

# Chapter 22 : Washington County

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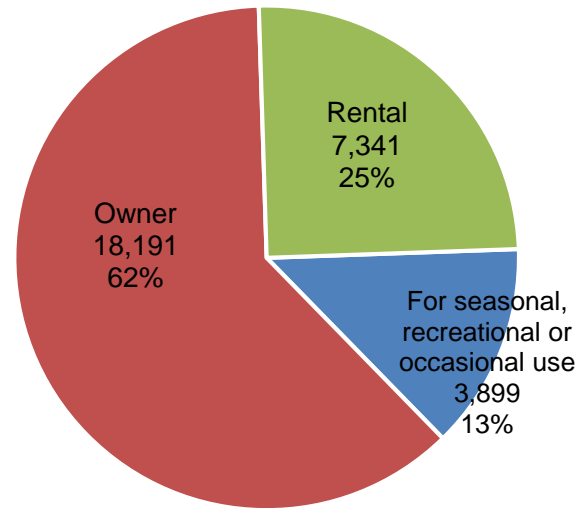
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## Total housing stock

Washington County's housing stock consists of 29,431 year-round and seasonal homes.

**Figure 22-1: Washington County housing types**

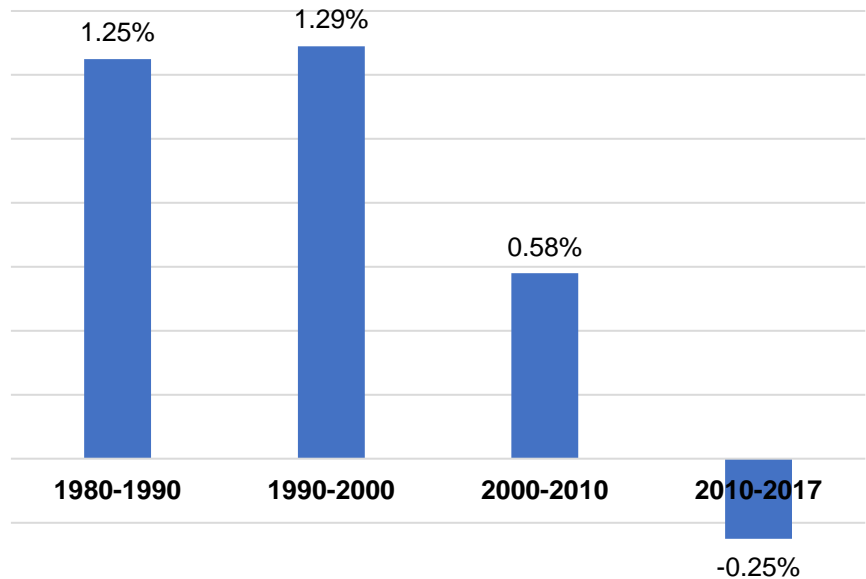


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates (Table B25003, B25004) from [housingdata.org](https://housingdata.org).

## Pace of housing and population growth

Since 2010, Washington County's total occupied non-vacation housing stock has been declining at an annual pace of 0.25%<sup>1</sup>, compared to a growth rate of 0.16% for the state. Although growth may occur in some individual Washington County towns, the number of households living in the county is projected to continue to decline between 2020 and 2025.

**Figure 22-2: Average annual change in Washington County housing supply**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey and Decennial Census from [housingdata.org](https://housingdata.org).

<sup>1</sup> The housing stock can decline when homes are destroyed or abandoned, when year-round homes converted to use as occasional/seasonal homes or non-residential purposes, or when multiple units are consolidated to form a single home.

Figure 22-3: Washington County household growth

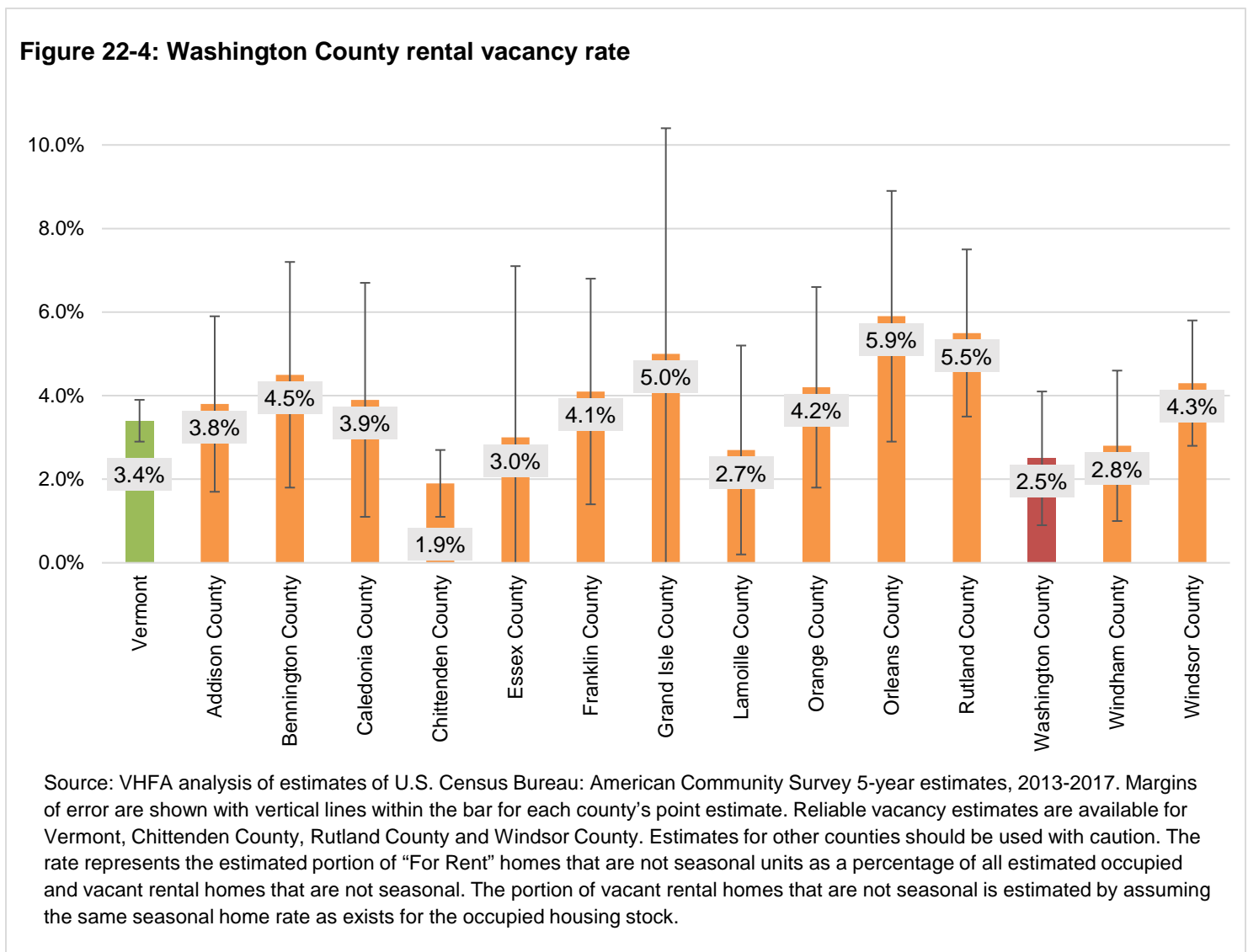
Estimated households in 2020	Projected expansion of households living in county, 2020-2025
24,839	None (decline of 75)

