third bedroom) and twelve three-bedroom homes at 1,900 square feet (with an optional fourth bedroom). Each home will include a two-car garage. Site plans have been approved, although construction has not yet begun. Site work is currently ongoing.

Photos of the existing conditions at each of these pipeline proposals are presented next. The photos show that construction is well underway at Villages on Green Spring, and site work has begun at Villas at White's Mill and Lion's Edge Townhomes.



Villages on Green Spring



Townes at Berry Creek



Villas at White's Mill



Sunny Valley



Island View Estates



Lion's Edge Townhomes

IV.1.k: For-Sale Housing Summary

Washington County's for-sale housing market is shaped by slow absorption, aging inventory, and limited speculative construction. Most new home development over the past two decades has occurred through individual lot purchases followed by custom or semi-custom construction, rather than developer-built, move-in-ready homes. This development model limits the speed of housing delivery and reduces affordability, particularly for first-time buyers.

The six active subdivisions in Washington County, located primarily near the Town of Abingdon, account for 502 approved lots, with 271 still unsold. Nearly all homes built in these subdivisions were either custom-built or constructed before the Great Recession, with minimal speculative construction in recent years. As a result, absorption has been slow. This is not necessarily due to weak demand, but rather reflects the structure of development activity in the region.

The lack of new, move-in-ready homes presents a challenge for both prospective buyers and local employers. Builders report difficulty delivering new homes priced under \$275,000, even though this price range sees the strongest demand. Buyers seeking homes between \$180,000 and \$275,000 face limited options. Most homes available in this range are older and often require significant repairs or updates, which can be prohibitive for households with modest incomes.

Current listings reflect the aging nature of the local housing stock. Nearly half of all active listings were built before 1980, and just 15 of the 161 active listings were built since 2020. Of these newer homes, only four are priced below \$300,000. Among the 65 pending or contingent listings, about half are priced under \$300,000, suggesting strong buyer interest at this level. However, most pending sales involve older homes, highlighting the shortage of affordable, newly constructed options.

Speculative construction remains limited, and new homes priced below \$300,000 are virtually unavailable. This restricts opportunities for buyers who require turnkey housing. Most newly built homes are priced significantly higher, with many listed between \$500,000 and \$950,000. These homes are out of reach for many working households, creating a clear mismatch between supply and demand.

Townhome construction has also been minimal. No existing subdivisions currently offer townhomes for sale, and most new developments with townhomes are targeting higher-income buyers. Projects such as Villages on Green Spring and Island View Estates are priced above \$300,000. However, successful examples from Roanoke and Northeast Tennessee indicate that moderately priced townhomes in the mid-\$200,000s could perform well in Washington County and meet the needs of younger households and first-time buyers.

Patio homes are similarly underrepresented, despite growing demand from seniors and downsizing households. While developments like Millbrook Estates and Countryside Townhomes offer some local examples, new construction remains limited. The planned Villas at White's Mill will be the first new age-restricted patio home community in the County, representing an important step toward meeting the housing needs of older residents.

In summary, Washington County's for-sale housing market faces persistent supply constraints that limit affordability and choice. To meet current and future demand, the County will need to support more speculative construction, promote a broader mix of housing types, and encourage the development of moderately priced homes that align with the budgets of local working households.

IV.2: Characteristics of the Rental Market

The following section analyzes both the market-rate and affordable rental housing segments within the greater Washington County housing market. As described earlier, this market includes properties in both Washington County and the City of Bristol, reflecting the fact that prospective tenants typically search for housing in both jurisdictions. Accordingly, the analysis below includes rental properties in the City of Bristol.

The market-rate rental segment consists primarily of smaller properties that are owned and operated by local or regional investors, along with a limited number of smaller-scale property management firms. There are few professionally managed apartment communities with on-site staff, and most that do exist are older developments offering only minimal or basic amenities. Very few professionally managed communities in the region have been developed by investors from outside the immediate area.

The affordable rental segment includes apartment properties with income-based restrictions. Most of these properties are deeply subsidized, with tenants typically paying 30 percent of their income toward rent. They are primarily managed by either the Abingdon Redevelopment and Housing Authority or Beyond Housing (previously the Bristol Redevelopment and Housing Authority, and the second-oldest redevelopment and housing authority in Virginia). These are the only two housing authorities operating in the region.

In addition to deeply subsidized housing, the region includes nine affordable rental communities that serve households earning between 40% and 60% of AMI.

There is only one affordable, age-restricted rental community in the region that does not offer deep rent subsidies. No market-rate properties in the region impose age restrictions.

IV.2.a: Market-Rate Rental Market

Table 23 presents data on existing market-rate rental properties in the Bristol region. While it may not capture every multifamily building, it reflects the vast majority of market-rate apartment communities, excluding only a small number of properties with fewer than five rental

units. In total, the table includes 1,202 units across 54 distinct apartment communities, with construction dates ranging from 1916 to 2024.

A defining feature of the market is its exceptionally low vacancy rate, measured at just 0.4 percent. Only five units were vacant across all surveyed properties. This tight market condition spans a wide range of properties, from older, lower-rent units to newer, higher-rent communities. In some cases, particularly for smaller buildings, occupancy was estimated due to the absence of public listings. However, based on consistent findings from previous studies, these properties are assumed to be fully occupied. The near-total occupancy across both newer and older properties indicates a highly constrained rental market in which demand consistently exceeds supply.

The data also reflect the aging nature of the region's rental housing stock. More than 65 percent of existing rental units were built before 2000, and nearly 90 percent were constructed before 2010. Only 94 units have been added over the past decade, accounting for fewer than eight percent of the total inventory. Notably, more than 60 percent of these newer units are small studio apartments at Icon Studio Apartments, a recent conversion of the former Red Carpet Inn.

The limited pace of recent construction highlights the challenge of addressing current housing demand with an aging and mostly outdated rental supply. This lack of new development restricts access to modern housing options and contributes to upward pressure on rents, especially in a market already defined by very low vacancy rates.

Most apartment communities in the region are small and lack on-site management or amenities. Nearly all contain fewer than 50 units, with only four exceptions: Willow Run Apartments (192 units), Downtown Plaza Apartments (76 units), Lee Garden Apartments (52 units), and Icon Studio Apartments (58 units). Willow Run is the only development that reflects a conventional multifamily community in terms of scale and design, which contributes to the higher rents it commands. More than 50 percent of all properties in the region contain fewer than 20 units, limiting economies of scale and reducing the feasibility of on-site services.

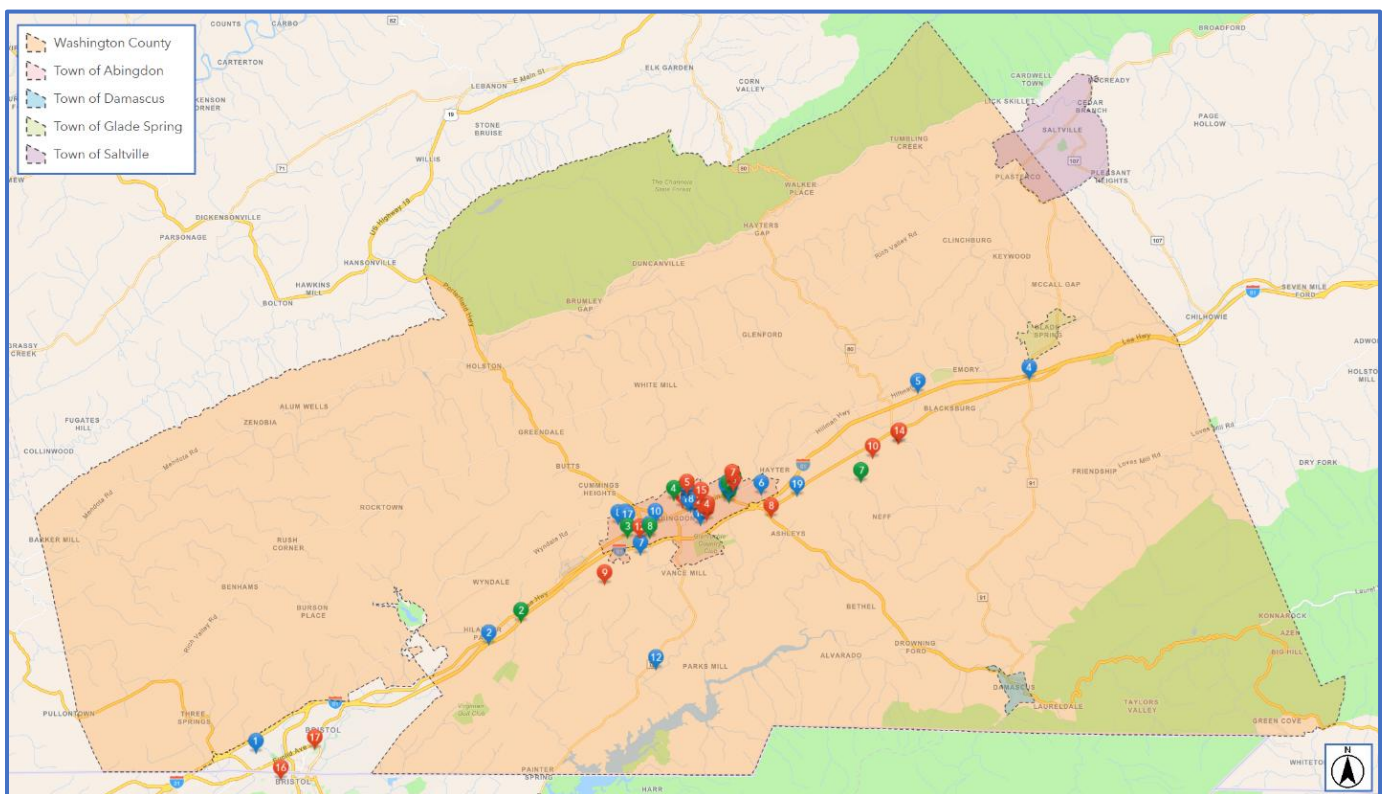
Overall, the data show structural limitations in the local rental market. Minimal new construction, combined with an aging and fragmented inventory, leaves renters with few choices. This scarcity may lead households to accept lower-quality housing or seek rental opportunities in neighboring areas, including communities across the Tennessee state line. Even renters with qualifying incomes may find it difficult to locate suitable units. The data suggest an underserved rental market in Washington County and underscore the need for both reinvestment in existing housing stock and the development of new, modern rental communities to meet growing demand.

Table 23: Characteristics of Market-Rate Apartment Properties — Bristol/ Washington County, VA (July 2025)

	<u>Map D Key</u>	<u>Year Built</u>	<u>Total Units</u>	<u>Vacant Units</u>
2000-2025				
Bristol View Townhomes	1	2024	29	0
Icon Studio Apartments	2	2024	58	0
Wolf Creek Villas	3	2019	7	0
Glade Terrace I & II	4	2012/13	32	0
Kelker Court	5	2008	18	0
Willow Run Apartments	6	2009/23	192	2
Hallock Drive Townhomes	7	2003	38	0
Wyndale Court Condominiums	8	2003	16	0
Village Green	9	2000	<u>26</u>	<u>0</u>
(Subtotal)			(416)	(2)
1990s				
Academy Court Apartments	10	1998	23	0
Colonial East Apartments	11	1997	32	0
Sweetland Apartments	12	1997	12	0
Whites Mill Road Apartments	13	1996	16	1
Nicholas Apartments	14	1996-98	20	0
Aston Ridge	15	1994	24	0
Gray Palace	16	1992	15	0
Meadowgreen Apartments	17	1992	15	0
Colonial Road Apartments	18	1990	7	0
Promise Landing Apartments	19	1990	<u>86</u>	<u>0</u>
(Subtotal)			(250)	(1)
1980s				
Eastside Apartments	1	1989	8	0
Cedar Ridge Apartments	2	1989/15	39	0
Manchester 242	3	1987-97	31	0
Pinehedge Condominiums	4	1985/09	30	0
Edgemont Apartments	5	1984	24	0
Morningside Village	6	1984	16	0
Greenway Apartments	7	1981	9	0
Stonemill Road Apartments	8	1981	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>
(Subtotal)			(167)	(0)
Pre-1980s				
Brookside Apartments	1	1979	14	0
Village Square Apartments	2	1979	10	0
Aspen Ridge	3	1979-84	18	0
Wolf Hill Apartments	4	1979-81	4	0
Millway Apartments	5	1979	33	0
Edgemont Townhouses	6	1978	7	0
Wilson Apartments	7	1978-80	6	0
Mountain Empire Apartments	8	1978-94	37	0
The Village at Riley Pointe	9	1977	26	0
Rolling Hills	10	1976	8	0
Stonewall Apartments	11	1974	14	0
Clinchview Terrace	12	1974	9	0
Heath Townhomes	13	1971	8	0
Cedar Creek	14	1970	16	0
Gray Drive Apartments	15	1969	14	0
Downtown Plaza Apartments	16	1968	76	2
Lee Garden Apartments	17	1950	52	0
Parthenon Apartments	18	1916	<u>17</u>	<u>0</u>
(Subtotal)			(369)	(2)
Total			1,202	5
Vacancy Rate				0.4%
Source: S. Patz & Associates, Inc.				

In addition to the apartment communities listed above, the Historic Downtown District of Bristol includes several dozen loft-style residential units. This area spans both the Tennessee and Virginia sides of the area. There are fewer than 70 total residential units, with some owner-occupied and others used as long-term rentals. Approximately one-quarter are believed to operate as short-term rentals through platforms such as Airbnb. These lofts typically include one- or two-bedroom floor plans and are located above or adjacent to ground-floor commercial space.

Map D illustrates the distribution of the 46 market-rate apartment properties surveyed in the region. Nearly all are located along the I-81 corridor. Of these, three are located within the City of Bristol, while the majority are situated in or near the Town of Abingdon.



Map D - Locations of Market-Rate Apartment Properties

Photographs of most of the apartment buildings referenced above are provided. The design of each property generally reflects the era in which it was constructed. Most buildings appear well maintained and do not exhibit visible signs of disrepair or blight. The photos depict a mix of architectural styles, with the majority following traditional garden apartment or

townhome configurations. None of the properties incorporate modern design elements, and few offer on-site amenities.

The first photo set features the nine rental properties built since 2000. These tend to represent the most upscale and highest-rent properties in the region. However, even these developments are modest in comparison to newly built apartment communities elsewhere in Virginia. Bristol View Townhomes, Wolf Creek Villas, Willow Run Apartments, Hallock Drive Townhomes, Wyndale Court Condominiums, and Village Green feature townhome-style designs and are primarily marketed to families with children. Glade Terrace and Keller Court offer more modest, garden-style layouts. Icon Studio Apartments is a motel conversion consisting of studio units, primarily occupied by single-person households. None of the properties display contemporary architectural styles or interior finishes.



Bristol View Townhomes



Icon Studio Apartments



Wolf Creek Villas



Glade Terrace I & II



Kelker Court



Willow Run Apartments



Hallock Drive Townhomes



Wyndale Court Condominiums



Village Green

The photos below show rental properties constructed since 2000. Most are small garden-style apartment buildings, while some feature townhome-style designs. All are modest in scale, with fewer than 40 rental units per development.



Academy Court Apartments



Colonial East Apartments



Sweetland Apartments



Whites Mill Road Apartments



Nicholas Apartments



Aston Ridge



Gray Palace



Meadowgreen Apartments



Colonial Road Apartments



Promise Landing Apartments

The final set of photos shows older rental properties that, like those constructed in the 1990s, follow traditional townhome and garden-style apartment formats. Despite their age, most appear well maintained and show no visible signs of deferred maintenance. With the exception of Downtown Plaza Apartments and Lee Garden Apartments, each development contains fewer than 40 rental units.



Eastside Apartments



Cedar Ridge Apartments



Manchester 242



Pinehedge Condominiums



Edgemont Apartments



Morningside Village



Greenway Apartments



Stonemill Road Apartments



Brookside Apartments



Village Square Apartments



Aspen Ridge



Wolf Hill Apartments



Millway Apartments



Edgemont Townhouses



Wilson Apartments



Mountain Empire Apartments



The Village at Riley Pointe



Rolling Hills



Stonewall Apartments



Clinchview Terrace



Heath Townhomes



Cedar Creek



Gray Drive Apartments



Downtown Plaza Apartments



Lee Garden Apartments



Parthenon Apartments

Market rents in the region vary widely based on unit age, features, and condition. However, collecting accurate rent data is difficult in a market where most small properties operate at full occupancy.

Research findings suggest that newer rental properties typically charge between \$700 and \$1,100 for one-bedroom units, \$900 and \$1,300 for two-bedroom units, and \$1,200 and \$1,650 for three-bedroom units. Some larger or more amenitized units command higher rents. For example, two-bedroom units at Bristol View Townhomes rent for between \$1,600 and \$1,700. Willow Run Apartments, the only large-scale community in the region with a full amenity package, charges \$1,141 for one-bedroom units, between \$1,166 and \$1,295 for two-bedroom units, and between \$1,275 and \$1,550 for three-bedroom units.

In contrast, older rental communities generally charge lower rents, often comparable to those at affordable housing properties.

Despite variation in pricing, the limited supply of rental properties continues to place upward pressure on demand. As noted earlier, the market-wide vacancy rate is just 0.4 percent, suggesting that renters face strong competition for available units. Property managers consistently report that rents have increased over the past three years without a corresponding rise in vacancy. Reported occupancy has remained stable or declined only slightly, indicating that rent increases have not dampened demand.

Many two- and three-bedroom rental units in the region have outdated layouts compared to more recently constructed units in Virginia and Northeast Tennessee. These older units often include only 1.0 or 1.5 bathrooms, reflecting the design standards at the time of construction.

Table 24 provides additional context by presenting monthly housing costs for renter-occupied units in Washington County, the City of Bristol, and the overall region, based on U.S. Census American Community Survey estimates.

Regionwide, nearly 68 percent of renters report paying less than \$1,000 per month. Over half (52.2 percent) fall into two key rent bands: \$500 to \$799 and \$800 to \$999. These figures align with pricing observed in many older market-rate properties and income-restricted affordable housing. A significant share of households paying below \$500 likely reside in subsidized housing where tenants contribute 30 percent of income toward rent.

Washington County has a greater share of households in the \$500 to \$799 range (30.8 percent), while Bristol has a larger proportion paying less than \$500 (more than 29 percent combined in the two lowest rent tiers). These differences reflect variation in the age and distribution of affordable housing across the two jurisdictions.

Only a small share of renters in the region pay \$1,500 or more per month, highlighting the limited supply of newly built, higher-end housing. Fewer than three percent of renters pay more than \$1,500, and fewer than one percent pay more than \$2,000. This is true despite a sizable portion of renter households with sufficient income to afford higher rents. For example, nearly 40 percent of renter households in Washington County could afford monthly rents of \$1,500 or more based on allocating 30 percent of income toward housing. This disparity suggests that constrained supply, rather than lack of income, limits the upper end of the rental market.

Finally, there is a notable share of renter households. Nearly 900 across the region report paying no rent in cash. This group likely includes individuals living rent-free in units owned by family or friends or in exchange for services. The high proportion of such arrangements (over 11 percent regionwide) indicates a broader reliance on informal housing solutions. Together, these findings highlight the structural mismatch between available rental housing and the evolving needs of the region's renter households.

Table 24: Monthly Housing Costs, Renter-Occupied Units — Bristol/ Washington County, VA						
	Washington County		City of Bristol		Regionwide	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Less than \$300	169	3.2%	344	12.7%	513	6.4%
\$300 to \$499	296	5.5%	452	16.7%	748	9.3%
\$500 to \$799	1,646	30.8%	528	19.6%	2,174	27.0%
\$800 to \$999	1,278	23.9%	747	27.7%	2,025	25.2%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	1,061	19.8%	430	15.9%	1,491	18.5%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	107	2.0%	13	0.5%	120	1.5%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	54	1.0%	0	0.0%	54	0.7%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
\$3,000 or More	10	0.2%	20	0.7%	30	0.4%
No Cash Rent	727	13.6%	166	6.2%	893	11.1%
Total Occupied Rental Units	5,348	100.0%	2,700	100.0%	8,048	100.0%
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ACS 2023 (5-Year Estimates)						

Table 25 presents median gross rents by unit type for Washington County, the City of Bristol, and the region as a whole. Median gross rent in Washington County is \$832 per month, which is slightly higher than the median in the City of Bristol (\$775) and also above the regional median of \$812. These figures suggest a rental market with generally modest pricing, consistent with the older age and limited amenities of much of the existing housing stock. In all three jurisdictions, median gross rents are well below those found in more competitive urban and suburban markets across Virginia.

