

Strategic Housing Plan Recommendations



The Creamery

Credit: richmondcreamery.com



Richmond Village Housing-
Borden St.

Credit: Champlain Housing Trust

Richmond, VT October, 2025



Housing in Richmond

- Diverse housing options are essential for community sustainability, workforce development, and vibrancy of businesses, organizations and schools
- In 2020, the housing vacancy rate fell to 1%, and more than 50% of Richmond residents identified as 'cost burdened' or 'severely cost burdened' when it came to their homes
- 2023 HOME Act passed by the Vermont state legislature set a target to add 31k housing units in Chittenden County by 2050. **Richmond's share is 400 units in 25 years*, ~16 units per year.**
- In 2025, median home sale price is \$395k, a 92% increase over past 5 years

*See Appendix for Housing Targets



Successful Projects Need

- Community support
- Funding
- Proper infrastructure
- Clear path to obtain approvals



Recommendations

1. Continued zoning improvements
2. Funding Affordable Housing Projects
3. Community Support and Outreach
4. Water and Sewer Regulations/Policy Revisions



Continued Zoning Improvements

- Allow housing in the Commercial and Village Commercial districts
- Expand current density bonus program to all zoning districts
- Increase the maximum allowable height of buildings by 1 story
- Work with the Planning and Zoning Office to revise zoning and subdivision application forms, procedures and regulations as needed to emphasize transparency and clarity



Funding Affordable Housing Projects

- Empower the Town Manager and provide templates/guidelines to write letters of support for projects when requested
- Create a housing trust fund to support eligible projects and land acquisitions
- Develop a master plan for the gateway with a 20-30 year plan
- Partner with local housing organizations
- Utilize CHIP to unlock financial support for infrastructure improvements



Community Outreach and Support

- Community education and expert insights
- Neighborhood Conversations & Small-Sale Engagements
- Public Awareness and Media Outreach
- Community Film & Discussion Night
- Public Commitment and Petition Drive



Water/Wastewater Expansion

- Work with the water and sewer commission to review the existing bylaws to increase the likelihood of district expansion
- Add language to the Town Plan to address the gateway
- Seek state and federal funding sources for extension (USDA Rural Development Water Loan/recently passed CHIP legislation)
- Apply for a planning grant to complete a feasibility study to evaluate infrastructure expansion



Request

- Review the Housing Committee's recommendations
- Where appropriate, incorporate the recommendations into planning initiatives, Town functions, and committees
- With support from the Housing Committee, track progress of the strategic plan

This long-term plan provides a north star for our community and its housing needs



Appendix



Appendix- Housing Targets



CHITTENDEN COUNTY HOUSING TARGETS

Draft
Review and comment by May 19! Visit ccrpcvt.org/housing for more details.

Vermont's HOME Act (Act 47 of 2023) introduced new requirements for regional and municipal plans. One is that plans must now include housing targets for 2030 and 2050 to ensure an adequate supply of safe, affordable housing in locations that keep transportation costs low.

Below are the draft housing targets for 2050. CCRPC has divided its regional target range (15,783 - 47,407) into LOW, MID, and HIGH targets for each city and town.

	EXISTING HOUSING UNITS (2023)	2050 HOUSING TARGET RANGES						ANNUAL HISTORIC GROWTH (2000-23)	2050 ANNUAL #S*		
		LOW # and %		MID # and %		HIGH # and %			LOW	MID	HIGH
BOLTON	550	59	11%	118	21%	177	32%	6	2	5	7
BUEL'S GORE	12	1	11%	3	21%	4	32%	0	0	0	0
BURLINGTON	18,245	3,557	19%	7,120	39%	10,683	59%	77	142	285	427
CHARLOTTE	1,643	176	11%	353	21%	530	32%	6	7	14	21
COLCHESTER	7,673	848	11%	1,697	22%	2,546	33%	39	34	68	102
ESSEX	4,889	1,233	25%	2,467	50%	3,702	76%	51	49	99	148
ESSEX JUNCTION	4,955	1,462	30%	2,927	59%	4,392	89%	52	58	117	176
HINESBURG	2,071	375	18%	752	36%	1,128	54%	16	15	30	45
HUNTINGTON	876	94	11%	188	21%	282	32%	6	4	8	11
JERICO	2,014	210	10%	419	21%	629	31%	10	8	17	25
MILTON	4,515	640	14%	1,282	28%	1,923	43%	42	26	51	77
RICHMOND	1,729	202	12%	404	23%	606	35%	8	8	16	24
SHELBURNE	3,529	802	23%	1,605	45%	2,409	68%	33	32	64	96
SOUTH BURLINGTON	9,921	3,788	38%	7,583	76%	11,378	115%	142	152	303	455
ST. GEORGE	314	34	11%	67	21%	101	32%	2	1	3	4
UNDERHILL	1,313	141	11%	282	21%	423	32%	9	6	11	17
WESTFORD	899	96	11%	193	21%	290	32%	6	4	8	12
WILLISTON	4,725	1,402	30%	2,807	59%	4,212	89%	70	56	112	168
WINOOSKI	3,665	663	18%	1,327	36%	1,991	54%	27	27	53	80
COUNTY TOTAL	73,538	15,783	21%	31,595	43%	47,407	64%	602	631	1,264	1,896

HOW WERE THE NUMBERS ASSIGNED TO EACH CITY AND TOWN?

CCRPC worked with its Planning Advisory Committee, made up of city / town planning directors and commissioners, for over a year to develop a method to assign housing targets to each city and town in Chittenden County.