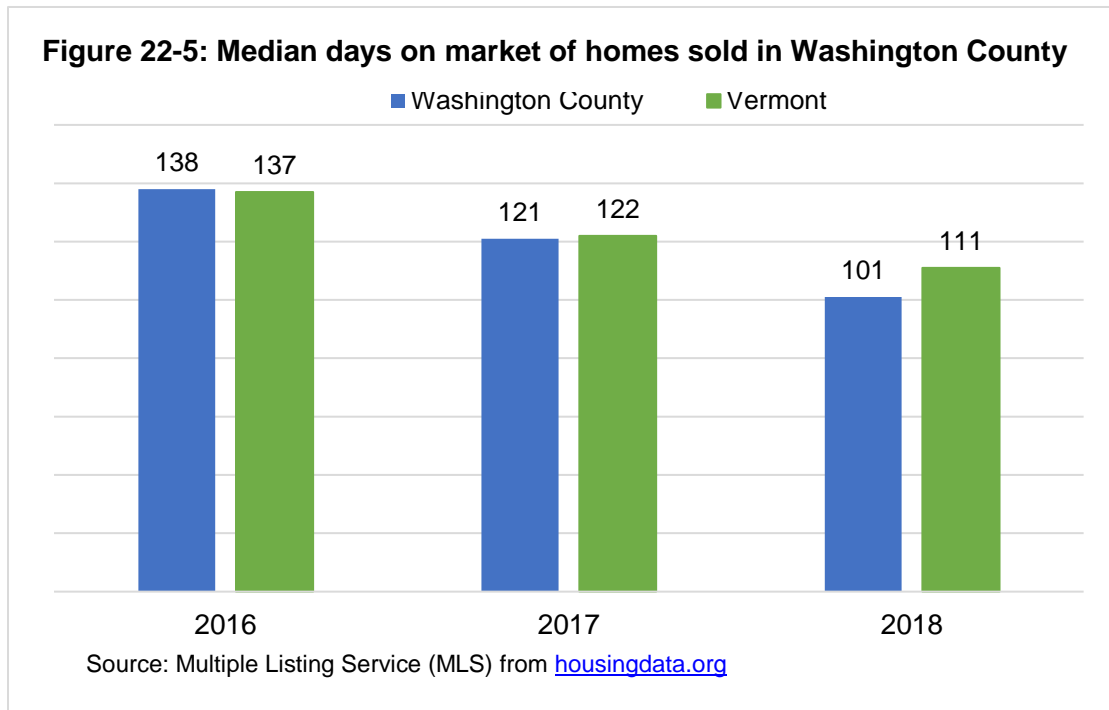
Source: Claritas

## For rent and for sale homes

Although vacancy rates may vary by town, the countywide estimated rental vacancy rate in Washington is 2.5%. This is lower than the statewide rate of 3.4%, and the second lowest rental vacancy rate by county. The average days on market of for sale homes in Washington (101 days in 2018) is also lower than the state as a whole.