Rental properties offering three- or four-bedroom units are limited throughout the region. In Washington County, most of these larger units are townhomes or single-family homes that were initially built for owner occupancy but have since been converted to rentals by individual property owners or small-scale investors.

Table 25: Median Gross Rent — Bristol/ Washington County, VA			
	Washington County	City of Bristol	Regionwide
One-Bedroom	\$533	\$368	\$475
Two-Bedroom	\$824	\$802	\$837
Three-Bedroom	\$975	\$854	\$938
Four-Bedroom	\$1,219	--	--
Median Gross Rent	\$832	\$775	\$812
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ACS 2023 (5-Year Estimates)			

IV.2.b: Affordable Rental Market

Table 26 presents data on nine affordable apartment communities in the region that serve households with modest incomes but do not offer deep rent subsidies. Deep rent subsidies provide financial assistance to low-income renters, typically those earning less than 30% of AMI, by capping their rent at 30 percent of household income.

This table focuses on properties financed through the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program. This federal program, administered by the Internal Revenue Service, offers tax incentives to developers and investors who build or rehabilitate rental housing for low- and moderate-income households. The LIHTC program is the primary source of funding for new affordable rental housing development in both Virginia and the United States.

The nine LIHTC apartment communities in the region are relatively small, with sizes ranging from 22 to 72 units and totaling 359 apartment and townhome units. These properties serve households earning up to 60% of AMI for the Kingsport-Bristol, TN-VA Metropolitan Statistical Area.

The following paragraphs provide a brief description of each of these communities.

- **The Village Oakview:** The newest affordable apartment community in the region, Village Oakview opened in 2019 with 48 affordable quadplex units along Oakview Avenue in the City of Bristol. The community offers two- and three-bedroom floor plans, including six units restricted to 40% of AMI, 34 to 50%, and eight to 60%. The two-bedroom units have 1.5 bathrooms and measure 810 square feet, while the three-bedroom units have two full bathrooms and measure 1,202 square feet. Several units are handicap accessible. The community currently has two vacancies due to normal turnover. Management maintains a waitlist of 489 households, including 386 for two-bedroom units and 103 for three-bedroom units. There are no on-site amenities. Village Oakview is the only affordable apartment community in the region developed in the past decade.
- **Sweetbriar:** Located along Elementary Drive near Abingdon, Sweetbriar includes 42 units developed in two phases. The first 20 units opened initially, with the remaining 22 units added in July 2023. The community consists entirely of three-bedroom, 2.5-bathroom duplex units with garages. All units include washers and dryers and are restricted to 40, 50, or 60% of AMI. Sweetbriar is fully occupied. The waitlist includes 141 households for

the initial phase and 318 households for the second phase. No on-site amenities are provided.

- **Ridgecrest Town Apartments:** The largest affordable apartment community in the region, Ridgecrest contains 72 units located on Heritage Drive in Bristol. The property consists of two- and three-bedroom townhome units, including eight units restricted to 40% of AMI, 35 restricted to 50%, and 29 restricted to 60%. On-site amenities include a fitness center, playground, computer room, laundry facility, and community room. The community is typically fully occupied.
- **White's Mill Point:** Located along White's Mill Road just north of the Town of Abingdon, White's Mill Point is a 32-unit affordable apartment community that opened in 2007. The property consists of two two-story garden apartment buildings. All units have two bedrooms and 1.5 bathrooms, with rents restricted to 50% and 60% of AMI. No on-site amenities are offered. Renovations are nearing completion, with the final 11 units currently offline. The rehabilitation project has included major upgrades to HVAC systems, roofing, parking areas, landscaping, appliances, siding, doors, and windows. These improvements meet multiple design and energy efficiency standards intended to benefit residents, including Virginia Housing's Universal Design, EPA EnergyStar, EarthCraft Gold, and Zero Energy Ready Home certifications. Management maintains a waitlist of 226 households.
- **Sapling Grove:** Located near Village Oakview along Oakview Avenue in Bristol, Sapling Grove includes 26 garden-style duplex units. Each unit is equipped with a washer and dryer, and all are restricted to 60% of AMI. The community is fully occupied. Management maintains a waitlist of 1,212 households, up from nearly 600 in 2023, including 806 for one-bedroom units and 406 for two-bedroom units. Sapling Grove has been in operation since 2007.
- **Douglas School Apartments:** Douglas School Apartments is the only age-restricted LIHTC community in the region. Located at 711 Oakview Avenue in Bristol, the property includes 41 affordable one- and two-bedroom units housed in a rehabilitated school building. Of these, 25 units are restricted to 50% of AMI, and 16 are restricted to 60% of AMI. Amenities include on-site laundry facilities. The community opened in 2006.
- **Harbor Landing:** Opened in 2004, Harbor Landing is a 32-unit affordable apartment community located at 800 Dixie Street in Bristol. It provides housing for households with annual incomes below 50% of AMI. The complex includes single-level attached units and features a clubhouse, playground, laundry facility, and outdoor grilling area. The property is currently fully occupied, with a waitlist ranging from six to nine months, depending on the floor plan.
- **Riverside Place:** Located in the Town of Damascus, Riverside Place is the only LIHTC apartment community in that locality. The community opened in 1990 and underwent renovations in 2012. It includes 22 units restricted to 50% of AMI and offers a mix of one-

, two-, and three-bedroom floorplans. The property is 92 percent occupied and maintains a waitlist of 75 households.

- **Abingdon Village:** This View is the oldest LIHTC community in the region, initially opened in 1983 on Lowry Drive in Abingdon. Following renovations in 2013, the property remains in high demand and is fully occupied, with an extensive waitlist of 197 households. It consists of multiple garden-style apartment buildings and offers a mix of one-, two-, and three-bedroom floor plans. Five units are restricted to 40% of AMI, and the remaining units are restricted to 50% of AMI.

Across these nine properties, the combined vacancy rate is just 0.8 percent, excluding units offline for renovation. Nearly all units are occupied, and waitlists are lengthy, reflecting minimal turnover and sustained demand. While some households are likely listed on multiple waitlists, there are nearly 2,700 households in total awaiting affordable housing. This highlights both the scarcity of affordable rental options and the continued demand for income-restricted housing throughout the region.

Table 26: Characteristics of LIHTC Apartments — Bristol/ Washington County, VA (July 2025)

	<u>Map E Key</u>	<u>Year Built</u>	<u>Income Restrictions</u>	<u>Total Units</u>	<u>Vacant Units</u>
Village at Oakview	1	2019	40%/50%/60%	48 ³	2
Sweetbriar I & II ¹	2	2009/13	40%/50%/60%	42	0
Ridgecrest Town Apartments	3	2008	40%/50%/60%	72	0
White's Mill Point ⁷	4	2007/24	50%/60%	32	11
Sapling Grove	5	2007	60%	26 ⁴	0
Douglas School Apartments ²	6	2006	50%/60%	41	1
Harbor Landing	7	2004	50%	32	0
Riverside Place ⁵	8	1990/12	50%	22	0
Abingdon Village ⁶	9	1983/13	40%/50%	44	0
Total				359	3
Vacancy Rate ⁸					0.8%

¹ 20 units built in Phase I. 22 units built in Phase II. Waitlist of 459 households.

² Age-restricted apartment community.

³ Waitlist of 386 households for two-bedroom units and 103 households for three-bedroom units.

⁴ Waitlist of 806 households for one-bedroom units and 406 households for two-bedroom units.

⁵ Waitlist of 75 households.

⁶ Formerly Highland View. Waitlist of 197 households.

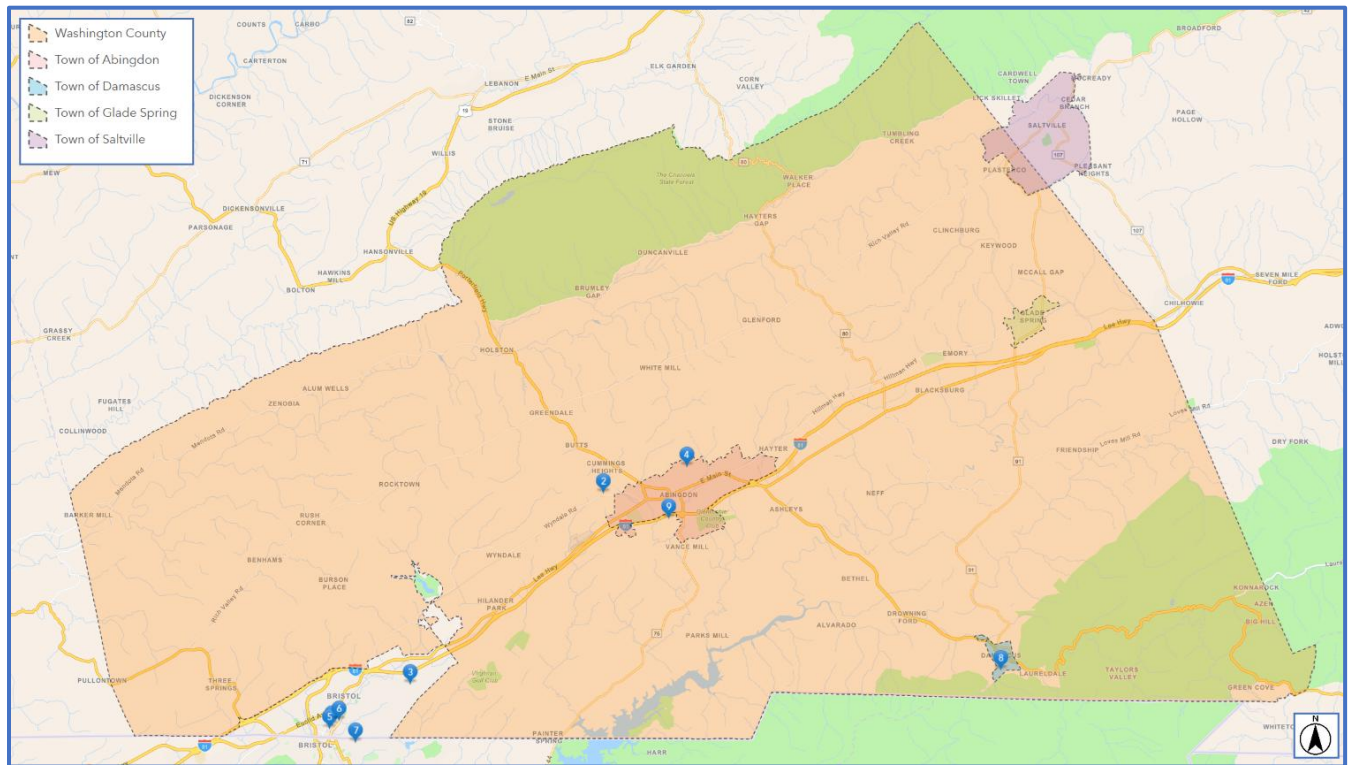
⁷ Eleven units offline for renovation. Waitlist of 226 households.

⁸ Excludes units offline for renovations.

Source: S. Patz & Associates, Inc.

Map E shows the locations of affordable apartment properties without deep rent subsidies, as detailed in **Table 26**. Four properties are located in the City of Bristol, three are

situated in or near the Town of Abingdon, and one is located in the Town of Damascus. This distribution contrasts with that of market-rate apartment properties, which are primarily concentrated in and around Abingdon.



Map E - Locations of LIHTC Rental Properties

In addition to the LIHTC apartment properties detailed in **Table 26**, there are 18 rental communities in the region that operate with deep rent subsidies, allowing tenants to pay 30 percent of their income toward rent. These 18 properties, totaling 1,195 apartment units, are listed in **Table 27**. Of these, nine properties with 346 units are located in Washington County, including 143 age-restricted units. The remaining nine properties are located in the City of Bristol. Apart from the 30-unit Thomas Jefferson Seniors, none of the Bristol properties are age-restricted. Most of the communities listed in **Table 27** were built prior to 2000 and are fully occupied, with active waitlists.

Beyond Housing manages 362 of the units listed in **Table 27**. The agency also administers 307 regular Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs), 15 Emergency Housing Choice Vouchers, and 39 Mainstream Housing Choice Vouchers. The public housing waitlist managed by Beyond Housing

includes 504 households, up from 398 in 2023. Additionally, 701 households are currently on the HCV waitlist, an increase from 429 in 2023.

The Abingdon Redevelopment and Housing Authority manages 28 public housing units at Kings Mountain Apartments, which was built in 1989. The agency is allocated 121 vouchers through HUD’s Housing Choice Voucher Program, with 80 vouchers under contract as of June 2025. When issuing vouchers, the housing authority typically contacts 40 to 50 applicants at a time. However, fewer than 20 percent of those who attend a voucher briefing ultimately receive a voucher. Voucher issuance does not follow a fixed schedule and depends on both funding availability and the number of vouchers currently in use.

As of June 2025, the HCV waiting list includes 78 applicants, following the recent removal of 50 individuals who did not respond to outreach efforts. The public housing waiting list includes 124 applicants.

**Table 27: Characteristics of Apartments with Deep Rent Subsidies —
Bristol/ Washington County, VA (July 2025)**

	<u>Type</u>	<u>Total Units</u>
<u>Washington County</u>		
Abingdon Green	Senior	32
Abingdon Terrace	Senior	32
Abingdon Village	Family	44
Kings Mountain	Family	28
Oak Knoll	Family	21
Ridgefield Court	Family	48
Settlers Point	Family	62
Washington Court	Senior	39
Woods Landing	Senior	<u>40</u>
(Subtotal)		(346)
<u>City of Bristol</u>		
Eastridge Apartments	Family	96
Johnson Court	Family	60
Jones Manor	Family	100
Leisure Park Towers	Family	151
Mosby Homes	Family	40
Rice Terrace	Family	136
Stant Hall	Family	100
Thomas Jefferson Seniors	Senior	30
Woodlands at Bristol	Family	<u>136</u>
(Subtotal)		<u>(849)</u>
Total		1,195
Source: S. Patz & Associates, Inc.		

The photos below depict each of the affordable apartment properties detailed in Table 26. Village Oakview, Sweetbriar, Ridgecrest Town Apartments, and Sapling Grove feature townhome-style designs. White's Mill Point, Harbor Landing, and Abingdon Village consist of garden-style apartment buildings. Douglas School Apartments and Riverside Place are adaptive reuse projects that were developed from former school buildings. All of these properties appear to be well-maintained and free of visible blight or deferred maintenance.



Village at Oakview



Sweetbriar



Ridgecrest Town Apartments



White's Mill Point



Sapling Grove



Douglas School Apartments



Harbor Landing



Riverside Place



Abingdon Village

Presented next are several of the apartment properties with deep rent subsidies, as listed in **Table 27**. The photos show a variety of building types and construction periods. Most properties appear well-maintained.



Abingdon Terrace



Jones Manor



Ridgefield Court



Thomas Jefferson Seniors



Mosby Homes



Rice Terrace



Washington Court

IV.2.c: Apartment Pipeline

Table 28 presents apartment developments that are currently in planning or under construction in Washington County and the City of Bristol. In total, four developments representing 160 new apartment units are in the pipeline at varying stages of progress.

The only project currently under construction is Goodson Hills, which will add 23 units with deep rent subsidies in the City of Bristol. These units are expected to be available for occupancy by late 2026 or early 2027.

Three additional proposals are in active planning. The Vue at Abingdon is the only market-rate development. It is anticipated to add 72 units in the Town of Abingdon, with construction expected to begin in the coming months.

Morning Meadows, a project planned to serve individuals who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or survivors of domestic violence, is expected to deliver 17 deeply subsidized units. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2026.

The Place at Glade is a 48-unit affordable housing proposal, with rents targeted to households earning 50% and 60% of AMI. The developer intends to pursue competitive 9% Low-Income Housing Tax Credits in the 2026 funding round. As a result, the project remains speculative at this stage.

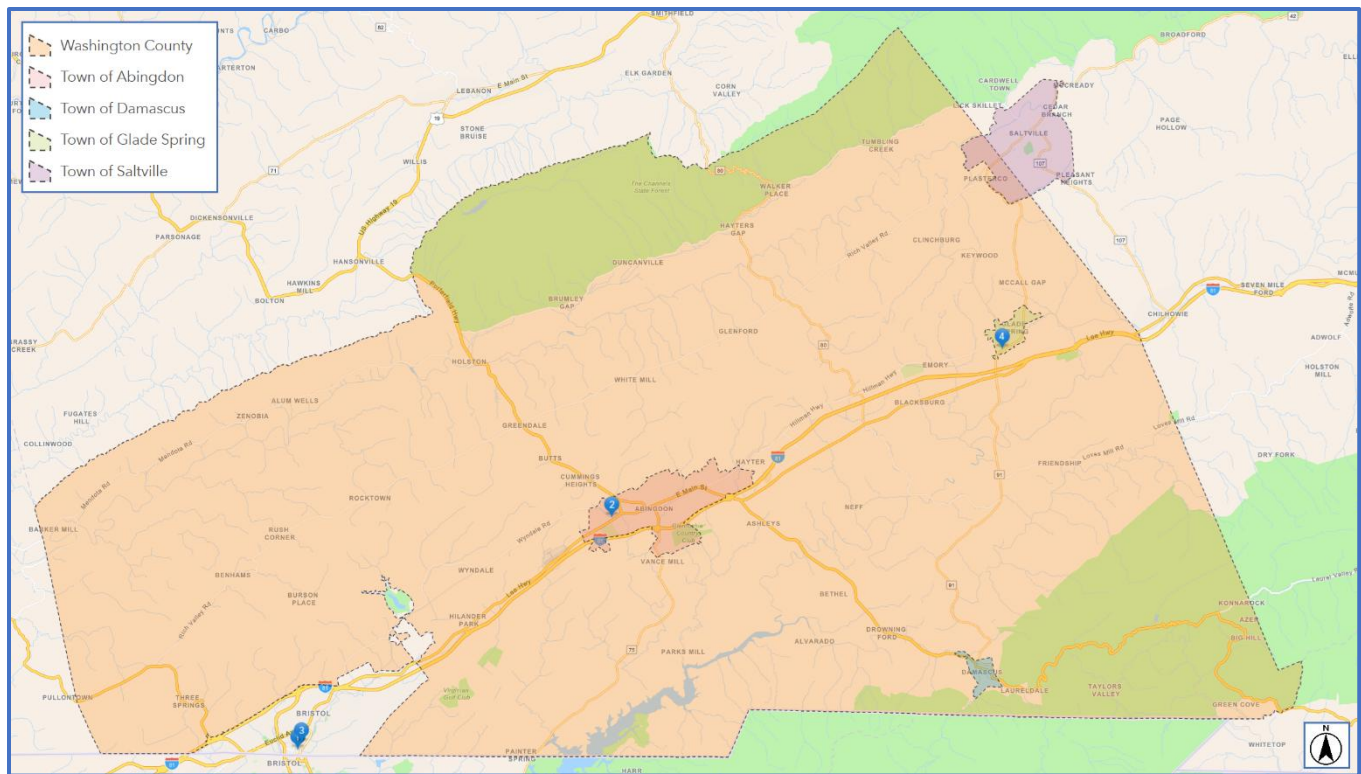
Table 28: Characteristics of Apartment Pipeline — Bristol/ Washington County, VA (July 2025)

	<u>Map F</u> <u>Key</u>	<u>Deeply Subsidized</u> <u>Units</u>	<u>LIHTC</u> <u>Units</u>	<u>Market-Rate</u> <u>Units</u>	<u>Status</u>
<u>Under Construction</u>					
Goodson Hills	1	23	0	0	Late-2026/Early-2027 Opening
<u>Planned</u>					
The Vue at Abingdon	2	0	0	72	Late-2025 Start
Morning Meadows	3	17	0	0	2026 Start
The Place at Glade	4	0	48 ¹	0	To Seek 9% LIHTC in 2026
Total		40	48	72	

¹ 24 units restricted to 50% of AMI and 24 units restricted to 60% of AMI.

Source: S. Patz & Associates, Inc.

Map F shows the locations of apartment proposals currently in the development pipeline. Goodson Hills and Morning Meadows, both deeply subsidized rental communities, are located within the City of Bristol. The Vue at Abingdon will be situated in the western portion of the Town of Abingdon, while The Place at Glade is proposed for the southern part of Glade Spring. No apartment developments are currently planned in the unincorporated areas of Washington County.