Housing targets consider factors like **infrastructure**, **historic growth rates**, and **land available for development**.

CITIES

Burlington, Essex Junction, South Burlington, Winooski

Receive **60%** of the regional housing target.

RURAL TOWNS

Bolton, Buel's Gore, Charlotte, Huntington, St. George, Underhill, Westford

Receive **3.8%** of the regional housing target and are encouraged to promote village development and protect working lands.

SUBURBAN TOWNS

Colchester, Essex Town, Hinesburg, Jericho, Milton, Richmond, Shelburne, Williston

Receive **36.2%** of the regional housing target, and weighting is applied based on accessibility of water and wastewater infrastructure.



This approach allows Chittenden County to meet its goals for livable downtowns and villages, intact farm and forest land, and healthy natural resources - while still accommodating development in all cities and towns.





5 Facts to Raise Awareness about Housing Needs in the Town of Richmond

There is a national, state, county and community housing crisis. Conversations about this topic are essential for creating a thriving, inclusive community where residents can live, work, and prosper.

<30%

guideline of income to go to housing costs

The general guideline is that housing costs should be no more than **30% of your gross income** so that a family or individual can be financially stable. This can be hard on a fixed income. Richmond retirees have grown to 16% of our population as of 2020 and are forecasted to grow to 24% in 5 years. 37% of Chittenden County households pay more than 30% of their income for housing.

\$183,320

income needed to afford a median home in Richmond

In 2021, the **median single-unit house sale price was \$512,000**. In 2023, that same number grew to **\$680,000**. When we apply the "30% Housing Cost Rule," a new Richmond resident or family would need a **household income of \$183,320/year** to afford the median house comfortably, and that does not include the rising cost of utilities.

-\$75,138

shortfall in income for an early career police officer and teacher couple

The salary for a **first-year Richmond police officer in 2023-24 is \$61,547**. When police officers can't afford housing in town, the response time to emergency calls gets longer. The salary for a **first-year teacher at MMUUSD in 2023-24 is \$46,635**. The district has lost teachers who were recruited, but then turned down their positions, due to a lack of housing they could afford.

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number of Richmond homes sold for \$300,000 or less from 2021-2023

Low supply impacts **first-time home buyers** (never owned a home), the **overhoused** (living in a larger house than is necessary), and all others looking for a home. Single-unit home sales in Richmond **fell from 48 homes in 2020 to 32 homes in 2021; rental households grew from 375 rentals in 2015 to 428 in 2020**. There is strong consensus that Richmond residents want single-unit homes priced at less than \$300,000, rentals for less than \$1,200/month, and more senior housing.

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Added new Richmond homes needed/year over current rate of new builds

To meet demand for homes, **Richmond needs 25 new housing units each year**, of which 6 should be new "subsidized-affordable" units. In the 1980's we used to add 32 new units/year. From 2010-2019, we added 9.6/year and about 1 new rent subsidized unit/year. **We need to find ways to support more new homes in Richmond.**

\$61,547 police salary Source: Town Of Richmond | \$50,051 School Teacher Source: Mount Mansfield Unified School District | \$680,000 median single unit house list price Source: MLS | 31% of households spent 30% or more of their income on housing source: USAFacts, 2023 | New housing unit goals for Richmond: Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission | Richmond Community Voices Source: Richmond Housing Report 2022





3 Ways the Housing Committee is Addressing the Housing Crisis

The Richmond Housing Committee is working to create diverse, resilient, affordable, and quality housing options while maintaining town character and preserving open space.

1. Community Voices: Insights from Our Focus Groups

Richmond Senior

An older Richmond resident has lived in Richmond for 13 years. She thinks her small two-story house would be a great starter house for someone else. **She would sell her current home if there was somewhere else to go.** She loves Richmond. She finds it harder to go to a public park now because mobility is an issue. Having outdoor space at home is better. She thought about Richmond Terrace. They have a communal room but also small, private, accessible apartments. They have gardens and places to walk. They are close to town. The design is good and well-managed. **"There needs to be more housing like that open to more people."** (Richmond Terrace is income-limited).

Richmond Young Professional

A 27-year-old has lived in Richmond for four years in housing provided by his employer. He has no kids and really likes his job. **If his employer didn't provide him with a two-bedroom apartment, he would have to leave and find different work.** He considers affordable as something in the \$250,000 - \$300,000 range. There are no homes for sale at that price in Richmond unless there are serious deferred maintenance issues. He thinks there could be denser housing in the village and that **"Richmond needs a cultural conversation about change and expectations around housing."** Accessory dwelling units might be a way for more young people to live in Richmond.

2. Town-Wide Conversation: Uniting for Action and Solutions



School



Sewer



Zoning



Environment



Transportation



Connections

The housing committee would like to plan a Town-wide conversation where we'll tackle the pressing issue of the housing crisis in our community. You will be able to voice concerns, share ideas, and collaborate with fellow residents, local officials, and experts. There are many considerations for this important but complex issue. Please support our Town's efforts to make housing more available for all.

3. Interest Form: Join or Volunteer with the Housing Committee

THE PEOPLE OF RICHMOND HAVE A SAY
IN HOW WE WANT TO SHAPE THE FUTURE
OF HOUSING IN OUR TOWN. HELP SOLVE
THE HOUSING CRISIS TOGETHER. PLEASE
FILL OUT OUR INTEREST FORM →



<https://bit.ly/HelpRichmondHousing>