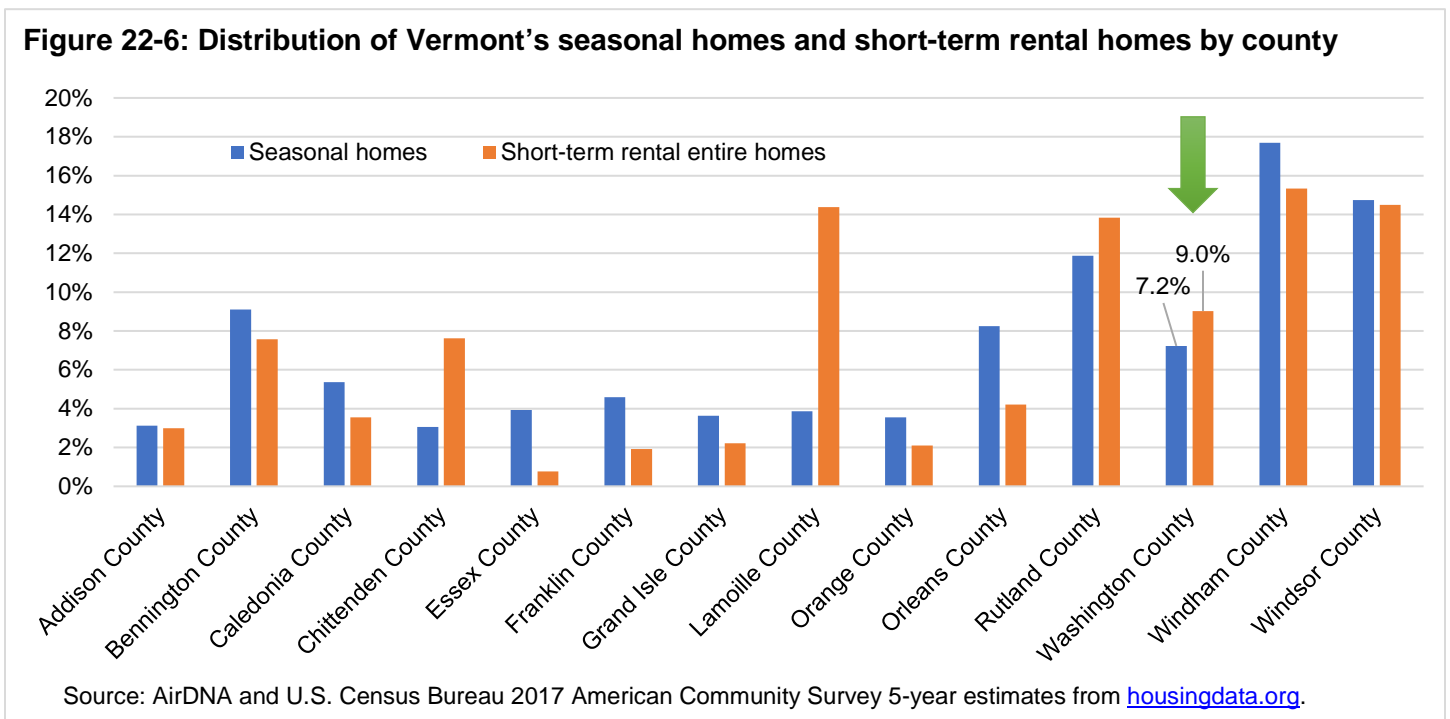
Figure 22-4: Washington County rental vacancy rate





## Short term rentals and vacation home effect on market

About 7% of Vermont’s stock of vacation homes and 9% of its short-term rental homes are located in Washington County. Of all homes in the county, 13% are vacation (seasonal) homes and 2% are consistently used as short-term rentals. The number of short-term rental homes in Washington County was 726 in July 2019--an increase of 1% relative to 2018.

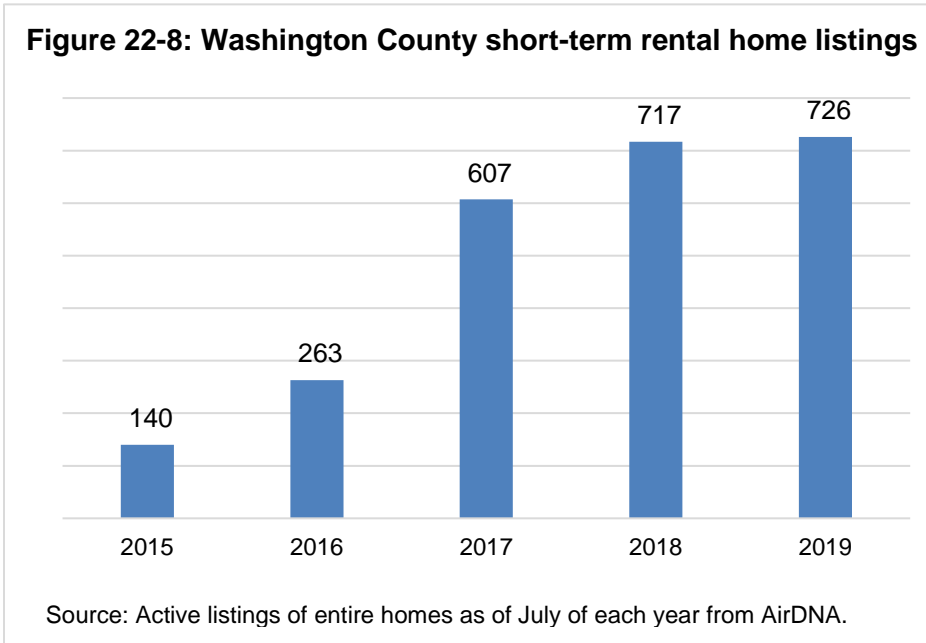


**Figure 22-7: Washington County seasonal home snapshot**

	Seasonal homes	As % of all homes in county/state
Washington County	3,899	13%
Vermont	53,940	17%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates from [housingdata.org](https://www.housingdata.org).