Map F - Locations of Pipeline Rental Properties

The paragraphs below detail each of the pipeline proposals:

- **Goodson Hills:** Ground was broken in June 2025 on Beyond Housing’s newest residential development, located at 200 Mary Street near the organization’s EnVision Center in the City of Bristol. The project site previously housed the Bonham Circle units, which were demolished in 2018. Goodson Hills will include 23 two-story, townhouse-style apartment homes, each with three bedrooms and two bathrooms. Construction is expected to take approximately 18 months. The development is being carried out as a Faircloth-to-RAD project, meaning the homes are being rebuilt under the housing authority’s existing public housing capacity, but will operate with long-term Section 8 rental assistance through HUD’s Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. This approach ensures long-term affordability and provides access to more flexible and stable funding than traditional public housing. Financing is supported by federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits and Virginia’s State Housing Opportunity Tax Credits (HOTC), introduced in 2021.
- **The Vue at Abingdon:** This proposal by R.P. Fralin involves the construction of three garden-style apartment buildings totaling 72 one- and two-bedroom units. The site is located on the south side of Wolf Creek Trail, east of Commonwealth Senior Living at Abingdon. Amenities may include a clubhouse and outdoor swimming pool, although final plans have not been confirmed. The developer received permit approvals in June 2025 and plans to begin vertical construction once site grading is complete, in coordination with the completion of horizontal development work. Units are expected to be available for occupancy by 2026.

- **Morning Meadows:** Planned by Beyond Housing, this proposal includes the development of 17 duplex units across seven buildings at 700 Moore Street in the City of Bristol, located behind the former Virginia Intermont campus. The units will serve individuals who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or survivors of domestic violence. Supportive services will be provided in partnership with People, Inc. Morning Meadows will follow the design model of the nearby Sapling Grove duplexes. Funding is primarily provided through the HOME-ARP (HOME Investment Partnerships American Rescue Plan) program. Construction is expected to begin in early or mid-2026.
- **The Place at Glade:** People, Inc. has proposed the development of 48 affordable apartment units at 509 W. Glade Street in Glade Spring. The complex would consist of four garden-style apartment buildings and include a mix of nine one-bedroom, 30 two-bedroom, and nine three-bedroom units, five of which would be fully accessible in compliance with UFAS standards. Half of the units would be restricted to households earning 50% of AMI, while the other half would be restricted to 60% of AMI. The development would also feature a community center and laundry room. Although People, Inc. applied for 9% Low-Income Housing Tax Credits in the competitive 2025 cycle, the project was not awarded funding. They intend to reapply in early 2026, with construction potentially beginning in late 2026 if credits are awarded.

Photos of the current conditions at each of the pipeline sites are provided below. The photos indicate that construction is underway at Goodson Hills, and site work has begun at The Vue at Abingdon. At the site of The Place at Glade, a blighted structure that formerly occupied the property has been demolished, but no additional work has occurred to date.



Goodson Hills



The Vue at Abingdon



Morning Meadows



The Place at Glade

IV.3: Hurricane Helene: Regional Damage Assessment and Housing Market Implications

Tropical Storm Helene impacted Virginia between September 25 and October 3, 2024, bringing catastrophic inland flooding, extreme winds, tornadoes, and record rainfall to Southwest Virginia, including Washington County. The storm caused widespread damage to residential properties, businesses, transportation networks, and community assets. Preliminary FEMA estimates placed damages in the hundreds of millions of dollars, including more than \$126 million in agricultural losses across multiple counties, Washington among them. Flooding severely compromised roads and bridges, isolating neighborhoods and delaying both emergency response and long-term recovery.

Recognizing the scale of the disaster, Virginia declared a state of emergency, followed by a major federal disaster declaration that made the region eligible for recovery resources. Washington County formally requested federal debris cleanup assistance, including removal of construction and demolition materials from homes such as sheetrock, insulation, siding, and wood. These requests underscore the extent of residential damage across the County.

The most severe impacts occurred in the southeastern portion of Washington County, where mountainous terrain and tributaries funneled rainfall into Laurel Creek and its valleys. This surge caused destructive flooding in the Town of Damascus and the nearby community of Taylor's Valley. In Damascus, nearly every business was affected, and the loss of fall tourism further strained a local economy dependent on visitors. Residential damage included single-

family, multi-family, and manufactured homes. FEMA Individual Assistance data show that 30 owner-occupied homes and fewer than 20 renter-occupied units in Washington County sustained major damage or were destroyed. The town manager reported that approximately 140 homes and commercial structures were damaged to varying degrees, from minor to catastrophic.

By mid-2025, more than 100 homes had been repaired, eight new homes constructed, and two tiny homes donated to support displaced residents. The Town of Damascus also worked with the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to secure funding for unmet recovery needs, particularly for structures with major or total damage. Taylor's Valley was completely cut off when flooding and road washouts blocked all access routes. With limited housing options in this part of the County, the damage intensified existing housing shortages.

The nonprofit Trails to Recovery played a central role in recovery, rebuilding 91 homes within nine months and raising nearly \$1.7 million in private donations. Washington County supported these efforts by waiving building permit fees for storm-related housing repairs in Damascus. Although Damascus and Taylor's Valley bore the brunt of Helene's impact, effects extended beyond these areas. Debris cleanup requests from other parts of Washington County confirm scattered residential and infrastructure damage. Agricultural operations also sustained losses, including damaged fences, barns, and other farm structures, adding to the region's recovery burden.

These housing challenges were worsened by the County's stock of older, lower-quality, and often manufactured housing, which proved especially vulnerable to flooding. The condition of pre-storm housing likely contributed to the extent of the losses, but it also presents opportunities for long-term rehabilitation and reinvestment as part of recovery.

In contrast, the Town of Abingdon experienced minimal direct damage. It remained fully functional during and after the storm, serving as a staging area for regional disaster response and housing for aid workers and volunteers. The towns of Glade Spring and Saltville also reported no significant housing or infrastructure damage.

Overall, Tropical Storm Helene disrupted Washington County's housing primarily by damaging and displacing existing households rather than halting new construction. The County's residential development pipeline was not significantly affected, but substantial repair and rehabilitation were required to stabilize the housing market in certain locations. In the hardest-hit communities, particularly Damascus and Taylor's Valley, the disaster reduced the supply of available housing and highlighted the fragility of existing housing conditions. Recovery initiatives have therefore focused less on expanding supply through new development and more on repairing, rebuilding, and improving the quality of existing homes.

Section V: Development Incentives and Program-Eligible Areas

This section evaluates federal and state programs that could support new housing development in Washington County. Several of these programs target specific geographic areas with incentives such as tax benefits, below-market financing, direct subsidies, and other tools intended to encourage residential investment in economically distressed or underserved communities. When applied strategically, these resources can help mitigate rising construction costs, close funding gaps, and improve the financial viability of projects that might not otherwise proceed under prevailing market conditions.

These tools are particularly relevant for the development of affordable and workforce housing, including units serving families and seniors, where rent caps and income restrictions limit revenue and increase sensitivity to debt service and operating margins. In rural markets like Washington County, where development risk is high and returns are modest, access to these programs can be a determining factor in whether a project proceeds. Incorporating available incentives into early-stage planning helps developers and public-sector partners identify feasible sites, assemble realistic funding structures, and design projects that address both financial constraints and long-term housing needs.

Washington County is eligible for a range of federal and state housing programs, including designations such as Qualified Census Tracts, Opportunity Zones, and New Markets Tax Credit-eligible areas. State-level resources include REACH Virginia, the Affordable and Special Needs Housing Program, the LIHTC program, the Mixed-Use/Mixed-Income Financing Program from Virginia Housing, and the Workforce Housing Investment Program. While other resources exist, those listed here are the most applicable given the County's current economic and demographic profile.

However, eligibility does not guarantee funding. Many programs, such as LIHTC, are highly competitive and often require partnerships with experienced financial intermediaries, mission-oriented developers, or public-sector sponsors. Project scale, readiness, and alignment with regional or state housing priorities all influence competitiveness. Early engagement with

program administrators and technical experts is essential for assessing feasibility and improving the chances of securing support.

The most viable residential projects in Washington County will likely require strategic layering of multiple resources, such as combining tax credit equity with subsidized loans or local gap financing. These tools function best when used in combination, serving as complementary components of a broader housing finance strategy. **Table 29** summarizes each relevant designation or funding source, outlines key benefits, and explains how each can support Washington County's housing development goals.

Table 29: Summary of Housing Incentives and Program Designations — Washington County, VA				
Program / Designation	Administering Agency	Primary Benefit	Applicable	Typical Use Cases
Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)	Virginia Housing	Federal tax credits generating equity to reduce debt burden	Yes	Affordable housing targeting families, seniors, and workforce households
Mixed-Use/Mixed-Income (MUMI) Financing	Virginia Housing	Long-term, below-market financing for mixed-income and mixed-use developments	Yes	Rental housing with commercial or community space in targeted redevelopment areas
Workforce Housing Investment Program (WHIP)	Virginia Housing	Low-interest loans for housing near employment centers	Not Currently	New or preserved rental housing for moderate-income workers, often in partnership with employers
Qualified Census Tracts (QCT)	HUD / Virginia Housing	30% LIHTC basis boost for 9% credit projects	Yes (in select tracts)	LIHTC developments serving low- to moderate-income households
Difficult Development Areas (DDA)	HUD	30% LIHTC basis boost if eligible	Not Currently	Monitor annually; may benefit future LIHTC projects
Opportunity Zones (OZs)	U.S. Treasury	Capital gains deferral and exclusion for investors	Yes (in select tracts)	Mixed-use or rental housing with long-term equity investment
New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC)	CDFI Fund / CDEs	Equity for mixed-use with community-serving components	Yes (in select tracts)	Housing paired with childcare, health care, or workforce training spaces
REACH Virginia Program	Virginia Housing	Flexible funds for site work, infrastructure, or predevelopment planning	Yes	Nonprofit and public-sector projects, modular housing, and workforce-oriented developments
Affordable and Special Needs Housing (ASNH) Program	Virginia DHCD	Deep subsidy for special needs and extremely low-income households	Yes	Permanent supportive housing, LIHTC gap financing
Double Distressed Locality	Virginia Housing	Priority access to WHIP funds and LIHTC scoring advantages	Not Currently	Projects near job centers, using WHIP and REACH Virginia funding
Source: Virginia Housing; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); U.S. Department of the Treasury; Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund; Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD); U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development.				

To support future housing initiatives in Washington County, the following section provides a concise summary of key federal, state, and local housing incentives and program designations described in **Table 29**.

These summaries identify each tool’s primary purpose, eligibility requirements, and typical applications, with a focus on how they can be used to advance affordable, workforce, and mixed-use housing. Strategically leveraging these resources, whether for equity, below-market

financing, or site development, will be essential for structuring feasible projects and building competitive funding packages.

V.1: Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)

The LIHTC program is among the most important and widely used tools for developing affordable rental housing in Virginia and across the country. In Washington County, LIHTC serves as a viable and accessible resource, particularly in areas designated as Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs), which enable eligible projects to receive a 30 percent increase in eligible basis. This basis boost can generate additional equity, helping to reduce the debt burden on a development and improve its financial feasibility.

LIHTC projects in Washington County can accommodate a variety of income levels, typically targeting households earning at or below 60% of AMI. However, recent changes under the income averaging provision enable developments to support a broader mix of tenants, with units aimed at households earning between 20% and 80% of AMI, as long as the overall project average stays at or below 60% of AMI. This flexibility is particularly crucial in rural areas like Washington County, where market diversity is limited, but housing needs vary among working families, seniors on fixed incomes, and individuals with special needs.

The LIHTC program operates through two distinct mechanisms: the 9% credit and the 4% credit, each with differing funding implications. The 9% credit is highly competitive and allocated by Virginia Housing through an annual application process, providing a higher equity contribution. In contrast, the 4% credit is non-competitive and automatically available to projects in which at least 50 percent of the aggregate basis is financed with tax-exempt bonds. However, the 4% credit results in a lower equity contribution and generally necessitates larger project scales or additional subsidy sources to ensure financial viability.

In the context of Washington County, where development costs are lower and deal sizes are modest, 9% credits are likely a more suitable and viable option. However, developers exploring larger or mixed-use sites, especially those that integrate residential and commercial

components, may find opportunities to structure 4% projects in collaboration with state bond allocations or gap financing tools.

The LIHTC program has proven effective for both family and senior housing. Projects can be structured as age-restricted communities, general occupancy developments, or mixed-age housing, depending on local demand and developer capacity. In Washington County, where the population is aging and a significant portion of renters are cost-burdened, senior-targeted LIHTC developments may be especially appropriate.

Successfully applying for and executing a LIHTC development requires technical expertise, long-term asset management capability, and a thorough understanding of Virginia Housing's allocation process. Partnering with an experienced LIHTC developer is essential. These partners bring expertise in application scoring, cost containment, and compliance requirements, all of which are critical to winning tax credits in Virginia's competitive allocation rounds.

V.2: Mixed-Use/Mixed-Income (MUMI) Financing

Virginia Housing's Mixed-Use/Mixed-Income (MUMI) Financing program is a targeted tool designed to support mixed-income rental developments. While a commercial or retail component is permitted, it is not required. Projects must meet legal and policy criteria that demonstrate a revitalization or economic need. This is especially relevant in rural and economically transitioning communities like Washington County, where the private housing market may not provide the full range or affordability of units needed to support long-term growth.

To qualify, a development must be in an eligible area or serve a public purpose as defined under Virginia law. Eligible areas include Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs), Targeted Areas (where at least 70 percent of families earn no more than 80 percent of the statewide median income), and designated redevelopment, conservation, or rehabilitation districts.

Projects may also qualify if they are in a revitalization area established by local resolution under §36-55.30:2 of the Virginia Code, a Housing Rehabilitation Zone created by local ordinance,

a federally designated Opportunity Zone, or part of a community revitalization plan submitted to Virginia Housing.

Several census tracts in Washington County already qualify under these guidelines, due to their status as QCTs or Opportunity Zones, including areas in and around the Town of Abingdon. This allows eligible projects in those areas to move forward without additional local action. For areas not automatically qualified, local governments can pass a revitalization area resolution or provide documentation of an approved plan to establish eligibility. This flexibility allows Washington County to expand MUMI access based on local priorities and planning goals.

MUMI loans offer long-term, below-market-rate financing, typically amortized over 30 years. The interest rate includes bond issuance costs but does not require bond insurance or external credit enhancement, helping reduce transaction complexity and cost. Projects must include a mix of incomes, with at least 20 percent of residential units reserved for households earning 80% or less of AMI. Remaining units may be unrestricted, allowing developers to create inclusive communities while improving financial viability.

Developers must apply through a Virginia Housing-approved mortgage broker. They should be prepared to demonstrate experience with mixed-income development, multi-source financing, and program compliance.

Local support is crucial to success, particularly in determining project eligibility. Local resolutions or adopted revitalization plans play a key role in qualifying sites that do not already meet the automatic area criteria. Partnership with local governments can strengthen the application and ensure alignment with broader community development goals.

V.3: Workforce Housing Investment Program (WHIP)

The Workforce Housing Investment Program (WHIP), administered by Virginia Housing, is a state-level initiative designed to increase the supply of rental and ownership housing for middle-income households in areas experiencing recent job growth. The program reflects the growing recognition that quality housing is a prerequisite, not a byproduct, of effective business

recruitment and workforce retention. In rural and economically transitioning areas such as Washington County, WHIP presents a meaningful opportunity to align housing production with economic development strategies.

WHIP supports both rental and homeownership projects serving households earning between 80% and 120% of AMI, with flexibility to reach up to 150% of AMI in rural localities. Funding is available through loan subsidies or grants, depending on the locality's economic classification and project characteristics. Washington County is currently designated as an economically distressed locality by Virginia Housing, which makes it eligible for enhanced WHIP terms. While it is not classified as "double-distressed," it still qualifies for reduced thresholds and favorable financing conditions.

To be eligible, a project must be located within a 30-minute drive time of a verified job announcement. Qualifying announcements may come from new businesses or expansions of existing employers and must be substantiated through a Governor's press release, a local economic development communication, or a formal employer letter. For transformational projects involving 500 or more full-time jobs, the award cap increases to \$5 million. While funds may be distributed across multiple housing developments, the maximum combined WHIP award and local match cannot exceed 20 percent of the total development cost.

WHIP funds may only be used to create new housing units, either through new construction or adaptive reuse. For rental developments, at least 10 new units must be created for every \$500,000 awarded, and affordability requirements must be maintained for a minimum of 15 years. For homeownership, awards are capped at \$40,000 per unit in distressed areas, with affordability restrictions lasting 10 to 15 years, depending on the size of the award.

Each proposal must include a detailed and feasible development plan. Projects must be completed within a 24-month performance period. Applications must demonstrate zoning approval, infrastructure readiness, and progress toward predevelopment milestones. Required documentation also includes a market study, verification of proximity to job locations, confirmation of other committed funding sources, and proof of local match contributions.

WHIP is not a general-purpose subsidy and cannot be used for infrastructure development, land banking, emergency shelters, or previously committed proffered units. Projects must be new, directly linked to verified workforce demand, and demonstrate a clear financing gap. Depending on the project's structure and locality classification, funds may be awarded either as grants or as loan subsidies, disbursed during construction draws.

V.4: Qualified Census Tracts (QCT)

HUD defines Qualified Census Tracts as areas in which at least 50 percent of households have incomes below 60% of AMI, or where the poverty rate exceeds 25 percent. These designations are updated annually using American Community Survey data and are used by several federal and state housing programs to prioritize investment in historically underserved areas.

Currently, there are no Qualified Census Tracts in Washington County. However, this could change in the future as demographic and economic conditions shift. Should a tract in the County become eligible for QCT designation, it could open the door to a range of financing advantages that support affordable housing development.

In Virginia, the most direct benefit of QCT designation is the automatic 30 percent basis boost available for LIHTC projects. This increase allows developers to claim additional tax credit equity without raising qualified development costs, which effectively reduces a project's debt burden. The incentive is especially important in rural areas where lower rent ceilings and higher construction costs often create challenging financial gaps.

Beyond LIHTC, QCTs are also recognized in other programs administered by Virginia Housing. For example, projects located within a QCT may receive revitalization points under the Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP), improving competitiveness during funding rounds. For mixed-income developments applying through programs such as the Mixed-Use/Mixed-Income Program or the Workforce Housing Investment Program, being in a QCT can simplify eligibility and strengthen alignment with broader state and local revitalization goals.

V.5: Difficult Development Areas (DDAs)

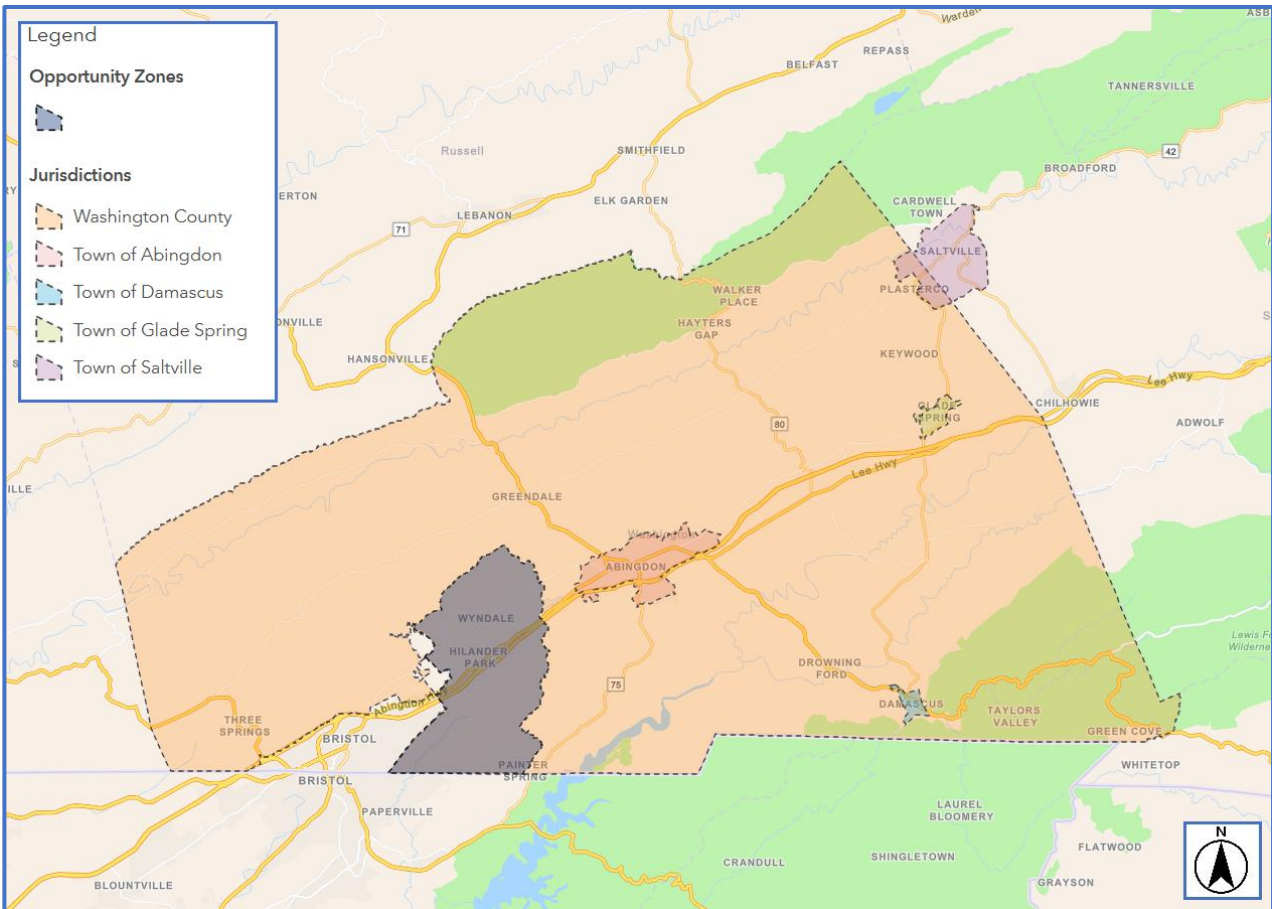
Difficult Development Areas (DDAs) are geographic regions designated annually by HUD based on factors such as elevated construction, land, and utility costs relative to area income levels. Projects located in DDAs are eligible for a 30 percent increase in the eligible basis under the LIHTC program, like the benefit provided in Qualified Census Tracts. This basis boost increases the amount of equity a project can receive through tax credit allocations, helping to close financing gaps in areas with unfavorable cost-to-income ratios.

As of HUD's most recent designations for 2025, no census tracts in Washington County are designated as DDAs. However, DDA status is reviewed and revised annually by HUD, often in response to updated income and cost data drawn from the American Community Survey. The list is also influenced by broader market trends, which may shift over time as housing and development conditions evolve.

V.6: Opportunity Zones (OZs)

Map G shows that two census tracts in Washington County are designated as Opportunity Zones (OZs), covering the southwestern portions of the County abutting the City of Bristol. These federally designated areas were established under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 to spur long-term private investment in low-income and economically distressed communities.

Investors in Opportunity Zones may defer, reduce, or eliminate federal capital gains taxes by reinvesting qualified gains into certified Opportunity Funds that support real estate or business development within these zones.



Map G - Washington County Opportunity Zones

For housing, Opportunity Zones offer a potential equity source for mixed-use, mixed-income, or workforce housing developments, particularly when combined with other funding sources such as Low-Income Housing Tax Credits. While the program does not provide direct grants or below-market financing, its tax benefits can help attract long-term private investment. This may help close financing gaps for projects that align with local revitalization priorities.

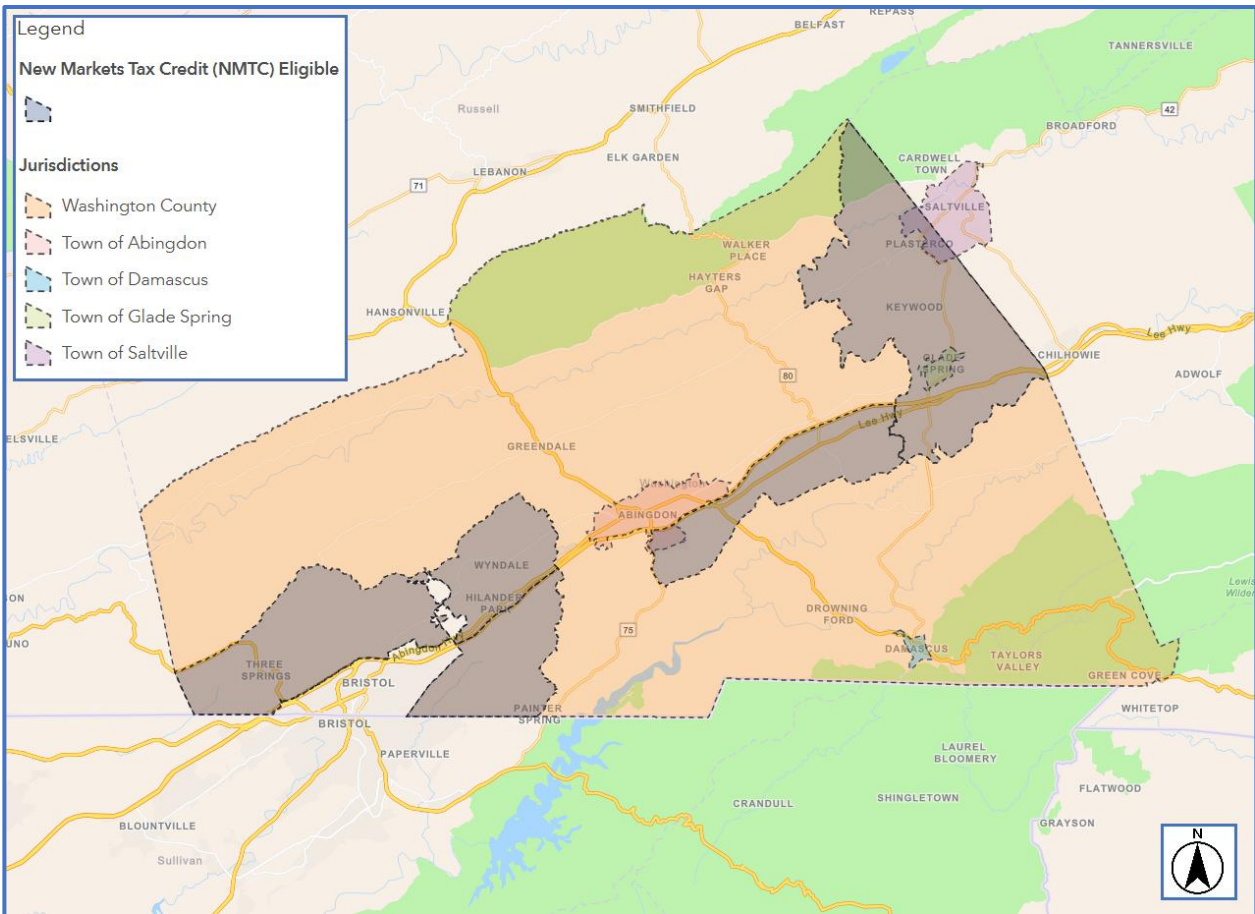
While investor activity in Opportunity Zones has been more limited in rural areas compared to metropolitan markets, the designation remains a potentially valuable incentive when paired with other financing tools such as the LIHTC program. Notably, over 93 percent of Opportunity Zone investments have gone to metropolitan areas, highlighting the challenges rural zones face in attracting capital.

In Washington County, aligning housing efforts with OZ boundaries may increase the appeal of projects to private investors and Opportunity Fund managers. Washington County has only two designated Opportunity Zones. To maximize impact, local officials should coordinate closely with potential investors and ensure that proposed developments address both community housing needs and the financial requirements of Opportunity Funds.

V.7: New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC)

The New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) program is a federal initiative that incentivizes private-sector investment in low-income and underserved areas. Administered by the U.S. Department of the Treasury, the program allocates tax credits to certified Community Development Entities (CDEs), which then invest in qualifying projects that create jobs and expand access to services in economically distressed communities.

To be eligible, a project must be located in a census tract that meets specific poverty or income criteria. These include areas with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent or where the median family income is below 80 percent of the area median. In addition, census tracts classified as “Severely Distressed” or located in “Non-Metropolitan” areas are prioritized. In Washington County, five census tracts currently meet the federal eligibility requirements for NMTC investments. **Map H** shows the location of these qualifying tracts.



Map H - New Market Tax Credit Eligible Census Tracts

The program provides tax credit equity equal to 39 percent of the total qualified investment, distributed over a seven-year period. This equity can play a critical role in closing financing gaps, particularly for large-scale or mixed-use projects that combine commercial, institutional, and residential elements. NMTCs are not typically used for stand-alone residential development, but they can support projects that incorporate housing when combined with a community-serving component. For example, affordable apartments built above a workforce training center, childcare facility, or health clinic may qualify.

In rural areas like Washington County, NMTCs can also support the adaptive reuse of vacant or underutilized buildings, such as former schools, factories, or downtown commercial properties, when such projects contribute to broader revitalization efforts. These types of developments often align well with the program's goals, particularly when they create or retain jobs and provide essential services.

Accessing NMTC financing, however, requires a partnership with a CDE that has a current allocation of credits and a demonstrated interest in investing in rural or small-town markets. Early engagement with NMTC consultants and potential CDE partners is critical. Projects are more likely to attract investment when they demonstrate strong local support, readiness for development, and alignment with regional economic development strategies.

While securing NMTC funding is complex and competitive, it remains one of the most flexible tools available for attracting private capital to high-need communities. In a locality like Washington County, where infrastructure and market constraints can limit private investment, NMTCs offer a meaningful opportunity to finance catalytic, mixed-use projects that might otherwise be infeasible.

V.8: REACH Virginia Program

The REACH Virginia Program is a flexible funding initiative administered by Virginia Housing to support the development of affordable housing, particularly in economically distressed or capital-constrained localities. REACH stands for Resources Enabling Affordable Community Housing and provides gap financing, planning assistance, and infrastructure support to both public-sector and nonprofit development partners.

In rural areas such as Washington County, where development can be financially challenging due to limited economies of scale, infrastructure constraints, and higher per-unit costs, REACH funding can improve the feasibility of projects that might not otherwise move forward. It is particularly useful for small and mid-sized developments that fall outside the scope of more structured programs or where additional support is needed to close financing gaps.

Unlike many competitive housing finance programs, REACH Virginia is designed to be responsive to local needs. It can support a broad range of activities, including property acquisition, predevelopment work, site preparation, off-site infrastructure improvements, and modular or alternative construction methods. The program is especially well-suited to projects that align with local or regional revitalization goals, address urgent housing needs, or contribute to broader economic development strategies.

Virginia Housing allocates REACH funds through several pathways. These include noncompetitive, staff-driven awards to local governments, targeted initiatives for rural or modular housing development, and supplemental support for projects applying through competitive programs such as the LIHTC program. Priority is generally given to localities that demonstrate project readiness, alignment with documented housing needs, and effective use of other financing sources.

Local governments, housing authorities, and mission-driven developers are encouraged to engage early with Virginia Housing staff to discuss potential project eligibility. While REACH does not follow a traditional open-application process, proposals are typically developed in collaboration with Virginia Housing to ensure consistency with internal priorities and funding availability. Because the program operates on a rolling basis and is driven by internal review, early coordination helps determine whether a project aligns with current funding strategies and REACH fund availability. This collaborative approach allows the program to adapt to evolving market conditions and support projects that may not qualify under conventional criteria.

V.9: Affordable and Special Needs Housing (ASNH) Program

The Affordable and Special Needs Housing (ASNH) Program is a competitive funding initiative administered by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). It consolidates several federal and state housing resources into a single application process, providing financial support for rental and homeownership developments that serve low-, very low-, and extremely low-income households across Virginia.

ASNH is funded through four primary sources: the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF), the Virginia Housing Trust Fund (VHTF), and Housing Innovations in Energy Efficiency (HIEE) funds. These resources can be combined to support a range of project types, including new construction, substantial rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse. The program emphasizes long-term affordability, with rental developments subject to a minimum 30-year affordability period.

All ASNH awards are competitively scored on a 100-point scale, with evaluation criteria based on housing need, financial feasibility, and developer capacity. A minimum of five residential units is required for both rental and homeownership projects. Each funding source also carries distinct income targeting requirements. For instance, NHTF funds are reserved for households earning at or below 30% of AMI; HOME funds generally target households earning up to 60% of AMI; and VHTF and HIEE funds may support households earning up to 80% of AMI.

For rural localities like Washington County, ASNH offers a strong opportunity to finance deeply affordable housing that would otherwise be infeasible due to low market rents and high construction costs. Projects located outside of federal HOME entitlement areas, such as Washington County, receive scoring preferences when applying for HOME funds through ASNH. Additional points are also available to Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs) that meet DHCD's certification requirements.

ASNH assistance is typically structured as permanent, interest-only financing for rental projects and as reimbursable construction financing for homeownership developments. All funds are subject to federal and state compliance standards, including environmental review, accessibility regulations, income verification, and long-term monitoring. Funding is capped at \$3 million per project across all sources.

In Washington County, the ASNH program can help address persistent housing gaps, particularly for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and extremely low-income renters. When combined with LIHTC, REACH Virginia resources, or other public and local financing tools, ASNH provides critical capital to support long-term, affordable housing development aligned with community needs.

V.10: Double Distressed Locality

Under Virginia law, a Double Distressed Locality is defined as a locality with an annual unemployment rate above the statewide average and a poverty rate also exceeding the statewide average.

Washington County does not currently meet both criteria and is therefore not recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia as a Double Distressed Locality. As a result, it does not qualify for the expanded benefits available under certain Virginia Housing programs that prioritize double distressed localities.

Section VI: Project BAUD: A Model for Blight Mitigation and Redevelopment

This section of the study evaluates the Town of Marion's Project BAUD (Blighted, Abandoned, Underutilized, and Derelict) as a potential model for addressing housing deterioration and property reuse throughout Washington County. Project BAUD is a locally led initiative coordinated by Marion's Economic Development Authority (EDA) that targets both publicly and privately owned properties for rehabilitation, demolition, or conversion. The program's primary objectives are to eliminate blight, expand the supply of safe and adequate housing, and repurpose certain sites, particularly those located within floodplains, as public green spaces.

The following analysis outlines the program's origins, structure, and operational challenges. It also considers whether similar mechanisms exist elsewhere in Washington County, including its towns and surrounding unincorporated areas. Based on this evaluation, the study concludes with recommendations for scaling or adapting a comparable initiative beyond the Marion town limits.

Originally conceptualized in 2018 and formally launched in 2021, Project BAUD was designed as a flexible, locally controlled initiative focused on long-term neighborhood stabilization and functional housing replacement. It emphasizes sustainable outcomes rather than short-term aesthetic gains. The program directly facilitates the acquisition, demolition, and redevelopment of blighted properties, with an emphasis on reuse that benefits both the housing market and the broader community through the introduction of high-quality infill housing. The program draws inspiration from West Virginia's Blight and Derelict (BAD) initiative but reflects Marion's own legal and administrative framework.

The early intent behind BAUD was to improve housing conditions, expand housing choices, and return idle parcels to productive use, thereby strengthening the local tax base. Previous attempts to address blight, particularly those funded through HUD's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, were limited in scope and geography. These earlier efforts often focused on targeted neighborhoods or corridors and faced cost overruns that made broader application infeasible. By contrast, BAUD attempts a more systematic, site-specific

approach that allows the Town to intervene strategically in response to individual property conditions.

Project BAUD defines success in terms of functional redevelopment rather than program permanence. It positions itself as a transitional tool. Once the supply of derelict properties is reduced to manageable levels, the program anticipates winding down or shifting to maintenance roles. Through this lens, BAUD is both a practical response to current needs and a longer-term investment in community resilience.

VI.1: Implementation and Operational Structure

The BAUD program is jointly administered by the Economic Development Authority (EDA), the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission (MRPDC), and the Town of Marion. This coordinated structure oversees the entire process, from property identification through acquisition, assessment, redevelopment, and resale. The program's central objective is to eliminate unsafe and substandard housing and to convert blighted properties into safe, sustainable residential or community-serving assets.

Initial property identification relies on a collaborative, community-based process. Input is gathered from code enforcement officers, public works personnel, utility meter readers, police, and fire departments. This integrated approach led to an initial inventory of approximately 250 properties, including severely deteriorated residential structures and underutilized commercial buildings.

Once identified, properties are evaluated based on external indicators of vacancy or physical distress, such as broken windows, overgrown vegetation, or visible structural deterioration. Town leadership and council members review the evaluations and determine the next steps. Where feasible, staff engage directly with property owners to explore options for repair, donation, or voluntary sale. Properties are acquired through negotiated purchases, donations, or tax sales. The EDA is responsible for handling all legal transactions, including deed transfers and financial documentation.

The MRPDC manages the redevelopment phase. Site inspections, cost-benefit assessments, and due diligence are conducted to determine whether structures should be rehabilitated or demolished. Each property is cross-checked against the National Register of Historic Places to identify any relevant preservation requirements before work begins.

Environmental safety is a significant concern throughout the process. Many structures contain hazardous materials, such as lead-based paint or asbestos. The Town relies on trained municipal staff and in-house equipment to carry out environmental remediation, which allows for greater quality control and has proven to be more cost-effective. Supplemental grant funding has been used to expand remediation capacity, particularly for properties with complex site conditions.

Once a decision is made to rehabilitate or demolish a property and funding is secured, the Town and MRPDC proceed with the construction or repair. Although these public entities act as developers using grant funding, they also actively work to attract private-sector partners. In recent years, the program has seen increased interest from private developers, particularly in acquiring vacant parcels that have been cleared and prepared for reuse.

The program's redevelopment philosophy goes beyond simply replacing housing units. Each new structure is intended to be resilient and thoughtfully designed, with the goal of establishing a high standard that contributes to broader neighborhood stabilization. While these individual projects are not always financially viable for private-sector developers, the EDA embraces this role with the understanding that achieving neighborhood revitalization may require accepting minimal returns or absorbing limited losses on a project-by-project basis.

As of September 2024, the BAUD inventory had been reduced to 54 of the original 250 properties, reflecting substantial progress in mitigating blight. To date, 46 projects have been completed, including 11 modular housing units. The current inventory includes 57 actively managed properties, of which 17 have been sold and six are listed for sale.

BAUD's scope also includes non-residential redevelopment. The program currently manages six commercial sites, eight green space parcels, and 14 vacant lots. These efforts contribute to a comprehensive revitalization strategy that addresses housing, preserves open space, and supports future economic growth. Increasing private-sector acquisition of cleared sites further suggests that the program is gradually approaching its long-term objective of rendering itself unnecessary by eliminating the conditions that led to its creation.

VI.2: Zoning Reforms and Policy Alignment

A key component of BAUD's implementation involved revising Marion's comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance. These changes, completed over a two-year period ending in 2003, were essential to removing regulatory barriers that had previously limited redevelopment potential. Zoning codes were updated to encourage infill and moderate-density development, improving the feasibility of parcels that had once been considered unbuildable under older standards.

For example, minimum lot sizes were reduced from 15,000 to 10,000 square feet in R-1 zones and from 7,500 to 5,000 square feet in R-2 zones. These reductions allowed new construction on smaller lots, many of which had remained vacant due to outdated minimum area requirements.

In addition, the Town eliminated road frontage requirements for developments with three or more housing units. Previously, each unit required at least 50 feet of frontage, a regulation that excluded many narrow or irregularly shaped parcels. Under the revised ordinance, such developments are now allowed if yard setbacks are met, each unit is separately connected to utilities, and residents establish a shared maintenance agreement for internal access streets and stormwater infrastructure. This revision has expanded opportunities for denser, small-scale residential development in neighborhoods already served by public infrastructure.

Another significant reform permitted duplex and triplex units to be sold individually, rather than restricted to rental occupancy. Developers can now subdivide attached units, provided end units meet side yard setbacks and each unit complies with 25-foot front and rear

yard requirements. For instance, a duplex built on a 7,500 square foot lot can now be subdivided into two 3,750 square foot parcels, with each supporting roughly 1,625 square feet of living space, depending on design. This approach allows developers to offer more ownership options at moderate price points while using land more efficiently.

The Town also reduced side yard setback requirements from 10 feet to five feet. This change is consistent with state building code allowances for structures within five feet of the side property line. Tighter restrictions apply for structures proposed closer than five feet to a property boundary.

Further clarification was provided to distinguish modular homes from manufactured homes. Manufactured homes are constructed to HUD code, have a permanent chassis, and retain mobility features. Modular homes, in contrast, are built offsite to standard building codes and installed as permanent structures. Prior to this clarification, confusion between the two terms led to resident misunderstandings and contributed to skepticism toward the BAUD program. The distinction now supports clearer communication and ensures that development standards are applied appropriately.