**Figure 22-8: Washington County short-term rental home listings**



**Figure 22-9: Washington County short-term rental snapshot**

	Active listings (homes)	Available entire month	As % of all homes in county/state	12-month increase in listings	Average daily rate
Washington County	726	71%	1.8%	1%	\$ 160
Vermont	8,041	72%	1.8%	12%	\$ 215

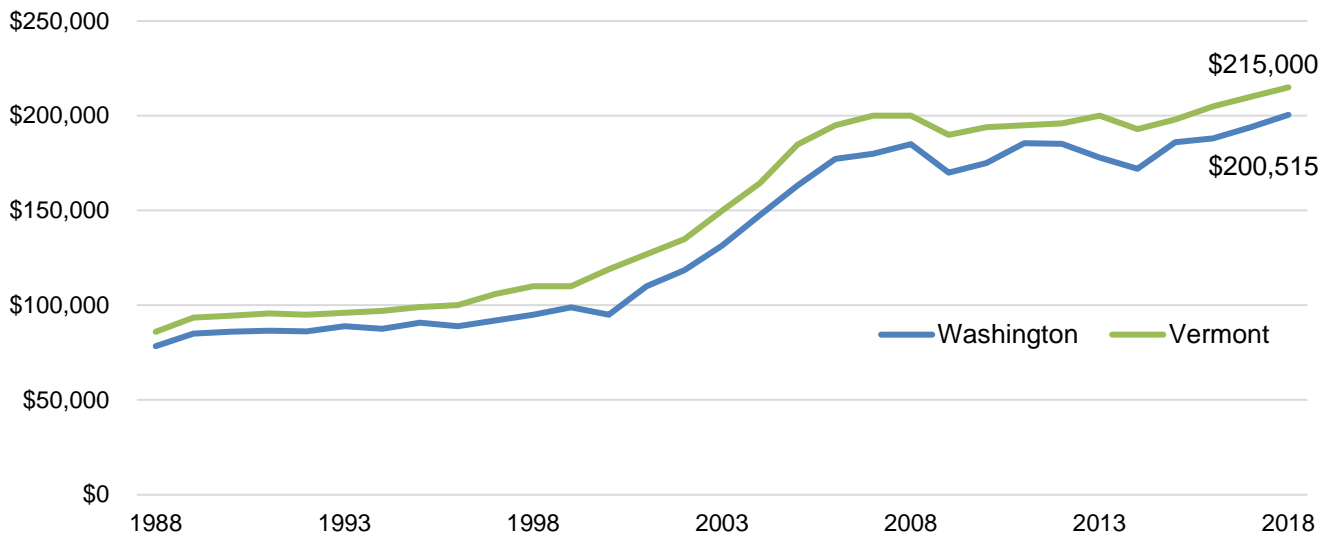
Source: Active listings of entire homes as of July of each year from AirDNA.

# Housing affordability

## Home prices and rents

The median sales price of homes sold in Washington County in 2018 was \$200,515--lower than the statewide median of \$215,000.

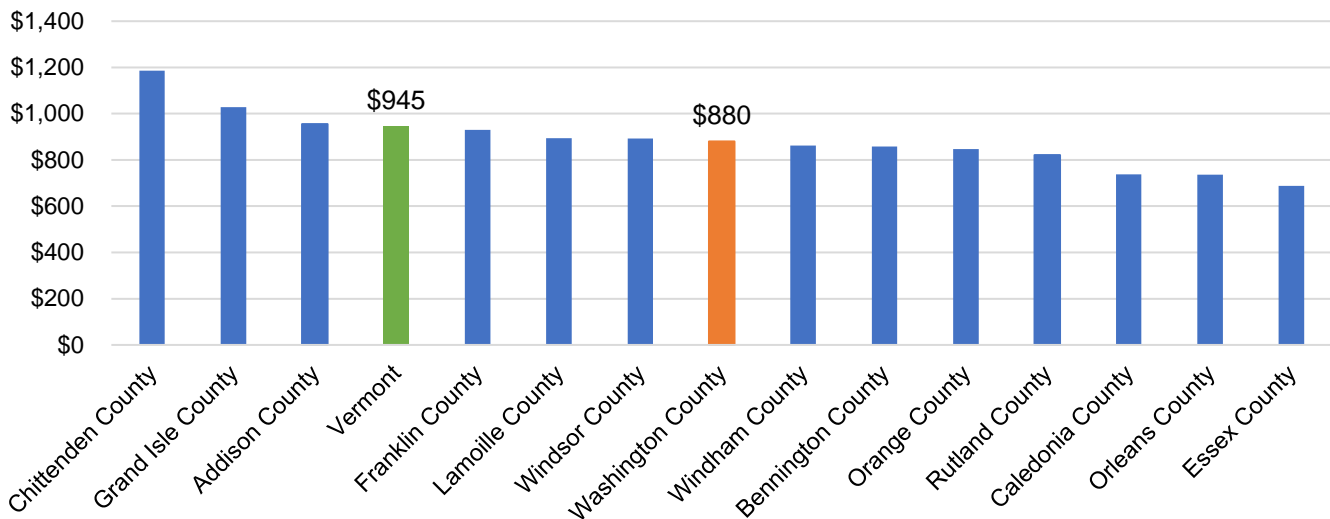
**Figure 22-10: Washington County median home sale prices**



Source: Vermont Property Transfer Tax (PTT) records from [housingdata.org](https://housingdata.org). Includes only non-vacation homes.

Median gross rent (including utilities) in Washington County was an estimated \$880 per month, which is somewhat less than the statewide median of \$945.