These zoning reforms created the regulatory foundation necessary for the success of the BAUD initiative. By eliminating outdated requirements related to lot size, frontage, setbacks, and unit ownership, the Town of Marion established a more flexible planning environment that supports a broader range of housing types. The updated framework enables both public and private developers to make more effective use of underutilized parcels while advancing the Town's goals for affordable and context-sensitive infill housing.

VI.3: Financing and Incentive Strategy

To support redevelopment and improve project feasibility, the Town of Marion implemented a layered funding strategy that integrates local, state, and federal resources. This approach, often referred to as “stacking,” combines funds from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, Virginia Housing, and targeted federal appropriations.

The MRPDC coordinates all funding applications on behalf of the Town and conducts return-on-investment analyses to support project selection and budgeting.

An initial \$1,000,000 federal grant, secured with assistance from Senators Kaine and Warner, provided early capital for site acquisition and construction. Since then, the Town has drawn from a range of additional sources, as listed in **Table 30** below.

Table 30: Summary of Housing Program Funding Sources and Terms for BAUD	
<u>Program Name</u>	<u>Amount and Type</u>
Virginia Housing CIG Deconstruction Grants (I & II)	\$300,000 grant
DHCD Acquire Renovate and Sell Program	\$230,000 partial loan
Grow Smyth County Housing Unit Development Program	\$800,000 0% interest loan
Virginia Housing PDC Housing Unit Development Program	\$172,000 grant
MRPDC's Housing Development Trust Fund	\$200,000 0% interest loan
Virginia Housing Innovation Grant	\$200,000 grant
Virginia Housing's Sponsoring Partnerships & Revitalizing Communities	\$250,000 in mortgage loan set-aside ¹
¹ Used to buy down interest rate by one percentage point.	
Source: Mount Rogers Planning District Commission	

This combined funding model reduces overall development costs and allows the Town to implement both supply-side and demand-side incentives to support homeownership. On the demand side, a range of programs have been made available to help qualified buyers access affordable housing in Marion, particularly those purchasing redeveloped BAUD properties.

One of the primary tools is a 20 percent forgivable second mortgage provided through the Town of Marion. This incentive is available to first-time homebuyers, veterans, seniors, and individuals relocating to Marion for employment. The second mortgage is forgiven after 10 years of continuous owner-occupancy and serves as a key affordability mechanism for buyers with limited upfront capital.

In addition to the EDA's program, a number of state and regional initiatives provide further support:

- The Virginia Individual Development Accounts (VIDA) program, offered through Rooftop of Virginia Community Action Program (CAP) and People Inc., helps eligible individuals save for a down payment. Participants receive financial training, matched

savings support, and can earn up to \$10,000 in match funding at a rate of \$10 for every \$1 saved. These funds may be used toward down payment and closing costs.

- The Homeownership Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance Program (DPA), coordinated by Open Door Community, People Inc., and Rooftop of Virginia CIP, offers gap financing for first-time buyers earning at or below 80% of AMI. Assistance is provided as a grant with a mandatory affordability period during which the home must remain the buyer's primary residence.
- MRPDC has secured \$2.5 million through the Sponsoring Partnerships & Revitalizing Communities (SPARC) Program, which allocates affordable mortgage financing to buyers in high-need communities. SPARC reduces Virginia Housing's published interest rate for first-time homebuyers by one percentage point, lowering monthly mortgage costs and improving long-term affordability.
- Housing counseling and credit repair services are available through Virginia Housing, Open Door Community, People Inc., and Rooftop of Virginia CIP. These services help prepare prospective buyers by addressing credit challenges and providing training on the responsibilities of homeownership.

Key financing partners also include the Bank of Marion, which offers mortgage products tailored to buyers of BAUD properties. These local and regional partnerships play a critical role in reducing financial risk for buyers and increasing access to stable, long-term homeownership opportunities.

Together, these programs form a comprehensive support system for new homeowners in Marion, particularly those purchasing properties rehabilitated through the BAUD initiative. By combining direct financial assistance with education and credit support, the Town and its partners are working to ensure that newly developed homes remain attainable for a broad range of residents.

VI.4: Use of Modular Construction

Modular homes have become a core element of the BAUD strategy. The zoning reforms outlined in earlier sections have played a critical role in making this development method more feasible by accommodating smaller lots, reducing setback requirements, and clarifying regulatory definitions. Modular construction, which involves offsite fabrication followed by onsite assembly, offers several advantages over traditional site-built methods. These include lower

construction costs, shorter project timelines, and greater quality control, particularly in environments where labor shortages and rising material costs pose challenges to conventional development.

Given current development constraints, modular housing presents one of the most practical approaches to delivering modestly priced, for-sale single-family units. In contrast to stick-built construction, which often exceeds cost thresholds for affordability in rural markets, modular units allow for controlled budgets and more predictable scheduling, which in turn supports more consistent redevelopment activity.

The Town of Marion has partnered with manufacturers such as Oakwood and Clayton Homes to place modular units on vacant infill parcels. In many cases, modular homes have been used to replace substandard structures that were demolished through the BAUD program. These placements have been facilitated by ongoing partnerships with manufacturers who understand the program's goals and are willing to work within local design standards.

Currently, six modular homes are listed for sale on redeveloped BAUD lots. Sale prices for these homes typically range between \$220,000 and \$240,000, depending on size and features. All are built to current building codes and exceed the structural and energy efficiency standards of the homes they replaced.

The use of modular construction has allowed the Town and MRPDC to maintain momentum in areas where traditional development models may not be economically viable. It also provides a replicable method for scaling infill housing production while maintaining affordability and quality. As the program evolves, modular units are expected to continue playing a central role in BAUD's redevelopment efforts.

VI.5: Program Challenges and Lessons Learned

Despite its measurable successes, the BAUD program has encountered several challenges that have shaped its development and informed its ongoing implementation. During the early stages, public skepticism was widespread. Concerns were raised about the potential for

gentrification, the perceived targeting of low-income neighborhoods, and the risk of rising property taxes. These fears were compounded by longstanding political dynamics within the community, which complicated initial outreach and slowed early program momentum.

To address these concerns, local officials emphasized transparency. Regular updates were provided during public council meetings, and stakeholders were engaged throughout the planning and implementation process. The Town also committed to sharing data that documented both the scope of the problem and the measurable outcomes of the program. This approach helped build credibility, demonstrate progress, and reduce misinformation. Over time, it became clear that maintaining public trust and securing political support were as essential to the program's viability as available funding or land use reforms.

A key takeaway has been the importance of an intentional and sustained public engagement strategy. This includes regular communication with staff, elected officials, and residents, as well as timely updates about project status and outcomes. The Town recognized that clear, consistent messaging was necessary not only to counter early skepticism but also to maintain momentum and support as the program evolved.

Program metrics have been especially effective in demonstrating impact. By tracking completed units, properties sold, funding leveraged, and cost savings achieved through modular construction or in-house remediation, the Town has been able to provide clear evidence of results. These metrics are updated regularly and shared publicly, contributing to a shared understanding of goals and progress. MRPDC staff play an active role in this process by attending town manager meetings and offering updates on specific projects as well as broader housing conditions across the region.

Sustaining the program long-term will require continued coordination, consistent institutional support, and adaptability in response to changing conditions. Transitions in elected leadership or fluctuations in housing market trends could pose challenges. However, Marion's practice of reinvesting proceeds from home sales into a local housing trust fund has helped mitigate this risk. The fund provides a recurring source of capital that is not dependent on annual

appropriations or outside grants, allowing the program to maintain operational flexibility even as external circumstances shift.

This reinvestment model underscores a broader lesson: financial sustainability must be built into program design from the beginning. By creating a mechanism for recycling funds into future projects, the Town has positioned the program to weather changes in leadership or funding availability. As other communities consider adopting similar strategies, this focus on long-term financial resilience may serve as a guiding principle for effective program replication.

VI.6: Comparative Local Blight Mitigation Approaches in Washington County

Blight mitigation in Washington County and its incorporated towns is characterized by staff limitations, budget constraints, and the absence of comprehensive or coordinated policy frameworks. While some localities have taken specific actions or are exploring new strategies, most enforcement activity remains complaint-driven and reactive. This section summarizes current blight-related activities and limitations in the County and each Town.

- **Washington County (Unincorporated Areas)**: Blight response in unincorporated areas of Washington County is constrained by minimal staffing and limited resources. The County employs a single Building Official and maintains a small legal staff, with the County Attorney and one paralegal managing all legal matters. In 2024, the County reestablished a Blight Committee to evaluate deteriorated properties and recommend mitigation strategies, but no comprehensive program has been adopted.

The County Code permits enforcement under the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC), but the County Code currently applies only to commercial and industrial zoning districts. Amendments have been proposed to expand enforcement authority to residential areas. Property owners must receive written notice, and legal procedures must be followed before enforcement. If violations persist, the County may proceed with repair or demolition and recover costs through a lien, but limited funding remains a barrier to sustained enforcement.

Past experience has discouraged proactive engagement. Over a decade ago, the County spent nearly \$100,00 to remediate a blighted motel near Exit 10, but was unable to recover the cost, prompting caution in future enforcement.

As a result, the County tends to avoid targeting certain properties due to political and economic sensitivities. Instead, it emphasizes low-cost, cooperative approaches and has explored citizen-driven processes, which allow residents to petition a grand jury to

investigate public nuisances. Complaints are typically submitted directly to the County Attorney's office.

- **Town of Glade Spring:** The Town of Glade Spring has an active code enforcement program that responds to complaints and issues notices to property owners or residents, requesting resolution. At least one property has been the subject of legal action, though a recent injunction halted further proceedings.

The Town does not currently have a formal spot blight abatement ordinance and has not adopted provisions aligned with Virginia Code § 36-49.1:1. A review of Glade Spring's municipal code confirms that it lacks specific tools to declare properties blighted, conduct formal hearings, or acquire or remediate properties using liens or cost recovery mechanisms. As a result, the Town's enforcement authority is limited to general property maintenance and nuisance violations.

Recognizing these limitations, the Town is in the process of developing a strategic planning proposal that includes extensive community engagement and a structured process for assessing and addressing problematic buildings. Inspired in part by the West Virginia BAD Buildings model, the proposed framework would involve the creation of a building inventory, evaluation of site conditions, and prioritization of actions and budgets.

The goal is to align enforcement efforts, redevelopment incentives, and reuse strategies with broader goals expected to emerge from the strategic planning process. The Town has expressed a clear interest in moving toward a coordinated, goal-driven approach rather than continuing to rely on ad hoc enforcement.

- **Town of Abingdon:** The Town of Abingdon adopted its Spot Blight Abatement Ordinance in 2003, which was updated in 2013, under Article III, Chapter 14, Sections 14-51 to 14-57 of the Town Code. The ordinance empowers the Town to declare properties blighted, following a preliminary determination by the Town Manager, who issues written notice describing the property's conditions and the reasons for the finding.

Property owners then have 30 days to propose a plan to remedy the blight, which may include repair or demolition, subject to Town Manager approval on timing and adequacy. If the owner does not submit a timely or acceptable plan, the Town Manager may request a public hearing before the Planning Commission, followed by one before the Town Council, to confirm blight status and authorize abatement or acquisition actions.

Once a property is formally declared blighted, the Town may acquire, repair, manage, clear, or dispose of the site under a Council-approved plan. All related costs, including a \$100 administrative fee added in 2019, may be assessed as a lien on the property and recorded in the County Clerk's office, with accrual of interest if unpaid.

While Abingdon has used this ordinance to address safety or health hazards, its application remains limited to reactive enforcement. The Town does not engage in

proactive acquisition or redevelopment of blighted properties as part of a broader revitalization strategy.

- **Town of Damascus:** Damascus has pursued blight mitigation through code enforcement and targeted housing rehabilitation in partnership with the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission and the Virginia CDBG program. In a recent effort, Phase 1 included the rehabilitation of six homes and the demolition of three structures, with Phase 2 now underway. However, these activities remain limited in scale and scope.

The Town does not have a standalone blight abatement ordinance embedded in its municipal code. Instead, any authority to address blighted properties is derived from the Virginia Code, which permits localities to identify, acquire, and remediate blighted properties through a formal process involving owner notification and cost recovery via liens. Without a dedicated local ordinance or formal program, Damascus addresses blight on a case-by-case basis. There is no comprehensive strategy to guide property acquisition, coordinated reuse, or long-term reinvestment.

- **Town of Saltville:** Saltville lacks formal policies or dedicated staffing for blight mitigation. The Town previously employed a Code Enforcement Officer, but that position was eliminated. Only two full-time municipal employees remain, limiting enforcement capacity. While current leadership has expressed concern about blighted conditions, no official strategies or operational plans have been established. The Town's code does not include any ordinances specific to blight abatement or property reuse, and no formal framework exists to guide systematic intervention.

Across Washington County, blight mitigation efforts remain largely reactive. Most enforcement occurs only in response to public complaints, and legal action is pursued only when conditions are severe. There is no coordinated strategy in place to identify, acquire, demolish, and redevelop blighted properties. Limited staffing and budgets restrict the ability of local governments to take proactive or sustained action. While several jurisdictions have expressed interest in developing more strategic approaches and expanding intergovernmental collaboration, meaningful progress will require clear policy direction, dedicated personnel, and stronger coordination between the County and its incorporated towns.

VI.7: Considerations for Replication

Across Washington County and its incorporated towns, the capacity to replicate a program like Project BAUD varies significantly. Only one locality, the Town of Abingdon, has adopted a formal blight abatement ordinance. Abingdon's Spot Blight Abatement Ordinance

establishes a formal process for declaring and remediating blighted properties, but its use remains limited and mostly complaint-driven.

Elsewhere, local efforts remain narrow, as other towns and the County itself have not adopted comparable ordinances or formal processes and lack a framework for property reuse or redevelopment. Typically, enforcement ends after a violation is addressed, with no pathway for reuse.

In contrast, Marion's BAUD model offers a comprehensive approach, spanning property identification, acquisition, redevelopment, and resale. The program evaluates properties, engages owners, determines whether rehabilitation or demolition is appropriate, addresses environmental hazards, and either redevelops sites directly or prepares them for private-sector use. Redeveloped properties are sold, with proceeds reinvested into a local housing trust fund, supporting sustained neighborhood stabilization.

Across much of Washington County and its towns, however, the institutional framework needed to support this process is largely absent. Enforcement is often complaint-driven, and after a violation is resolved, properties may remain vacant or deteriorating for years. Limited staff and budgets further prevent local governments from acquiring properties or planning redevelopment, leaving communities unable to move from enforcement to revitalization.

Communities interested in replicating BAUD should begin by evaluating whether their zoning and administrative frameworks support comprehensive redevelopment. Marion's success was supported by zoning reforms that expanded the pool of buildable lots, reduced frontage and setback requirements, and clarified definitions for modular housing. In many Washington County localities, outdated or incomplete zoning codes need to be addressed before redevelopment can proceed.

Enforcement capacity is also a prerequisite. Marion's program benefits from contributions by a wide range of municipal personnel, including code officers, public works staff, utility meter

readers, and public safety officials, all of whom help identify and monitor potential sites. Elsewhere in the County, capacity is more limited.

Given these limitations, a regional implementation model may offer the most feasible path forward. Marion's partnership with the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission enables the Town to access planning, environmental review, grant writing, and redevelopment coordination without creating new municipal departments. A similar shared-services approach could allow other localities in Washington County to participate in a structured redevelopment process without straining their existing resources.

Financial capacity is another key factor. Marion's layered funding model draws from state, federal, and local sources and supports both site preparation and buyer-side affordability. Replication efforts will likely require similar mechanisms, which may be most efficiently accessed and managed through a regional entity like the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission. Smaller localities rarely have the administrative capacity to secure and manage these funds independently.

Based on current conditions, replication in Washington County and its towns will require a phased, collaborative approach. Localities should first focus on aligning zoning and enforcement practices, then build capacity for acquisition and redevelopment through shared regional partnerships.

Key steps for replication include:

1. Reviewing and revising zoning ordinances and comprehensive plans to eliminate barriers to small-lot development, modular construction, higher-density housing, and other infill strategies. A supportive regulatory framework is essential for enabling redevelopment once properties are identified.
2. Establishing or strengthening code enforcement capacity to proactively identify properties showing signs of vacancy or deterioration. Early detection supports timely interventions and lays the groundwork for acquisition or engagement with property owners. Where staffing is limited, consider pooled enforcement services or cross-jurisdictional arrangements.

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3. Partnering with a regional entity such as MRPDC to manage technical functions such as grant writing, environmental review, redevelopment planning, and overall program coordination. This is especially critical for smaller jurisdictions with limited internal capacity.
 4. Creating and maintaining an inventory of vacant, abandoned, and blighted properties to guide resource allocation, track progress, and support transparent, data-driven decision-making. A centralized inventory also enhances coordination across departments and jurisdictions.
 5. Securing a diversified funding strategy that draws on local, state, and federal resources. The approach should support both upfront site preparation and buyer-side affordability tools, such as forgivable second mortgages, down payment assistance, or interest-rate reductions.
 6. Establishing a local housing trust fund or reinvestment mechanism to promote long-term financial sustainability. Redirecting proceeds from property sales into a dedicated fund can help support ongoing redevelopment without full dependence on external grants.

While conditions vary across Washington County, the core principles of the BAUD model, such as targeted acquisition, regulatory flexibility, coordinated funding, and regional support, can be adapted to different settings.

Section VII: Development and Redevelopment Properties

This section of the housing analysis identifies available sites recognized by local officials as being suitable for new residential development. All of these sites have access to, or are located near, public water and sewer services. This access is a critical factor in making residential development financially viable, particularly for larger-scale projects, since construction without utility connections often requires costly private water systems or on-site septic infrastructure.

Given the number and variety of available parcels suitable for a wide range of residential development types, such as single-family homes, townhomes, and multifamily housing, it is clear that land availability is not currently a limiting factor for residential growth in Washington County. The County's existing inventory of developable land is robust and provides flexibility to accommodate a range of housing needs and market conditions.

VII.1: Vacant Parcels with Residential Potential

Table 31, Table 32, Table 33, Table 34 present data on multiple vacant parcels in Washington County that have potential for new residential development. The survey focuses on larger properties of five acres or more that could appeal to homebuilders from outside the region.

Smaller parcels, along with those facing significant development constraints such as topographic issues, difficult access, or flood-prone conditions, were excluded from the analysis. All of the properties listed in these tables have direct or nearby access to public water and sewer services.

The tables are organized by geography. **Table 31** includes parcels in the Bristol area, **Table 32** covers the Hillman Highway area, **Table 33** features parcels in the Abingdon area, and **Table 34** includes sites in the Emory and Glade Spring areas of Washington County.

The data show that Washington County has an abundance of large parcels available for residential development. A total of 290 vacant parcels meeting the selection criteria were

identified. These sites range in size from five acres to nearly 300 acres, providing opportunities to support a mix of housing types on a single property.

Many of these parcels are currently zoned for low-density residential or agricultural use and would require rezoning for higher-density development. Some have commercial or industrial zoning designations that may limit their suitability for residential use. Only a few of the identified sites are actively being marketed for sale.

The key takeaway is that Washington County has a strong inventory of developable land. Land availability is not a significant constraint on new residential development in the region.