**Figure 22-11: Washington County median monthly rent, 2017**

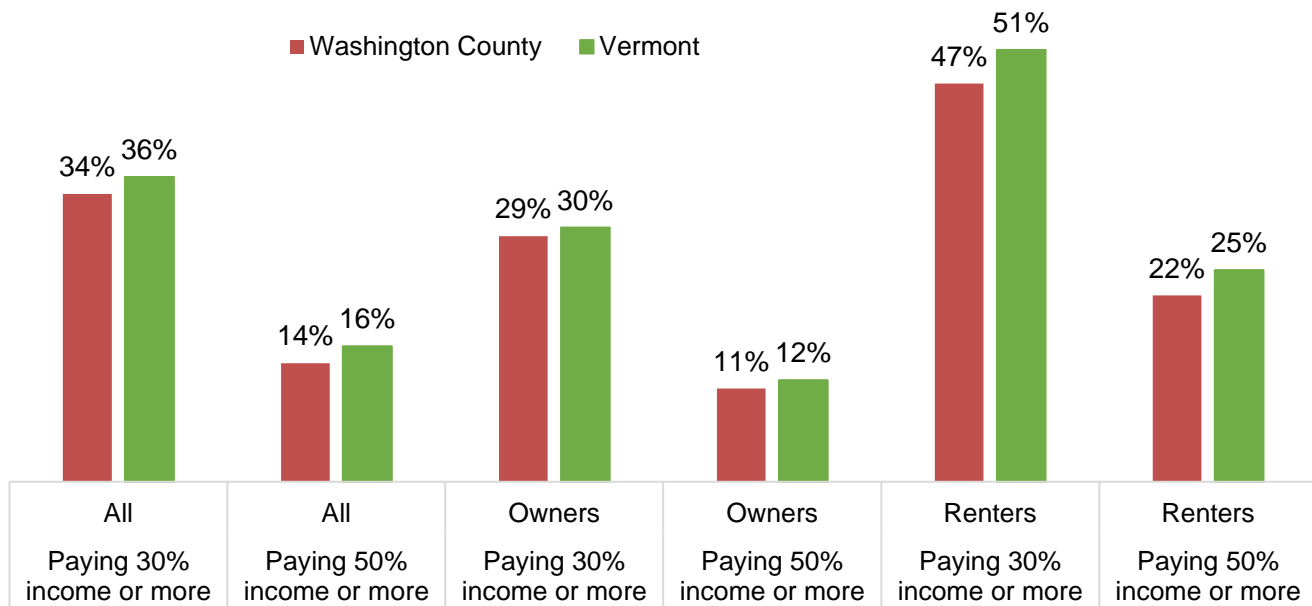


Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates from [housingdata.org](https://housingdata.org).

## Cost burden

When a household’s housing expenses consume less than 30% of their monthly income, their housing is considered “affordable” because there is likely to be enough income remaining to afford other necessities. Similar to the rest of the state, 34% of all Washington County households pay more than 30% of their income for housing. About 14% of Washington County households pay a severely high 50% or more of their income for housing. These households are at a high risk of housing instability, including frequent moves, eviction, foreclosure and homelessness.

**Figure 22-12: Washington County households with high housing costs relative to income**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates (Table B25070, B25095) from [housingdata.org](https://www.housingdata.org).

**Figure 22-13: Washington County households with high housing costs relative to income**

	Paying more than 30% of income for housing	Paying more than 50% of income for housing
<b>Washington County Renters</b>	3,056	1,441
<b>Washington County Owners</b>	5,045	2,001

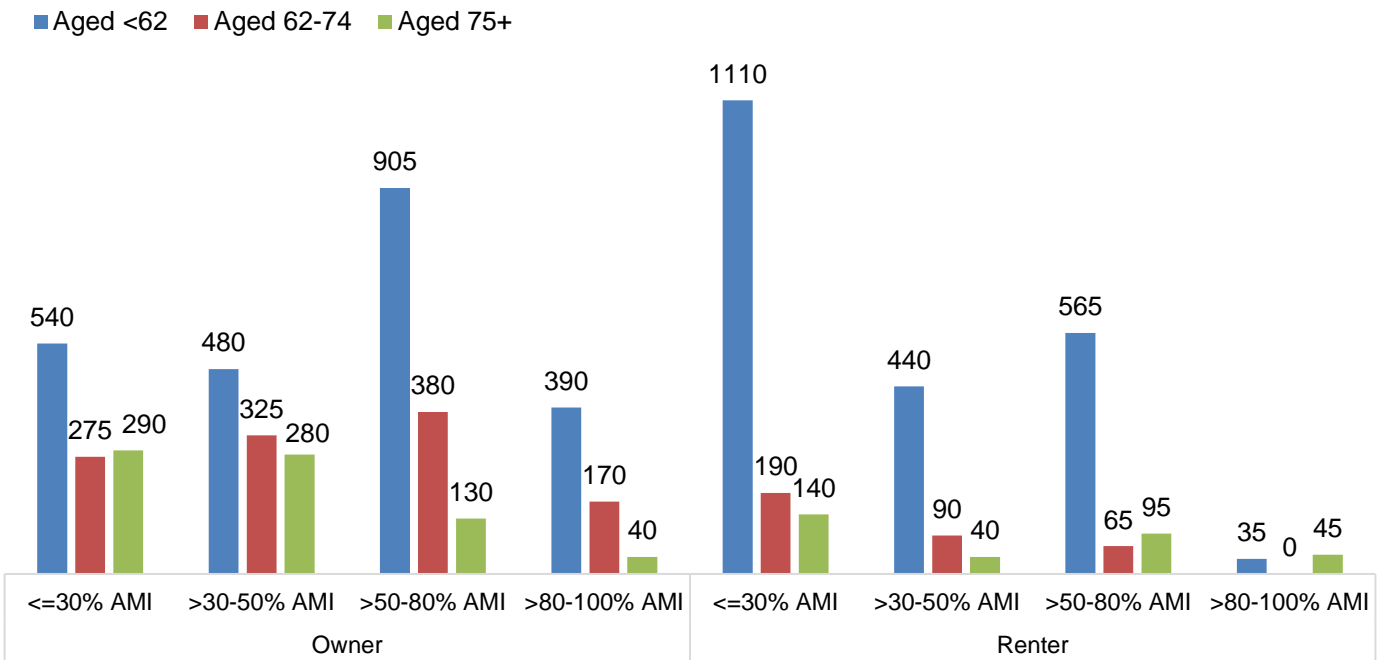
Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2017 American Community Survey 5-year estimates (Table B25070, B25095) from [housingdata.org](https://www.housingdata.org).



## Who faces housing problems most often?

In Washington County, the largest demographic group experiencing housing problems are renters with household income of <30% of median who are younger than 62. HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy estimates 1,110 of these households had at least one of the following housing problems: housing costs of 30% or more of income, lack of kitchen or plumbing facilities, and overcrowding<sup>2</sup>.

**Figure 22-14: Washington County households with housing problems**



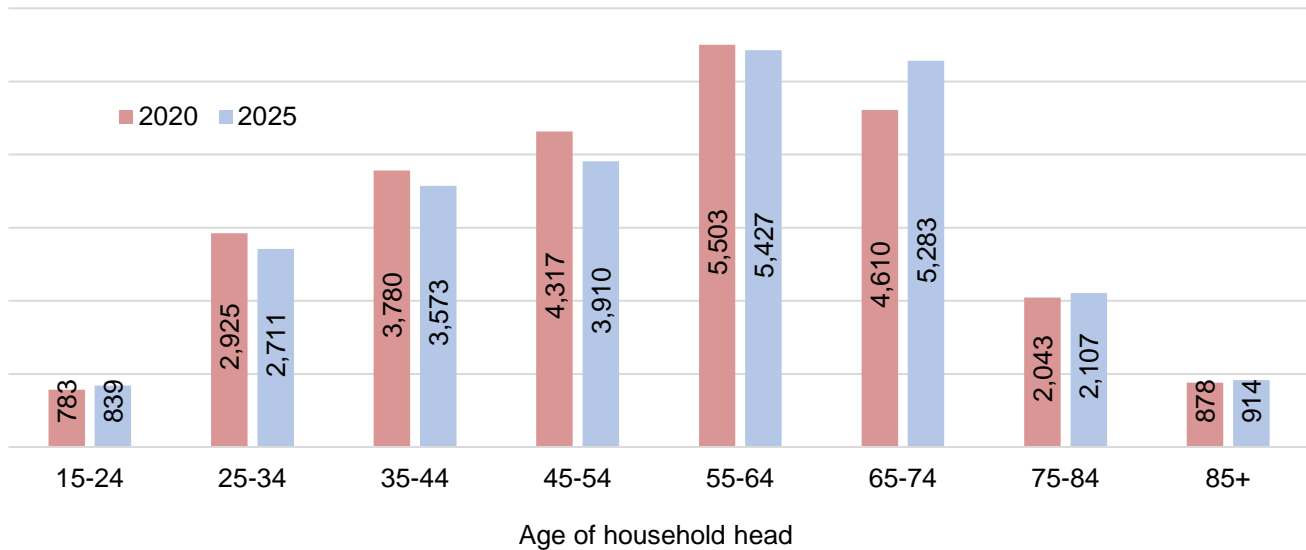
Source: HUD CHAS estimates, 2015, from [housingdata.org](http://housingdata.org). AMI=County median income.

<sup>2</sup> Overcrowding is defined here as having more than one person per room of the unit.

## Householder age

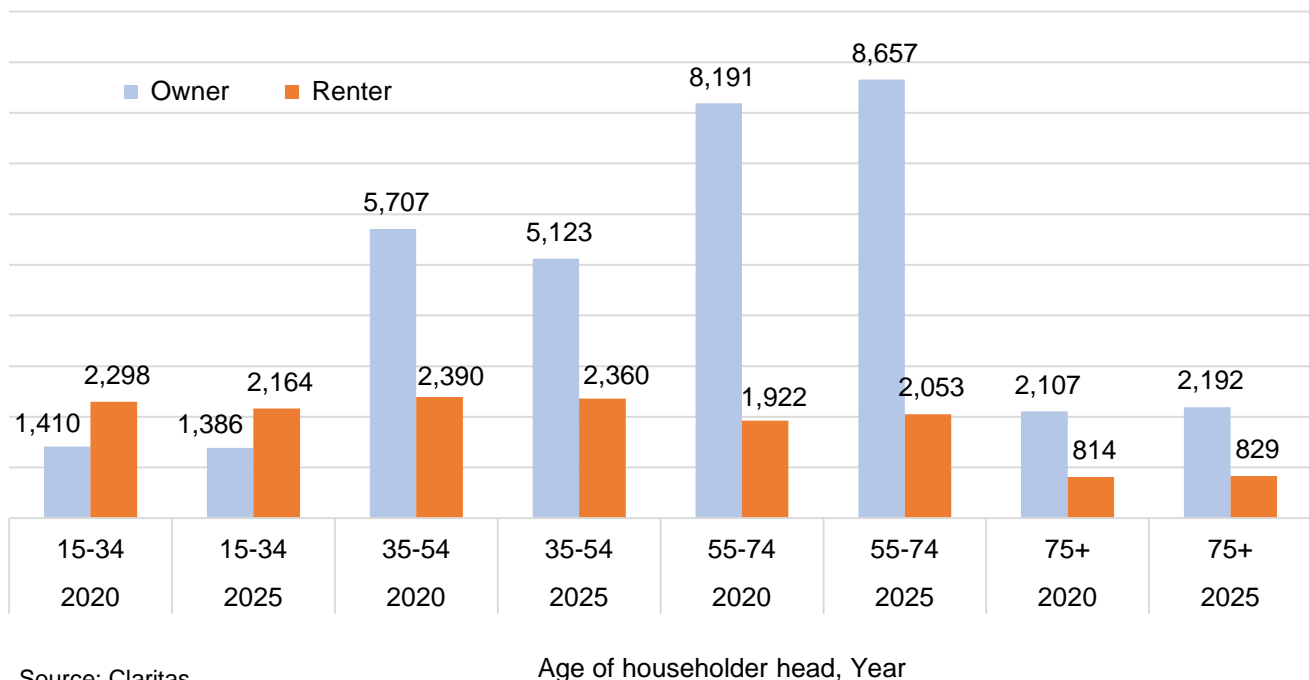
Between 2020 and 2025, the median age of the head of a Washington County household will inch up from 59 to 60 for owners and 46 to 47 for renters. An estimated 34% of all householders in the county will be at least 65 years old and 4% will be at least 85 years old.