Table 31: Characteristics of Better Properties with Residential Development Potential — Bristol Area of Washington County, VA			
Parcel Number	Description	Acreage	Zoning
142-A-23B	BOUNDARY ADJ PROP OF	5.4	B2
142-A-31	LOT 3 CAMPBELL PROP	5.7	B2
163-A-5A	LOT 2 PT TWO LOT DIV OF	6.2	A2
163-A-25	TRACT 2 PT SUBD OF	6.5	R2
123-A-15A	TRACT A JEAN B PAYNE LAND	7.2	A2
163-A-2	GIBSON LAND ACR 7.4	7.4	A2
163-A-10C	LOT 1 PT OF THE PROP OF	7.7	A2
183-A-34	CARMACK LD ACR 7.731	7.7	A2
123-A-98	TRACT 1 DIV OF THE	9.3	R2,A2,B2
163A-A-13	SINKING CREEK ACR 9.46	9.5	A2
142-A-24D	ELIZABETH P FARRIS EST	11.5	A2
163-A-7B	SINKING CREEK	11.8	A2,R2
123-A-98A	TRACT 2 DIV OF THE	13.3	B2
162-A-24A	TRACT NO 2 J C FORGEY	14.6	R2
142-A-48	GREENFIELDS MOBILE HOME	15.3	A2,B2
123A-1-36	TR 36 TO 39 INC	16.8	A2
163-A-3	SINKING CREEK ACR 17.24	17.2	A2
163-A-10B	PT PROPERTY OF DANIEL E	17.4	A2
141-A-34	WALLACE ACR 18.324	18.3	A2,P1
141-A-34C	PT PLAT OF TWO LOT SUBD	20.8	A2
123-A-156C	PT OF THE C T FLEENOR	20.9	A2
163-A-10A	DANIEL E & JUDY A DUTTON	36.1	A2
123-A-153A5A	REPLAT OF A PORTION OF	39.7	<Null>
141-4-1	TR 1 CLARA CLENDENEN EST	47.0	A2
123-A-97	PT W B NOONKESTER PROP	47.7	R2,A2
183-A-35	FORGY ACR 50.5	50.5	A2
163-A-1	PROP OF HENRY DONALD	60.3	A2
102-A-78A	DOROTHY R FISER PROP	81.6	A2
141-A-32	TRACT A WILLIAM A LAMBERT	84.8	A2
162-A-23	SINKING CREEK ACR 87.97	88.0	A2
122-A-27	BRISTOL INDUSTRIAL PARK	89.5	M2
122-2-A	KIRBY SMITH LD ACR 103	103.0	M2
123-A-153A7	TRACT 7 PT BOUNDARY ADJ	171.9	M1
141-A-1	WALLACE ACR 284.83	284.8	A2
Source: Washington County Service Authority			

**Table 32: Characteristics of Better Properties with Residential Development Potential —
Hillman Highway Area of Washington County, VA**

<u>Parcel Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Zoning</u>
086-A-33	PT S W WILKINSON LD	5.4	M1
086-3-1B	LOT 3 PT A DIV OF THE	6.9	M1
086-2-4	TR 4 CORA JONES LD	7.0	M1
085-2-23A	TR A REPLAT ACR 7.05	7.1	A2
086-A-43	PT TRACT 1-B PAUL & MABEL	8.6	M1
086-A-35	PT GALLIHER LAND	9.5	M1
086-A-43A	TRACT 1-A PAUL & MABEL	15.5	M1
086-A-44A	TRACT 2A WALLACE HAGY	16.8	M1
086-A-3	LEE HWY ACR 17.59	17.6	A2
086-1-11	GALLIHER LAND ACR 19.5	19.5	A2
086-A-45	TR 3 JONES LD	22.2	M1
086-5-8	TRS 8 TO 13 INC PT 14	23.6	A2
085-A-77	PT J W WILLIE PEAK LD	25.3	A2

Source: Washington County Service Authority

**Table 33: Characteristics of Better Properties with Residential Development Potential —
Abingdon Area of Washington County, VA**

<u>Parcel Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Zoning</u>
104-1-8A	PT TR 8 & ALL 9	5.0	R2
106B-1-A-1	SOUTHVIEW ESTATES SUBD	5.0	ABINGDON
124-A-69	IRESON LD ACR 5	5.0	R1
124A2-A-5	JONESBORO RD ACR 5.00	5.0	R1
106-6-2	EARL W BLEVINS LD	5.1	ABINGDON
010-1-33A	PT BOUNDARY ADJ OF PROP	5.2	
084C2-1-46	46 & 47 KINZEL LD	5.2	ABINGDON
104-A-20A	PT LEE ROY DUNFORD	5.3	B2,R1
104-10-6	TR 6 FINAL PLAT STONE	5.3	ABINGDON
124-15-16	TRACT NO 6 PT DIV OF	5.3	R2
018-6-30	PT LTS 30 & 31 S F HURT	5.4	ABINGDON
104-A-20	PT BOUNDARY LINE ADJ	5.4	B2
123-21-6	TR 6 MARTHA CAMPBELL	5.5	B2,A2
124-A-46E	PT A BOUNDARY LINE ADJ	5.5	R2
107-A-11	PT ROSEDALE ACR 5.54	5.5	A2
007-2-8	WASHINGTON COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD	5.6	ABINGDON
103A4-6-10	PT BOUNDARY ADJ OF THE	5.6	A2
104-A-23	TRS 9-10 20-21 31-32	5.6	B2
084-A-12	PATRICK LD ACR 5.625	5.6	R1
104F-1-154	DEER RUN ESTATES LOT 154	5.7	R2
124A2-13-1	TR 1 R V DAVIS EST	5.7	R1
104-1-3	TRS 3 & 4 PT OF MRS	5.7	B2,R1
104-A-64	BRISTOL RD TRS 2	5.8	ABINGDON
104-A-59	PT TR A ACR 5.78	5.8	ABINGDON
106B-1-A-31	SOUTHVIEW ESTATES SUBD	5.9	ABINGDON
124-15-14	TRACT NO 14 PT DIV OF	5.9	R2
005-1-2	KINZEL LD ACR 5.931	5.9	ABINGDON
084C2-A-4	NEAR ABINGDON ACR 6	6.0	R2
106-7-31H	PT TR 31 R B KREGER LD	6.0	M2
014-1-35	PROP OF PATTY R ATKINS	6.1	ABINGDON
104-11-9	LOT 9 PT A BOUNDARY	6.1	ABINGDON
015-1-4	HUMES LAND ACR 6.15	6.2	ABINGDON
106-A-3C	W J HAGY LD ACR 6.179	6.2	ABINGDON
104-10-5	LOT 5 FINAL PLAT	6.3	ABINGDON
105-A-32	FAIRGROUND ACR 6.4	6.4	ABINGDON
123-A-123	TR 12 PT OF 11	6.4	B2,A2
084C1-A-14	DYER LD ACR 6.466	6.5	ABINGDON
105-10-6	FAIRWAY OAKS LOT 6	6.5	R2
104-7-5	PARCEL 5	6.5	ABINGDON
106-A-54	PT PROP OF CLARICE E	6.6	A2
104-5-7A	PT TR 7 C C SUTTON LD	7.0	A2
124-A-71	IRESON LD ACR 7.00	7.0	R1
106-3-10	TR 10 TINA CAMPBELL EST	7.1	A2
016-1-1	PT BOUNDARY RETRACEMENT	7.5	ABINGDON
084-9-1	PT TR 1 HAROLD D MITCHELL	7.5	MHR
084C1-A-20	PT TR 4	7.6	R1
106-A-20	KING HAGY LD ACR 7.6	7.6	ABINGDON
086-12-4	LOT 4 HARMONY HILLS	7.6	R2
125-1-18	LTS 18 TO 31 INC	7.6	A2
085-14-29	PT STONEYBROOK PHASE 3	7.7	ABINGDON
084-9-2	HAROLD D & ROSE M	7.7	A2
105C-1-G	PARCEL G- FAIRWAY 10	7.7	ABINGDON
084-2-14A	PT TRS 14 & 25 ACR 7.77	7.8	A2,R2
105E-2-4	PT PROP OF CHARLES M	7.9	R2

<u>Parcel Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Zoning</u>
105C-1-F	PARCEL F- FAIRWAY 3	7.9	ABINGDON,A2
124-A-74	ROPP LAND ACR 8	8.0	R1
104-10-13	LOT 13 FINAL PLAT	8.0	ABINGDON
015-1-2	TR 23 ACR 8.09	8.1	ABINGDON
083-7-4	J A BROWN PROP ACR 8.195	8.2	R2
104-A-24	TRS 6-7-8 17-18-19	8.4	B2
084-10-1	TR 1 PROP OF A DIV OF	8.4	R1
106A2-3-302	302 & 303 C H SCOTT	8.5	ABINGDON
084-A-20B	DENNISON LD ACR 8.513	8.5	R2
124-A-44	PT A DIV OF THE SEVEN	8.5	R2,B2
124-15-17	TRACT NO 17 PT DIV OF	8.6	R2
126-A-2	MEADOWS- CAMP GLENROCHIE	8.7	ABINGDON
107-A-11C	PT DEWEY SKEENS PROP	8.9	A2
104-10-11	LOT 11 FINAL PLAT	8.9	ABINGDON
104-A-35B	LOT 2 PT OF BOUNDARY	9.0	ABINGDON
103-5-9	LOT 1 TWO LOT DIV OF	9.0	A1,R2
104-10-1	LOT 1 FINAL PLAT	9.3	ABINGDON
123-A-144	PT LESTER LD ACR 9.348	9.3	B2,A2
105-A-37	MEADOWS ACR 9.50	9.5	ABINGDON
084C1-A-33	PT TR 1 PERKINS LD	9.9	ABINGDON,R1
106A2-3-254	254 TO 263 INC 270 TO 278	10.0	ABINGDON
104-A-36	N&WRR ACR 10.238	10.2	ABINGDON
105-A-43	MEADOWS ACR 10.33	10.3	ABINGDON
105-A-50A	PT MARTIN M CAMPBELL PROP	10.4	R2
106-7-31K	PT TR 31 R B KREGER LD	10.7	B2
104-15-3	TRACT NO 3 JOHN T PHIPPS	10.9	A2
123-22-15	NEW LOT 15 INDUSTRIAL	11.7	M1
104-A-22	PT BOUNDARY LINE ADJ OF	11.8	B2,R1
020-1-20	PT J H HASSINGER EST	12.2	ABINGDON
107-1-134	PT TR 134 R F BARKER LD	12.3	B2
104-15-2	TRACT NO 2 JOHN T PHIPPS	12.7	A2
103A4-6-21	TR 21 RATCLIFF LD	13.4	A2,R2
084-10-2	PT BOUNDARY LINE ADJ OF	13.8	A2
125-3-1	PT TR 1 ACR 14.272	14.3	ABINGDON
104-A-33	PT LOT 2 DIV CATHERINE	14.9	ABINGDON
105C-1-C	PARCEL C-FAIRWAY 8 & 9	15.0	ABINGDON
105E-2-1	TR 1 CHARLES M MEADE LD	15.0	R2
106-5-4	PT TRS 1-2-3-4-5 RAMSEY	15.3	ABINGDON
124A1-A-2	THE JEANETTE JOHNSTON	15.3	R1
124A1-A-2A	THE JEANETTE JOHNSTON	15.3	R1
105-A-17	HUMES LAND ACR 15.64	15.6	ABINGDON
104-15-1	TRACT NO 1 JOHN T PHIPPS	15.8	A2
106-A-23A	PT BOUNDARY LINE ADJ OF	17.6	B2,A2
085-A-39	PT TR 1 W J HAGY LD	18.0	ABINGDON
104-A-19	CUMMINGS LD ACR 18.665	18.7	B2,R1
085-A-38	PT TR 1 W J HAGY LD	19.5	ABINGDON
086-8-5	TR 5 OLLIE C WRIGHT	19.5	A2
105-A-46A1	PT THE REPLAT OF THE	19.5	A2
106-7-27	PT TR 27 R B KREGER LAND-FARM 2	19.5	R2,A2
084-A-15	NEAR ABINGDON ACR 19.71	19.7	R2
084-5-B	PT TR B ACR 19.95	20.0	R2
125-2-3	ABINGDON STOCKYARD	20.7	A2
084-A-22A	PT DENNISON LD	20.9	ABINGDON,R2
084-A-9	ELLER LD ACR 22.481	22.5	R1
084-A-20	DENNISON LD ACR 22.619	22.6	R2
105E-2-5	TR 5 CHARLES M MEADE LD	23.0	R2
107-1-152	PT TR 152 R F BARKER LD	23.9	A1
086-12-5	LOT 5 HARMONY HILLS	24.2	R2
106-A-17A	TRACT 2 THE ALPINE MOTEL	24.5	ABINGDON
103A2-12-8	PROP OF JEAN SUMMERS	24.8	R1
104-5-9	PT TRS 8 & 9	25.1	ABINGDON
106-13-4	PT CLARK LD ACR 25.19	25.2	A2
104-A-65	WOLF CREEK-SUTTON	25.3	R2,R1
105-A-1	HIGH HOPES FARM AND	25.5	ABINGDON
124-A-45	PT BRISTOL ROAD	26.2	R2,B2
084-A-1	HAWKINS LD ACR 26.375	26.4	R2,A2
086-A-8	PT BOUNDARY LINE ADJ OF	27.2	R2,A2
124-A-50	SPRING CREEK ACR 27.45	27.5	A2
105-A-34	JOINS BOOKER N HWY 81	27.6	ABINGDON
106-8-5	RE-PLAT OF THE FINAL	27.7	A2
124-A-65	CHARLES S CAMPBELL ESTATE	27.8	R1
105-8-2	PT TR B THE GRAHAM	28.5	ABINGDON,A2
085-4-2	HAYTERS BRIDGE	29.7	ABINGDON
104-A-29	PT REEDY CREEK RD	29.8	R1
124-A-24	PT BRISTOL RD	30.5	B2
103A1-A-1	POOR VALLEY ACR 31.769	31.8	A2
106-A-4B	LEE HWY ACR 32.10	32.1	ABINGDON
104-2-1	PT TRS 1 THRU 8	33.0	ABINGDON

<u>Parcel Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Zoning</u>
104-A-39	PT TR 4 L R JOHNSON EST	33.5	ABINGDON
084-A-24	ALICE M CALDWELL PROP	33.6	R2,A2
105-8-1	PT TR A & STRIP	35.4	ABINGDON,A2
105-A-20	HUMES LD ACR 35.48	35.5	ABINGDON
106-A-2	PT PROP OF JAMES D	35.7	ABINGDON
106A1-5-1	TRACTS 1-2-3-4 & 8	36.6	ABINGDON,R2
126-2-23	MARY HOPE KELLY EST	38.7	ABINGDON,A2
085-4-3E	ROBERT & SUE COX LD	40.5	A2
125-1-32	TRS 32 TO 37 INC	41.0	A2,M1
083-A-52	NEAR ABINGDON ACR 43.213	43.2	R1
104-7-2	PARCEL 2 & PT OF PARCEL	47.8	ABINGDON
103A1-1-4	TRS 4 & 5 C N WHITAKER LD	48.8	A2
104-3-1	RIDDLE LAND ACR 49.681	49.7	ABINGDON,A2
105-8-3	TR C ACR 51.125	51.1	ABINGDON,A2
106-7-31	PT TR 31 R B KREGER LD	57.2	M1,A2
104-A-83A	NEAR ABINGDON ACR 57.77	57.8	ABINGDON
106-2-8	ACKLAND ACR 62.33	62.3	ABINGDON
126-A-60	MEADOWS ACR 81.51	81.5	ABINGDON,A2
085-A-43	SALTVILLE RD ACR 100.14	100.1	A2
105-A-46C	REPLAT OF THE RIDGES	100.8	ABINGDON,A2
124-A-64	PT CHARLES G CAMPBELL	102.6	R1,R2
104-5-7	PT TRS 7A-7-8-8A-9	104.1	A2
125-4-2	TR 1A ACR 107.55	107.6	A2
104-A-10A1	PT BOUNDARY LINE ADJ OF	110.4	R2
125-2-6	TOWN OF ABINGDON	143.3	A2
125-A-37	PT KNOBS ACR 146.72	146.7	A1
124-A-55M	PT BOUNDARY LINE ADJ &	151.0	R1
106-13-5	PROP OF KENNETH O &	280.4	R2,A2
083-1-B1	ROBERTS LD ACR 298.069	298.1	A1

Source: Washington County Service Authority

**Table 34: Characteristics of Better Properties with Residential Development Potential —
Emory/ Glade Spring Area of Washington County, VA**

<u>Parcel Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Zoning</u>
052A2-A-17	1 PARCEL ACR 5	5.0	GLADE SPRING
070A-2-1	PT TR 1 MCNEW RYBURN	5.1	GLADE SPRING,R2
067-9-1	TR 1 MCKINNEY-BOWYER LD	5.3	R2
067-A-35A	TR A KENDRICK LD	5.4	R2
052A2-14-80	LOT 80 JAS K DEBUSK SUBD	5.4	GLADE SPRING
067-9-8	TR 8 MCKINNEY-BOWYER LD	5.6	R2
069-A-22	LEE HWY ACR 5.68	5.7	A1
069-7-4	TR 4 PT GLADE-HIGHLANDS	5.7	M2
052A3-1-2	TRACT 2	5.8	GLADE SPRING
069-7-1	TR 1 PT GLADE-HIGHLANDS	5.8	M2
052A4-A-2A	GLADE SPRING ACR 5.856	5.9	GLADE SPRING
067-A-30A	U PARCEL	5.9	A2
067-A-43	CORNETT LD ACR 6	6.0	A2,R2
067-12-14	PROPERTY OF R P CULLOP	6.0	A2
052-A-13B	PT TRS 14 & 15 COBB LD	6.1	A2
070A-4-12	TR 12 MAP 2 ACR 6.3	6.3	B2
067-12-22	PT LTS 22 & 23	6.3	A2,V
067-9-10	TR 10 MCKINNEY-BOWYER LD	6.4	R2
052A1-A-15	NEAR GLADE SPRING-	6.4	GLADE SPRING,R1
069-A-20	LEE HWY ACR 6.40	6.4	A1
052A1-A-16	NEAR G S-JENNIE P CLARK	6.5	R1,GLADE SPRING
069-7-2	TR 2 PT GLADE-HIGHLANDS	6.7	M2
070A-2-3	PT TR 3 BEN MCNEW RYBURN	6.8	R2
068-5-3	TR 3 W E RECTOR EST	6.9	R2
052A4-1-32	PT LTS 32 TO 46	6.9	GLADE SPRING
069B-1-1	EARL B CLARK EST ACR 7.05	7.1	A2
052A2-14-79	PT TR 79	7.2	GLADE SPRING
069-5-4A	PT PROP OF PATTON T &	7.3	A2
069-A-42	PT TR 2 J P MASON LD	7.6	B2
067-A-44	CORNETT LD ACR 7.88	7.9	A2
067-12-13	PATSY C CRENSHAW ET AL	8.5	A2
069-A-19	LEE HWY ACR 8.48	8.5	A2,A1
067-9-12	TR 12 MCKINNEY-BOWYER LD	8.9	R2
067A3-A-124A	PT 4 TRS DALLAS PHILLIPS	8.9	A2,V
052A2-A-146	GLADE SPRING ACR 9.61	9.6	R1,GLADE SPRING
068-1-35	PT TR 35	10.3	V
067-9-11	TR 11 MCKINNEY-BOWYER LD	10.8	R2
069B-A-1	GLADE SPRING PRESBYTERIAN MANCE	10.9	A2
067A3-A-144	WILEY DARNELL PROPERTY	11.0	A2
069-7-7	TR 7 PT GLADE-HIGHLANDS	11.6	M2
068A5-A-3	PETERS 1D ACR 11.669	11.7	V

<u>Parcel Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Acreage</u>	<u>Zoning</u>
070-A-1	GLADE SPRING ACR 11.95	12.0	GLADE SPRING,R2
067-A-36B	PT A DIV OF THE PROP OF	12.3	A2
068A2-2-33	PT TRS 15 & ALL 31 & 33	12.5	A2
069-7-6	TR 6 PT GLADE-HIGHLANDS	12.7	M2
069-A-58	OLD GLADE ACR 13.472	13.5	A2
052-A-7	ALLISON LD ACR 13.75	13.8	GLADE SPRING,R1
068-1-13	TR 13 MCKINNEY-BOWYER LD	14.5	R2
067-7-8B	TRS 7 & 7A ACR 15.556	15.6	A2
069-A-53A	BYARS CREEK ACR 16.1	16.1	<Null>
069-2-4	TRS 4-5-6 E B CLARK LD	17.0	A2
069-A-38	PT OLD GLADE ACR 17.13	17.1	A2
067A2-3-2	PT V D KENDRICK ET AL	17.4	R2
069-A-27	PT A TWO-LOT DIV OF THE	18.5	A2,A1
069-A-18	BYARS LAND ACR 18.57	18.6	A1,A2,R2
069-A-32A	BYARS CREEK ACR 19.26	19.3	A2
069-A-16C	PT BYARS CREEK	19.3	A1,A2,R2
067-A-36	PT BOUNDARY LINE ADJ OF	19.6	A2
069-A-17	BYARS LAND ACR 20.57	20.6	R2,A2
088-A-39	BOUNDARY RETRACEMENT OF	21.0	A1
069B-1-32	EARL B CLARK EST	21.4	A2
067-A-37	BROWNING LAND ACR 21.593	21.6	A2
069-A-34	TRACTS 1 THRU 5	22.4	A2
067-11-29	ASTON LD ACR 22.5	22.5	A2
069-A-32	BYARS CREEK ACR 24.85	24.9	A2
069-5-3	TR 3 BEATTIE LD ACR 29.86	29.9	A2
068-A-11	W E RECTOR LAD ACR 30.1	30.1	A2
069-8-6	PT TRACT NO 6 FINAL PLAT	31.1	A2
052-A-8	JEAN M JACKSON PROP	39.4	GLADE SPRING,R1,A1
069-A-51	OLD GLADE ACR 44.329	44.3	A2
070-A-5	NEAR OLD GLADE ACR 52.60	52.6	R2,A2
052B-2-61	PARCEL B PT PROPERTY OF	69.3	R2,A1
051-3-16	TRACTS A AND A-1	70.7	GLADE SPRING,A1,R2
052-A-11	PARCEL B EDMAR A	75.2	A1,GLADE SPRING
051-A-12B	PT 6 TRS BEATTIE LAND	81.0	A1,A2
069-A-53	L A & JULIA B ROBINSON	86.3	A2,A1
052-A-13	PT ALLISON M PENNELL &	94.9	A2
068-A-10	TRACT 3 JOHN A BLAKEMORE	100.4	B2,A2
068-A-25A	NORTH OF 81 ACR 125.30	125.3	A2
069-A-9	BYARS CREEK ACR 130.95	131.0	MHR,A2
089-A-54	BYARS CREEK ACR 163	163.0	A1
052-3-26	PT TR 26 JAS E CLARK LD	168.0	A1
069-A-8	SOUTHWEST VA RESEARCH STAT VPI	210.0	A2
Source: Washington County Service Authority			

VII.2: Vacant Buildings with Residential Potential

In addition to the vacant parcels listed above, there are two existing buildings in Washington County that could potentially be rehabilitated for residential use. Both properties are in the Town of Abingdon and are briefly described below:

- **Southern States Co-Op Building:** This is a single-story brick building located at 517 W Main Street in the Town of Abingdon. It was previously used as a Southern States warehouse and has been vacant since 2017. Built in 1972, the building encompasses approximately 40,540 square feet. There is no on-site parking, but the same ownership entity holds the adjacent parcels to the east and west, which could potentially be used for parking if the building were redeveloped for housing. This site could be a candidate for conversion into an apartment complex. Price Richards Commercial is currently marketing the property.
- **Empire Motor Lodge:** This is a vacant former 32-room motel located at 867 Empire Drive in Abingdon, on the north side of Lee Highway near I-81 Exit 19. The two-story structure

was built in 1978 and offers approximately 11,195 square feet of interior space along with ample on-site parking. The 1.053-acre parcel is well-suited for conversion into studio or possibly one-bedroom apartment units, potentially by combining two motel rooms to provide sufficient space for a full kitchen. This location may be particularly appropriate for an affordable housing development. The property is not currently listed for sale.