**Figure 22-15: Washington County households by age, 2020-2025**



Source: Claritas.

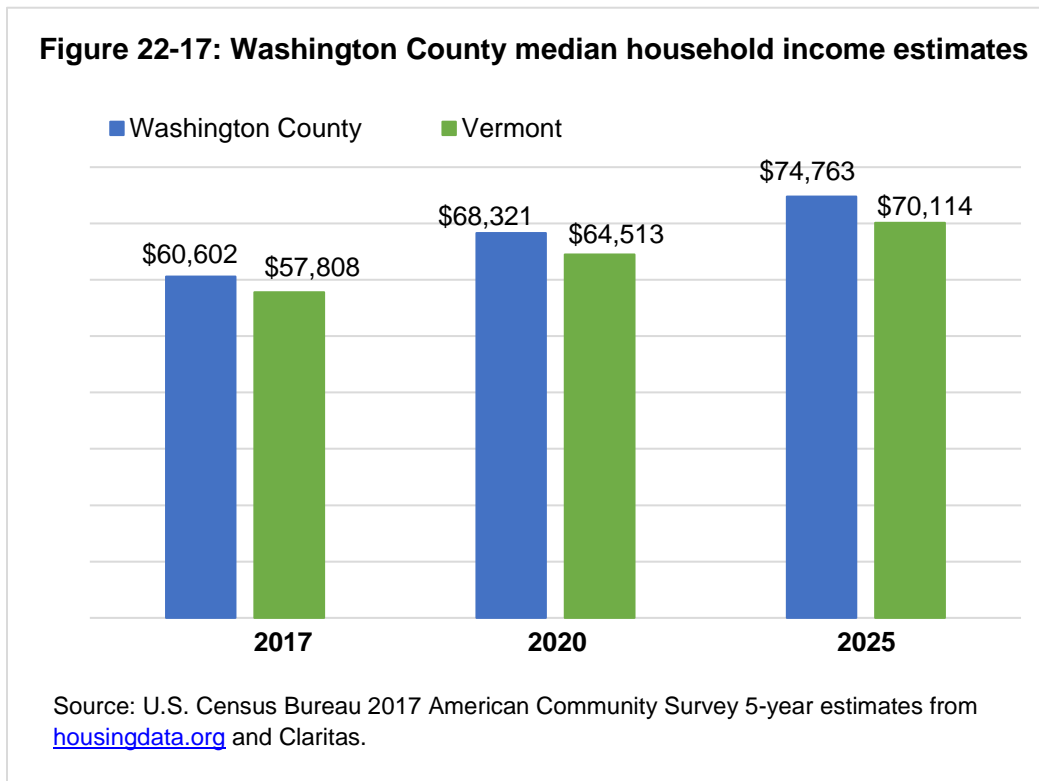
**Figure 22-16: Washington County households by age and tenure, 2020-2025**



Source: Claritas.

# Household income

The median income among all households in Washington County is expected to increase from \$68,321 to \$74,763 between 2020 and 2025.



**Figure 22-18: Income ranges relative to Washington County median income, 2020**

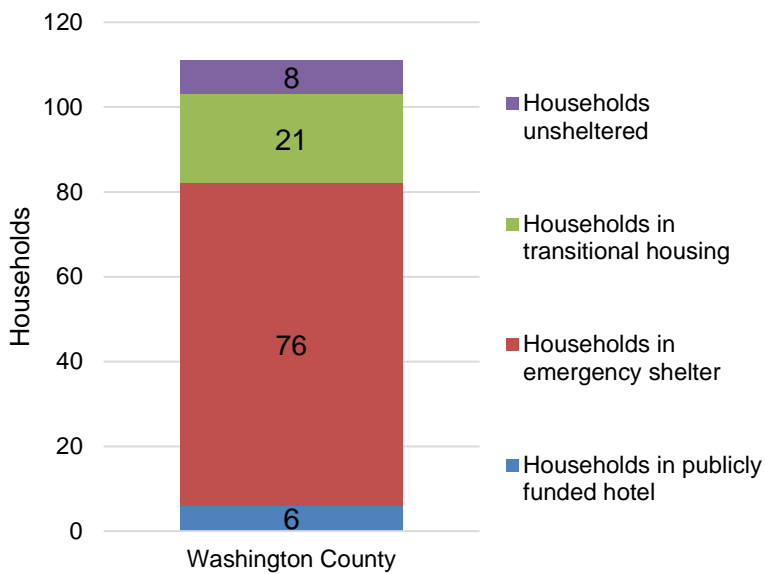
Median income		\$	68,321
<=30% of median		<=	\$ 20,496
31-50% of median	\$	20,497 -	\$ 34,161
51-80% of median	\$	34,162 -	\$ 54,657
81-100% of median	\$	54,658 -	\$ 68,321
101-120% median	\$	68,322 -	\$ 81,985
>120% of median		>	\$ 81,986

Source: Claritas

# Homelessness

During the 2019 one-night count, 141 Washington County residents experienced homelessness. Washington County has the third largest concentration of clients experiencing chronic homelessness (10%). According to the 2017 VCEH report, local service providers attribute high expenses for hotel stays to a lack of subsidized housing which makes it hard for families to move beyond shelter. Local providers also pointed to a gap between stays in the shelter and housing which makes it difficult to free up space in emergency shelters<sup>3</sup>.

**Figure 22-19: Shelter status for Washington County homeless households**



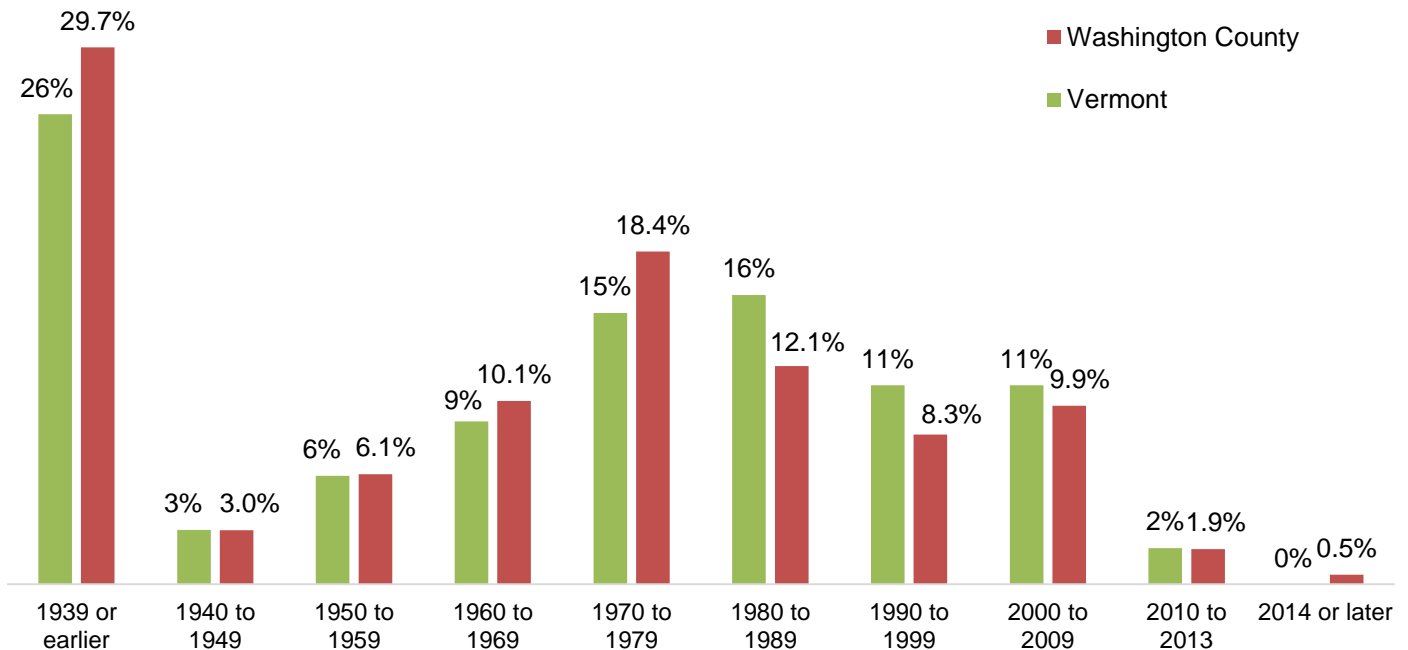
Source: 2019 One Night Count. Institute for Community Alliances from [housingdata.org](http://housingdata.org).

<sup>3</sup> Vermont Coalition to End Homelessness [2017 VCEH Local CoC Assessment Report](#)

## Housing quality

The median home in Washington County was built in 1971<sup>4</sup> compared to 1974 for the state as a whole. An estimated 29.7% homes were built prior to 1940, the largest percentage of older homes in the state. Although not necessarily indicative of housing quality problems, an older home is likely to elevate home maintenance and heating costs for its occupant.

**Figure 22-20: Age of Washington County housing stock**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates (Table B25034, B25036), 2013-2017 from [housingdata.org](http://housingdata.org).

## Homes in mobile home parks

Washington County has 24 mobile home parks and 600 lots. There are 54 vacant lots and a 9% vacancy rate, which is substantially higher than Vermont’s overall lot vacancy rate of 5.2%.<sup>5</sup> Washington County has six mobile home parks located in floodways.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates (Table B25035), 2013-2017 from [housingdata.org](http://housingdata.org)

<sup>5</sup> [Vermont Department of Housing & Community Development](http://Vermont Department of Housing & Community Development), Mobile Home Park Registration Summary, 2019

<sup>6</sup> [Vermont Housing & Conservation Board](http://Vermont Housing & Conservation Board) and John Ryan, Development Cycles, “Sustainability Assessment of Affordable Mobile Home Parks in Vermont”, 2019