The following photos depict the Southern States Co-Op and Empire Motor Lodge buildings. The Empire Motor Lodge, in particular, presents a strong opportunity for residential reuse. Its size, location, and layout make it a promising candidate for affordable housing and likely its highest and best use.



Southern States Co-Op Building



Empire Motor Lodge

Section VIII: Conclusions and Recommendations

This section brings together the findings of the market analysis and presents a set of practical, data-driven housing recommendations. Together, these conclusions and recommendations provide a framework for addressing Washington County's current and emerging housing needs.

The conclusions identify the most significant factors influencing local housing demand, including demographic shifts, economic conditions, and market performance indicators. They also identify gaps where existing housing supply does not meet the needs of specific population segments, such as the workforce, older adults, and lower-income households.

The key conclusions of the report are summarized in the following points:

1. **Current demand is shaped by employment growth, workforce turnover, demographic change, and limitations in the existing housing stock.**
 - **Employment Growth and Housing Pressure:** Washington County and the neighboring City of Bristol function as a shared labor and housing market. Economic expansion in this region has been significant, driven in part by the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Bristol, which created nearly 1,300 jobs upon its opening in fall 2024. This hiring surge occurred during a period when the local housing inventory grew only marginally, creating pressure on available units. Given current occupancy patterns, many of these new employees are likely commuting from outside the County, particularly from nearby Tennessee.
 - **Commuting Patterns and Labor-Market Mismatch:** Data show that a substantial share of the region's jobs are held by workers living outside Washington County, reflecting a mismatch between housing availability and employment growth. Without additional housing options, employers may face persistent recruitment and retention challenges, and the local economy may lose potential spending from resident workers who could otherwise live locally.
 - **Tight Labor Market:** Washington County's unemployment rate was 3.1 percent at the end of 2024, down from 3.5 percent in 2019, alongside a net gain of nearly 450 local jobs. With such low unemployment, most new hiring will require attracting residents from outside the County. Inadequate housing supply increases the likelihood that these workers will live elsewhere and commute, reducing the broader economic benefits of job growth.

- **Renter Demand and Occupancy Trends:** Rental market data show significant unmet demand among current residents living in aging or substandard homes as well as among potential in-migrants. Occupancy rates remain high across both new and older rental communities at nearly all price points. Older, less desirable units maintaining near-full occupancy suggest that renters who could afford better-quality housing have few alternatives.

Although the median gross rent in Washington County is relatively low at \$832, this figure corresponds to an annual household income of about \$33,280 under standard affordability guidelines (30 percent of income). Approximately 3,777 renter households earn above this threshold, representing about 63 percent of all renters. At these same guidelines, more than 2,300 households could afford monthly rents of around \$1,000. However, supply at this level is minimal, forcing many to remain in older or less desirable units.

- **Senior-Oriented Housing Gaps:** Seniors now comprise over 30 percent of Washington County's total population, up from 18.5 percent in 2000. Among homeowners, the senior share is even higher at 54.5 percent in 2024, compared to 32.8 percent in 2000. The share of senior renters has also risen sharply, from 17.5 percent in 2000 to 34.1 percent in 2024.

There is a shortage of housing designed for older adults, such as single-level homes, ground-floor primary bedrooms, and low-maintenance features. Realtors report that many senior homeowners are interested in downsizing but face limited options, particularly at affordable price points. While many seniors could afford to purchase smaller homes, they remain underserved by the current for-sale inventory.

The small number of patio homes built and sold over the past decade sold quickly, indicating strong demand. However, there are currently no market-rate age-restricted communities in the region. Expanding this segment could also help free up existing housing stock for younger households.

2. **Regional growth patterns are placing increasing pressure on Washington County to remain competitive in attracting and retaining residents.**

At-place job growth in Northeast Tennessee has outpaced gains in the Virginia portion of the Bristol region, influencing housing demand across jurisdictional lines. Tennessee has added more jobs in recent years and has responded with higher levels of residential construction, which has expanded its available housing supply. The absence of a state income tax in Tennessee further incentivizes some workers to live there, even when employed in Virginia, and this financial advantage may sometimes outweigh other location factors.

These combined factors underscore the need for Washington County to expand its housing options and ensure that new development is priced, located, and designed to compete effectively within the broader regional market.

3. There is a limited supply of market-rate rental housing in Washington County.

Washington County has seen minimal new market-rate apartment development over the past decade. Of the 1,202 market-rate rental units identified in the study area, only 94 units, approximately 7.8 percent of the total, were added during this period. More than two-thirds (68 percent) of these units were created through the conversion of the Red Roof Inn motel into 58 small studio apartments, rather than through new construction. Most other recent additions have been adaptive reuse or small-scale redevelopment projects, rather than professionally managed apartment communities.

As a result, the current rental inventory is predominantly older stock and offers limited appeal for prospective renters seeking modern, professionally managed housing. Vacancies are rare across both newer and older properties, indicating that demand exceeds supply. The limited number of newer or higher-quality units are often scattered-site rentals, frequently in single-family homes or duplexes managed by small landlords, which typically lack the design consistency, amenities, and professional services offered in contemporary apartment communities elsewhere in Virginia.

The shortage of modern rental housing reduces choices for local households and creates barriers for employers. Employers report difficulty recruiting and retaining staff partly due to the shortage of suitable housing close to job centers. Many new hires secure housing outside the County and commute, often from Tennessee. This pattern weakens local economic integration, lengthens commute times, and contributes to workforce instability.

Persistently low vacancy rates, paired with rent increases in recent years, emphasize the need for new rental development.

4. Washington County has a substantial inventory of vacant parcels with potential for residential development.

Several of the larger sites will likely need to be subdivided to support a mix of housing types and price points, while most require rezoning to permit higher-density residential uses. Based on current parcel data, overall land availability is not a limiting factor for new housing production, although zoning and infrastructure capacity could affect the pace and form of development.

5. Rent burdens in Washington County are concentrated among lower-income households and older renters.

Nearly 21 percent of renter households spend more than the standard affordability threshold on housing, meeting the definition of being rent-overburdened. Households earning less than \$35,000 annually represent more than 95 percent of all rent-overburdened households, underscoring the link between low income and housing cost strain.

Among senior renters, nearly 21 percent spend over 35 percent of their income on housing, and 17.6 percent pay more than 40 percent, meeting the threshold for severe rent burden. Limited incomes, combined with a shortage of affordable and accessible units, heighten the housing vulnerability of this population and increase the risk of displacement or housing instability.

6. **Washington County's affordable rental housing stock is mature, fully occupied, and characterized by long waitlists.**

The nine LIHTC apartment communities that serve moderate-income households are all at full occupancy and maintain extensive waitlists, indicating persistent demand that exceeds supply. Only one age-restricted affordable property exists without deep rent subsidies, and overall affordable senior housing options are limited and inadequate to meet both current needs and projected future demand.

7. **Barriers to homeownership continue to limit the growth of the for-sale housing market in Washington County.**

Rising development costs, limited infrastructure capacity in certain areas, and zoning provisions that restrict higher-density or smaller-lot housing types make it challenging to produce modestly priced homes. These constraints reduce the feasibility of building units that would serve first-time buyers and older households seeking to downsize.

The existing for-sale inventory is dominated by resales, particularly older single-family homes, many of which require updates or modernization. Speculative new construction has been limited since the Great Recession, although a modest uptick in recent development activity indicates the potential for renewed growth.

8. **Middle-income households have limited choices in Washington County's for-sale housing market.**

Middle-income households earning between 80% and 120% of AMI are underserved, with most homes in their price range being older properties that often lack the design, layout, and energy-efficiency features many buyers in this segment prefer. In contrast, most newly built homes are priced well above levels affordable to these households. This affordability gap reduces homeownership opportunities for working households and contributes to sustained rental demand over time.

Smaller single-family homes, including modular units, along with duplexes and townhomes, could help fill this gap. These formats can offer more attainable price points while meeting the preferences of many middle-income buyers. Targeting this segment is important for broadening access to homeownership, attracting and retaining working-age residents, and maintaining a balanced and resilient housing market.

9. **Rental housing continues to account for the majority of new housing demand in Washington County.**

Current market conditions favor rental development over for-sale housing. High mortgage interest rates, modest household incomes, and elevated development costs have constrained demand for homeownership. However, there is sustained demand for modestly priced homes suitable for both seniors and families.

10. Access to housing incentive programs will be critical to advancing new residential development in Washington County.

State and federal programs such as Qualified Census Tracts, Opportunity Zones, and New Markets Tax Credits, together with state-level tools like LIHTC, WHIP, and ASNH, play a key role in closing financing gaps, particularly for projects that incorporate affordability requirements. These tools are especially important for developments serving families and seniors, where income restrictions limit potential rental or sales revenue.

Competition for these program awards is high, making early coordination with experienced development teams and alignment with program criteria essential to securing funding and moving projects forward.

11. Washington County currently lacks a coordinated, sustained approach to blight mitigation.

No formal programs or dedicated staffing resources exist to address blighted or underutilized properties. While there have been discussions and some committee-level attention, efforts to date have not produced an ongoing, countywide initiative.

A more structured program could support the development and implementation of replicable blight mitigation strategies across the region. Such an initiative would likely require proactive code enforcement, targeted property rehabilitation or redevelopment, and shared administrative and technical resources to ensure long-term implementation.

In summary, there are persistent gaps in Washington County's housing market, particularly for seniors and low- and moderate-income households, due to limited housing availability. Despite these challenges, there are opportunities to address them through the County's wide availability of land with residential development potential, as well as multiple state and federal programs that can help bridge financing gaps.

Expanding the supply of new homes at rent and price points that align with the strongest areas of demand, particularly those attainable for moderate-income residents, will require early, coordinated action among developers, lenders, and community partners.

VIII.1: For-Sale Housing Recommendations

This subsection outlines the projected need for new for-sale housing units in Washington County over the next five years. The analysis focuses on two key segments: workforce households earning 80% to 120% of AMI and the general market-rate segment. Based on this analysis, recommendations are provided for the number and type of new for-sale units that could be developed to meet projected demand and be absorbed by the local market.

Demand estimates are based on the distribution of owner household incomes (**Table 6**) and the 2025 HUD income limits. Local real estate professionals and recent listing activity indicate that homes priced above \$300,000 tend to absorb more slowly, with demand weakening further at higher price points. These observations suggest a practical price ceiling for most new for-sale homes under current market conditions.

These price thresholds serve as a guide for aligning new housing supply with both affordability targets and market feasibility. They also support the goals of Appalachian Highlands Housing Partners in expanding access to quality workforce housing that reflects the income capacity of local households and aligns with regional market conditions.

VIII.1.a: Target Workforce Housing Income Ranges and Household Characteristics

For the purposes of this analysis, workforce households in Washington County are defined as those earning between 80% and 120% of AMI. This group includes working families, first-time homebuyers, and moderate-income professionals. Based on the 2025 HUD income limits, qualifying household incomes typically fall between \$42,960 and \$99,480, depending on household size. Approximately 6,205 of the County's 17,101 owner households, representing about 36 percent, are within this income bracket. These households form the core market for new for-sale homes that align with established workforce housing affordability guidelines.

Although some larger households exist, they represent a relatively small portion of the owner-occupied housing stock. According to **Table 6**, more than 93 percent of owner-occupied households in Washington County consist of one to four individuals.

**Table 35: 2025 HUD Income Limits by Household Size —
Washington County, VA**

	<u>80% of AMI</u>	<u>120% of AMI</u>
1 Person	\$42,960	\$64,440
2 Person	\$49,120	\$73,680
3 Person	\$55,280	\$82,920
4 Person	\$61,360	\$92,040
5 Person	\$66,320	\$99,480
Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development		

VIII.1.b: Housing Cost Assumptions and Pricing Methodology

To provide a consistent framework for evaluating housing affordability across target income levels, this section outlines the methodology used to estimate affordability ceilings. These calculations are based on standard lending practices and reflect both federal guidelines and conditions specific to the Washington County housing market.

Affordability ceilings were determined using a step-by-step approach consistent with HUD guidance and local economic assumptions. Each scenario uses a 30-year fixed-rate mortgage with a 6.7 percent interest rate, reflecting the 52-week average from Freddie Mac's Primary Mortgage Market Survey as of July 2025. It is important to note that these ceilings are sensitive to interest rate fluctuations. Any significant change in prevailing rates would influence the maximum affordable purchase price. A 20 percent down payment is assumed, consistent with conventional mortgage standards.

Although the model uses a conservative approach, it is acknowledged that some buyers, especially first-time purchasers, may access loan products with lower down payment requirements, such as FHA loans. While these products may allow for higher home prices in individual cases, they are not incorporated into this model.

Total monthly homeowner costs are limited to 30 percent of gross income, consistent with widely accepted affordability benchmarks. Before estimating the allowable mortgage payment, fixed monthly expenses are deducted. These include estimated real estate taxes at 0.43 percent of the purchase price (slightly higher in Abingdon, Damascus, Glade Spring, and Saltville), homeowners insurance at 0.40 percent, and typical monthly costs for maintenance or

homeowners association (HOA) fees. These values are intended to represent common cost burdens for buyers in Washington County.

The remaining portion of the housing budget, which is available for principal and interest, is converted into a maximum loan amount using a mortgage factor of 0.00645. This factor corresponds to the monthly cost per dollar borrowed on a fully amortized 30-year loan at a 6.7 percent rate. The loan amount is then adjusted to include the 20 percent down payment, resulting in an estimated affordable home price for each household size and income level.

The key assumptions used in this model are summarized in **Table 36** below.

Table 36: Cost Assumptions Used in Pricing Model		
<u>Cost Component</u>	<u>Assumption</u>	<u>Rationale</u>
Interest Rate	6.7% (30-year fixed)	Reflects 52-week average (Freddie Mac PMMS)
Down Payment	20% of Purchase Price	Reflects conventional loan standards
Real Estate Tax	\$0.43 per \$100 of assessed value ¹	Washington County 2025 real estate tax rate
Insurance	0.40% of purchase price annually	Based on regional insurance estimates
HOA / Maintenance	Patio: \$150/month Townhome: \$100/month Single-family: \$50/month	Reflects ongoing maintenance and shared amenities
¹ Real estate taxes are slightly higher in the towns of Abingdon, Damascus, Glade Spring, and Saltville. Source: S. Patz & Associates, Inc.; Freddie Mac PMMS		

This pricing model is designed to align each affordability scenario with both the purchasing power of target households and the typical cost structure associated with homeownership. Using these variables, affordability ceilings were calculated based on 2025 HUD income thresholds for Washington County, applying a 20 percent down payment, a 6.7 percent 30-year fixed mortgage, and the HOA/maintenance costs shown in **Table 36**. The results are summarized in **Table 37** below.

The model includes three housing types: patio homes, townhomes, and single-family homes. It estimates maximum affordable purchase prices for households earning either 80% or 120% of AMI. Affordability ceilings vary based on household size and income tier. For example, a two-person household earning 80% of AMI (\$49,120) could afford a patio home priced up to

\$184,200, while a four-person household at 120% of AMI (\$92,040) could support a purchase of approximately \$384,700 for a single-family home.

These figures serve as general affordability guidelines and assume that no more than 30 percent of gross income is devoted to housing costs, including mortgage, taxes, insurance, and maintenance. Actual affordability may vary depending on factors such as down payment savings, debt obligations, and available financing terms.

Table 37: <u>Affordability Ceilings Based on HUD Income Thresholds — Washington County, VA</u>				
Product Type	Household Size	AMI Tier	Income	Price Ceiling¹
Patio Home	1	80%	\$42,960	\$157,900
Patio Home	1	120%	\$64,440	\$249,700
Patio Home	2	80%	\$49,120	\$184,200
Patio Home	2	120%	\$73,680	\$289,100
Townhome	2	80%	\$49,120	\$192,800
Townhome	2	120%	\$73,680	\$297,700
Townhome	3	80%	\$55,280	\$219,100
Townhome	3	120%	\$82,920	\$337,200
Single-Family Home	3	80%	\$55,280	\$227,600
Single-Family Home	3	120%	\$82,920	\$345,700
Single-Family Home	4	80%	\$61,360	\$253,600
Single-Family Home	4	120%	\$92,040	\$384,700
Single-Family Home	5	80%	\$66,320	\$274,800
Single-Family Home	5	120%	\$99,480	\$416,500
¹ Rounded to the nearest \$100. Calculations apply a 20 percent down payment, a 6.7 percent 30-year fixed mortgage, a mortgage factor of 0.00645 (\$6.45 per \$1,000 borrowed), real estate taxes at 0.43 percent, insurance at 0.40 percent, and HOA or maintenance costs of \$150 (Patio), \$100 (Townhome), or \$50 (Single-family) per month, capped at 30 percent of gross income.				
Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; S. Patz & Associates, Inc.				

The affordability ceilings shown in **Table 37** reflect the upper limit of home prices that remain attainable under the model's financial assumptions. These figures provide a practical framework for evaluating the feasibility of various housing formats and inform decisions regarding lot sizes, construction methods, and amenity levels.

VIII.1.c: Product Mix, Pricing Bands, and Unit Delivery Targets

To estimate how many workforce households might enter the for-sale housing market each year, the analysis applies a 5.0 percent annual turnover rate to the 6,205 households

identified in the previous section. This assumption reflects turnover patterns observed in rural communities, where housing mobility tends to be lower due to long-term homeownership and an aging population. At this rate, approximately 310 workforce households are expected to seek housing annually, a figure that aligns with historical home sales activity in Washington County.

Over a five-year period, this methodology yields a projected turnover of approximately 1,550 workforce households. These households may remain within Washington County by purchasing an existing home or, if limited inventory is available, by entering the market for new construction. While not all turnover households will purchase newly built homes, this group represents a recurring and measurable source of demand.

To reflect market conditions and mitigate development risk, it is assumed that new construction will capture only a modest share of this demand, approximately 10 to 12 percent over the five-year period. This results in a projected demand for 155 to 186 new for-sale units. To remain conservative, a development target of 140 to 170 new units is recommended. These units should include a balanced mix of patio homes, townhomes, and single-family homes, designed to meet the needs of working families, downsizing seniors, and first-time buyers.

This approach is summarized in **Table 38** below:

Table 38: <u>Estimated Demand from Workforce Household Turnover — Washington County, VA</u>		
<u>Metric</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Total Workforce Households	6,205	Households earning between 80% and 120% of AMI
Annual Turnover Rate	5.0%	Based on HUD rural/small-town norms
Estimated Annual Turnover	310 households	$6,205 \times 5\%$
Estimated 5-Year Turnover	1,550 households	$310 \times 5 \text{ years}$
Assumed Capture Rate	10% – 12%	Reflects modest absorption expectations
Estimated Demand (5-Year)	155 units – 186 units	$1,550 \times 10\% \text{ to } 12\%$
Recommended Development Target	140 units – 170 units	Conservative planning range
Source: Ribbon Demographics; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; S. Patz & Associates, Inc.		

While the affordability model shown in **Table 37** suggests that some larger households earning up to 120% of AMI could support home prices as high as \$416,500, feedback from local real estate professionals indicates limited demand for homes priced above \$300,000. For this

reason, pricing recommendations are intentionally conservative and reflect the current dynamics of the Washington County housing market.

Table 39 outlines the recommended pricing bands and unit targets by product type. This proposed mix is designed to support a balanced development approach that responds to local household sizes, income distribution, and prevailing economic conditions.

Table 39: Recommended For-Sale Housing Mix and Target Price Bands — Washington County, VA				
Product Type	Target HH Size	80% of AMI Price Range	120% of AMI Price Range	5-Year Target
Patio Homes	1 – 2	\$155,000 – \$184,000	\$245,000 – \$288,000	50 – 60 units
Townhomes	2 – 3	\$190,000 – \$218,000	\$260,000 – \$299,000 ¹	50 – 60 units
Single-Family Homes	3 – 5	\$225,000 – \$274,000	\$280,000 – \$325,000 ²	40 – 50 units
Total				140 – 170 units
¹ Starts below the ceiling to widen the pool of eligible buyers and recognize that townhomes compete partly on price with larger patio homes.				
² Begins below the ceiling to reflect realtor feedback that sales slow above \$300,000.				
Source: S. Patz & Associates, Inc.				

The following recommendations outline key considerations related to design, pricing, and target buyer segments for each proposed housing product. These strategies are intended to align product offerings with market demand, demographic trends, and affordability benchmarks.

- **Patio Homes:** Patio homes should comprise a sizable share of new for-sale development, given the County’s aging population and the rising need for low-maintenance, accessible housing options. To meet the needs of older adults, individuals with mobility limitations, and downsizing households, these homes should incorporate universal design principles, such as zero-step entryways, single-story layouts, and wide doorways. Compact building footprints and simplified interior finishes will help keep price points manageable. While seniors and empty nesters represent the primary market, these units may also appeal to small households or single professionals, especially as broader inventory constraints continue. Recommended pricing falls between \$155,000 and \$184,000 for households earning 80% of AMI, and \$245,000 to \$288,000 for those earning 120% of AMI. The five-year delivery goal is 50 to 60 units, which reflects both demographic trends and market feasibility.
- **Townhomes:** Townhomes present an efficient and cost-effective pathway to homeownership, particularly suited for younger buyers, smaller households, and moderate-income professionals. Their attached format allows for higher site density and reduced per-unit infrastructure costs. Townhome design should emphasize efficient use

of space, durable materials, and minimal maintenance requirements. Pricing is recommended at \$190,000 to \$218,000 for households earning 80% of AMI, and \$260,000 to \$299,000 for those earning 120% of AMI. These price points are deliberately positioned below the maximum affordability thresholds to broaden access and account for market overlap with higher-end patio homes. The five-year delivery target is 50 to 60 units.

- **Single-Family Homes:** Detached single-family homes are intended for households seeking more traditional ownership, private yards, and greater square footage. This includes growing families, move-up buyers, and residents relocating from more rural areas. To keep these homes within reach of workforce buyers, especially at the lower income tier, developers should consider cost-efficient construction techniques, such as modular or panelized systems. Modest lot sizes, streamlined layouts, and restrained finish packages can help control overall costs without sacrificing quality. Recommended pricing for this product type ranges from \$225,000 to \$274,000 for households at the 80% of AMI income level, and from \$280,000 to \$325,000 for those at the 120% of AMI income level. Pricing at the higher end of this range may face slower absorption, consistent with local real estate feedback indicating limited demand above \$300,000. The five-year delivery goal is 40 to 50 units.

To achieve these pricing targets, especially for homes aimed at buyers near 80% of AMI, cost management will be critical. Strategies may include smaller or shared lots, modular construction techniques, bulk purchasing of materials, and coordination with local governments to secure incentives or infrastructure support. Public-private partnerships and early collaboration with builders can help align development costs with achievable sale prices. These tools will be essential in mitigating inflationary pressures and ensuring long-term project viability.

VIII.2: Rental Housing Recommendations

The analysis in **Section IV.2** highlights a substantial and sustained demand for new rental housing in Washington County, including both market-rate units and those affordable to a range of income levels.

Since 2000, fewer than 420 professionally managed, market-rate rental units have been delivered across the region, averaging fewer than 20 units per year. This limited pace of development has not kept up with demand, especially as local employment has remained relatively stable and, in some areas, has grown. Vacancy rates among newer apartment communities are exceptionally low, currently below 0.6 percent, and even lower at just 0.4 percent

across all market-rate units. These consistently tight conditions have persisted for several years and continue to exert upward pressure on rent levels.

Most existing market-rate rental properties offer only modest features, limited on-site amenities, and dated floor plans. Common layouts include two- or three-bedroom units with only one or one-and-a-half bathrooms, which are often no longer aligned with renter preferences or household needs.

There are currently about 1,200 professionally managed, market-rate rental units in Washington County, as shown in **Table 23**. In contrast, the data in **Table 7** show that more than 3,200 renter households in Washington County earn above \$40,000 annually, which is enough to afford net rents of approximately \$1,000 or more per month based on the standard affordability threshold of 30 percent of income. This discrepancy indicates that a large share of moderate- and higher-income renters are living in scattered-site rentals outside of managed apartment communities. Many of these units were originally built as for-sale homes and are now renter-occupied, often without professional management or maintenance standards.

In addition, it appears that many higher-income renter households are occupying modestly priced units not because of cost limitations, but due to the lack of available, higher-quality alternatives. As a result, these households compete directly with moderate-income renters for limited inventory, tightening supply for those with fewer housing choices and placing increased strain on lower-income households seeking affordable options.

Affordable rental units in the region face similar conditions. As was shown in **Table 26**, nearly all 359 LIHTC units serving households at 40% to 60% of AMI are fully occupied, with just three vacancies reported. Waitlists remain long, and turnover is minimal. No rental developments in the region currently serve households at 80% or 120% of AMI.

To address this imbalance, the construction of new garden-style apartment communities appears to be the most practical and achievable solution for private-sector developers, particularly since there are few sizable buildings in Washington County suitable for residential

rehab. These developments could serve both incoming workers and local renters who are currently in outdated or undersupplied housing. Most new units should focus on two-bedroom layouts with two full bathrooms, as these configurations are well-suited for couples, small families, and roommate households.

Rental housing also offers a relatively low-risk entry point into the Washington County housing market, particularly for developers focused on the hourly wage workforce. Based on current income data and rent trends, viable rental rates are estimated at \$1,100 for one-bedroom units, \$1,275 for two-bedroom units, and \$1,400 for three-bedroom units. These estimates are considered conservative and assume modest but functional finishes without luxury-level amenities.

Household income data from **Table 7** show that approximately 3,075 renter households in Washington County could afford monthly rents of \$1,100, assuming 30 percent of income is allocated toward housing. Yet the number of professionally managed rental units priced at or near this level remains limited. This gap points to significant transfer demand, or renters who are currently in lower-quality units but would likely move to better-quality housing if such options were made available.

Table 40 displays the 2025 HUD maximum gross rents by unit size and income tier. The data show that allowable rents at both 80% and 120% of AMI exceed the achievable rent levels outlined earlier in this section. This suggests that new rental housing priced at the recommended market-rate levels could comfortably serve households earning above 80% and 120% of AMI, even in the absence of formal income restrictions.

These units would primarily target the market-rate segment, with a focus on moderate-income renters who do not qualify for subsidized housing but continue to face limited access to newer, high-quality rental options. While income limits may not directly affect most new development under current conditions, they may still apply when public financing tools, tax credits, or other incentive-based programs require units to meet specific affordability criteria.

Table 40: 2025 HUD Maximum Gross Rents — Washington County, VA							
	30% of	40% of	50% of	60% of	80% of	100% of	120% of
	<u>AMI</u>	<u>AMI</u>	<u>AMI</u>	<u>AMI</u>	<u>AMI</u>	<u>AMI</u>	<u>AMI</u>
Studio	\$402	\$537	\$671	\$805	\$1,074	\$1,342	\$1,611
One-Bedroom	\$431	\$575	\$719	\$863	\$1,151	\$1,438	\$1,726
Two-Bedroom	\$518	\$691	\$863	\$1,036	\$1,382	\$1,727	\$2,073
Three-Bedroom	\$598	\$798	\$997	\$1,197	\$1,596	\$1,995	\$2,394
Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development							

As noted in **Table 28**, several apartment developments are currently under construction or in the planning stages in the region. Among these, Goodson Hills, Morning Meadows, and The Place at Glade are intended to serve households earning up to 60% of AMI, providing new affordable rental options for the area.

The only planned market-rate development in the current pipeline is The Vue at Abingdon, a 72-unit project with vertical construction expected to begin by late 2025. Initial one-bedroom rents are anticipated to start just above \$1,000 per month, positioning these units to serve the workforce segment. This project will likely reach stabilized occupancy before any new developments supported directly or through partnerships with Appalachian Highlands Housing Partners come online.

Given recent and anticipated job growth, along with significant pent-up demand from renters currently in substandard housing or commuting from outside the region, there is a clear and immediate need for additional rental supply. Any new housing developed in coordination with local housing partners will likely follow the completion and lease-up of The Vue at Abingdon.

Based on current market conditions and inventory constraints, an initial recommendation of 200 new rental units is appropriate. These units could be delivered in two phases, which would provide a manageable entry point for developers while addressing a portion of the existing unmet demand. If absorption rates are strong and sustained, a second phase of similar scale should be pursued, subject to both market response and local development capacity.

In addition to market-rate offerings, future apartment developments should include units priced below the 80% of AMI income level. There is substantial unmet demand from families, seniors, and other income-constrained households, many of whom are currently spending more than 30 percent of their income on rent. These renters often live in older, lower-quality homes that do not meet current housing standards.

The viability of new affordable rental projects will depend heavily on the ability of developers to secure Low-Income Housing Tax Credits or comparable public subsidies. Without such tools, these developments are unlikely to be financially feasible under current construction and operating cost conditions.

Given the extent of unmet need, Washington County could support a first phase of approximately 130 general occupancy affordable units, along with an additional 80 age-restricted affordable apartments designed specifically for seniors. While actual demand far exceeds these figures, this represents a practical and achievable starting point, assuming the development is supported by Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, which is the most likely funding scenario. The successful delivery of these units will depend on early identification of qualified development partners and access to competitive subsidy programs. Future expansion of affordable housing should be tied to actual absorption trends, local income profiles, and ongoing community feedback.

VIII.3: Phasing and Implementation

In light of current demand levels and development constraints, near-term efforts should focus on the delivery of new apartment units, patio homes, and townhomes. These housing types offer the most practical starting point for implementation based on development feasibility, land availability, and compatibility with local market dynamics. They also represent the most appropriate products for meeting the needs of the local workforce. Although patio homes have traditionally been marketed to older adults, well-priced units with efficient layouts are also likely to attract younger households seeking compact, low-maintenance homes.

These product types are among the fastest to bring to market and offer flexibility in terms of phasing. Market-rate apartments, in particular, can help address the County's large rental housing shortage while allowing for phased delivery. Even at market rents, achievable pricing levels in Washington County are likely to remain within reach for a significant portion of the workforce population. Patio homes can serve both aging adults and first-time buyers, especially when developed in areas suitable for low to moderate-density residential formats. Townhomes, which are currently underrepresented in the local housing inventory, can appeal to a broad segment of entry-level buyers, including small families and young professionals.

Income-restricted apartments remain a critical need; however, they are generally more complex to finance and develop. Projects of this type often depend on public subsidies and layered funding sources, which extend the timeline for implementation. As a result, affordable rental housing should be pursued in parallel with market-rate housing efforts, with the understanding that delivery will likely require a longer horizon. Early engagement with experienced development partners and familiarity with tax credit or subsidy programs will be essential to advancing these projects.

As noted in **Section VII**, Washington County includes a significant number of vacant parcels with potential for residential development. Some of the larger sites may require subdivision to accommodate a mix of housing types, while most will require rezoning to allow for increased residential density. Land availability is not considered a barrier to development at this time. Although there are too many viable parcels to recommend specific sites at this stage, future housing development should be prioritized near major employers, medical services, and transportation infrastructure, particularly along the I-81 corridor.

VIII.4: Summary of Recommended Housing Development

Based on the findings of this assessment, Washington County is positioned to support the development of at least 550 new housing units over a five-year period. This figure represents the number of units that could be reasonably constructed and absorbed by the market under current economic, demographic, and housing conditions. It should not be interpreted as a comprehensive

gap analysis or as a full accounting of total unmet housing need. Instead, it reflects a realistic estimate of what could be delivered and occupied within the planning horizon.

New development should include a balanced mix of for-sale and rental housing, with a focus on patio homes designed for seniors, workforce-oriented single-family homes and townhomes, and both market-rate and affordable rental apartments. If early lease-up and sales activity exceed expectations, these projections can serve as a foundation for future development phases.

As discussed in previous sections, the initial development focus should center on higher-density housing types, including apartments, townhomes, and patio homes. These product types are in the greatest demand, offer the strongest near-term financial feasibility, and can be delivered in greater numbers. They are also best suited to serve Washington County's workforce population. Affordable rental units will continue to be an important need but will likely require competitive subsidy awards and longer lead times for implementation.

The recommended unit distribution is summarized in **Table 41** below:

Table 41: Recommended Housing by Type	
<u>Housing Type</u>	<u>Unit Count (5-Year)</u>
Patio Homes (For-Sale)	50 – 60 units
Townhomes (For-Sale)	50 – 60 units
Single-Family Homes (For-Sale)	40 – 50 units
Market-Rate Apartments	200 units ¹
Affordable General Occupancy Apartments	130 units ¹
Affordable Senior Apartments	80 units ¹
¹ Represents initial phases and assumes longer development timelines for affordable housing. Additional units should be phased in based on market absorption. Scattered-site development is recommended, where feasible.	

The recommended unit totals should be viewed as flexible planning targets rather than fixed development quotas. They are grounded in current levels of unmet demand, local absorption potential, and typical project feasibility, and reflect what could realistically be delivered under present market conditions and cost structures. These estimates also consider the potential availability of public or private development incentives.

Although these figures serve as a useful framework for guiding future development activity, each project should be evaluated individually. This is particularly important for larger proposals, such as multifamily communities, that may introduce a significant number of units within a short time period and require more detailed market and site-specific analysis.

Data Sources

S. Patz & Associates utilizes various sources to gather and confirm the data used in this report. These sources include the following:

- Claritas; Ribbon Demographics
- Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund
- Easy Analytic Software, Inc. (EASI)
- Emory & Henry University
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Freddie Mac's Primary Mortgage Market Survey (PMMS)
- Internal Revenue Service
- Management of each rental property surveyed
- Mount Rogers Planning District Commission
- National Association of REALTORS
- National Register of Historic Places
- Sponsors of each pipeline apartment proposals
- State Council for Higher Education for Virginia
- U.S. Census Bureau
- U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development
- U.S. Department of the Treasury
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- U.S. Department of Labor
- U.S. Forest Service
- Urban Institute
- U.S. Geological Survey
- Virginia Business
- Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
- Virginia Economic Development Partnership
- Virginia Employment Commission
- Virginia Housing
- Virginia Landmarks Register
- Virginia REALTORS
- Washington County Chamber of Commerce
- Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service

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This market study is prepared by S. Patz & Associates, an independent real estate market research firm based in Potomac Falls, Virginia. The analysis, opinions, and conclusions presented herein are derived from data sourced from various entities, believed to be reliable, and are subject to the assumptions and limiting conditions set forth in this document.

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S. Patz & Associates Company Background

S. Patz & Associates is a Potomac Falls, Virginia-based real estate consulting firm with over two decades of industry experience. The firm provides comprehensive market research and strategic consulting services to a wide range of clients, including lenders, developers, builders, investors, and public agencies.

Known for its rigorous, data-driven approach, S. Patz & Associates applies a consistent analytical framework grounded in demographic, economic, and real estate market data to deliver objective insights and actionable recommendations. Clients rely on the firm to support due diligence, guide investment decisions, and evaluate the feasibility of proposed development projects across a range of asset types.

With a portfolio that includes hundreds of completed studies, S. Patz & Associates has established itself as a trusted advisor to both private- and public-sector clients. The firm's expertise encompasses rental and for-sale housing, senior living, commercial and industrial development, hotels, and mixed-use projects. It also frequently partners with housing finance agencies, planning departments, and economic development organizations to support public policy and both local and regional planning efforts.

S. Patz & Associates combines market intelligence with clear, well-supported conclusions tailored to each client's goals, regulatory requirements, and financial context. Its findings are frequently used in applications for tax credits, zoning approvals, bond financing, and other entitlement processes. In addition, the firm's analysis plays a key role in demonstrating market feasibility for financing and informing project design, scale, and phasing.

Our core services include:

- **Rental Housing Market Studies:** We conduct market studies across the United States for a variety of rental housing types, including general occupancy, student housing, special-needs housing, and mixed-use developments. Our expertise also encompasses senior housing, including assisted living, independent living, and memory care. We provide both preliminary and comprehensive feasibility studies for internal use or for submission to financial institutions and lenders, including HUD, under the Multifamily Accelerated Processing (MAP) guidelines.
- **Affordable Housing Market Studies:** We work with both for-profit and non-profit housing developers to conduct market studies for affordable housing communities. These include Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) properties for families, seniors, and special-needs populations, including individuals with disabilities and veterans. S. Patz & Associates is approved by multiple state housing agencies and serves as a trusted provider for national tax credit syndicators.
- **For-Sale Housing Market Studies:** We conduct housing studies for a wide range of for-sale housing types, including single-family homes, townhomes, condominiums, and specialized markets such as retirement and resort housing. Our expertise also covers

feasibility studies for large master-planned communities, smaller subdivisions, infill projects, and active adult communities.

- **Hotel and Resort Market Studies:** We provide comprehensive market research and feasibility analysis for a variety of hotel and resort developments. Recognizing the role of these facilities in supporting tourism and local economic growth, we prepare objective reports that help developers and operators assess the potential of their projects.
- **Commercial and Industrial Market Studies:** We assess the feasibility of commercial developments, including retail, office, self-service storage, and industrial spaces. Our clients include both private developers and public-sector agencies.
- **Area-Wide Housing Studies:** We frequently conduct area-wide studies to assist public agencies in developing effective housing strategies. Our work with state housing agencies, planning departments, and economic development organizations has provided critical insights into local housing markets, guiding the development of informed housing policies and strategies.
- **Fiscal Impact Analyses:** We evaluate the net fiscal impact of proposed development projects for local governments, using detailed models, including those based on U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis RIMS II data. These analyses assess the economic impact of new development on local communities.
- **Appraisals:** We offer specialized appraisal services for multifamily properties, with expertise in both market-rate and affordable housing, including HUD MAP, Section 8, LIHTC, and USDA programs. The firm has completed hundreds of HUD-compliant appraisals covering Sections 223(f), 221(d)(4), 231, 241, and 220, as well as Rent Comparability Studies (RCS) that meet Section 8 Renewal Guide standards. We also provide appraisals for LIHTC applications across the Mid-Atlantic region, support Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac financing efforts, and conduct USDA portfolio valuations. Additional services include appraisal reviews, such as HUD MAP Quality Control and RCS reviews for state Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) administrators.
- **Proffer Analyses:** Developers and municipalities throughout Virginia engage us to assess and calculate impact fees, which are one-time charges used to fund capital improvements required to support new development. Our reports provide legally sound recommendations for proffer amounts, tailored to each project's characteristics and the needs of the local jurisdiction. These analyses evaluate the impacts of proposed rezonings and identify mitigation strategies to support public services, including schools, police, fire and rescue, and parks.