



CHAPTER 4: Housing and Livable Communities

INTRODUCTION

A comfortable, safe home provides the necessity of shelter, a source of financial security, health, safety, and a sense of pride and belonging. Prince Edward County strives to maintain housing policies that address the full spectrum of lifestyle considerations for all who wish to live and work in the County. This chapter identifies current housing characteristics, market forces and trends, expanding housing opportunities, as well as policies, goals, and strategies to ensure safe, adequate housing for current and future residents who call Prince Edward County their home.

KEY THEMES

Key themes from community engagement that especially relate to housing are interwoven throughout this chapter. These themes include:



Prosperity

Community engagement revealed a high number of workers who commute into the County, choosing to live in neighboring jurisdictions. A diverse selection of quality housing attracts and sustains a quality workforce, which in turn attracts investments from employers and entrepreneurs who strengthen the economy in many ways and expand employment opportunities. Increasing housing options allows people to live and work in the County, bolsters the community, and supports local businesses.



Community Wellness

Throughout community engagement, there were consistent concerns for the myriad effects of inadequate housing on the community. Comfortable, healthy residences and neighborhoods are foundational to the health and well-being of the community. Eliminating the stress and time needed to commute allows people to invest more in the community and spend more time with friends and families. Housing stability allows students and workers to focus on personal and professional betterment, increasing quality of life and reducing dependence on outside resources.



Livability

Community engagement cited the need for quality housing across the spectrum of attainability to serve the needs of Prince Edward's current and future residents, regardless of income and lifestyle. From attracting young professionals, to housing college and university students, faculty, and staff in the County, to providing affordable housing for the County's families and retirees, housing of all types and price points are needed.



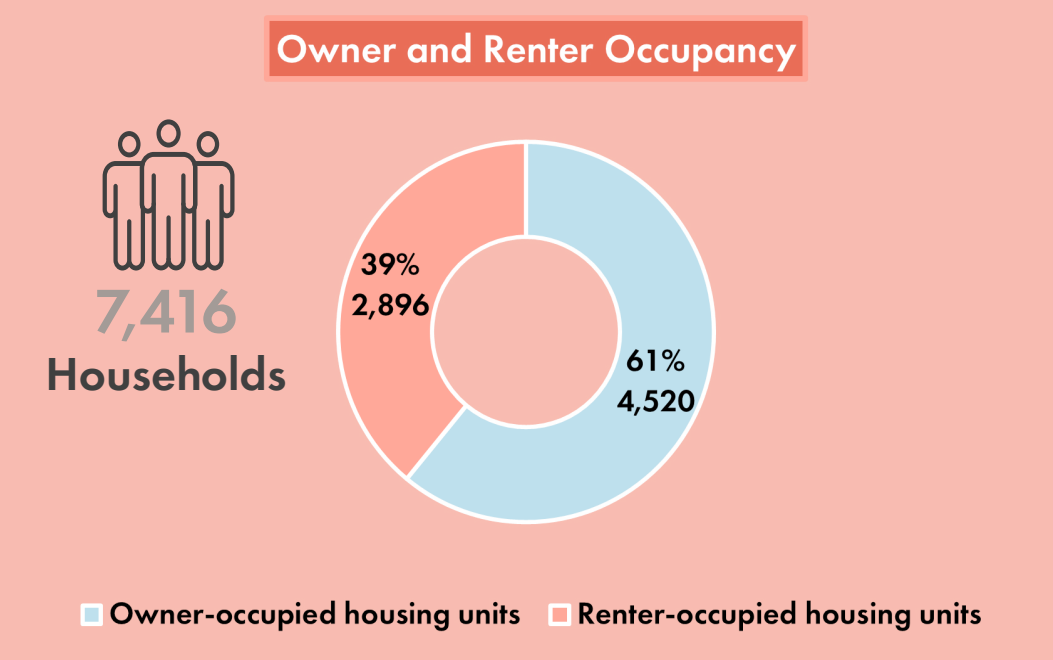
EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

EXISTING HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

OCCUPANCY

Prince Edward County has 7,416 occupied housing units; 61% of these are owner-occupied with an average household size of 2.47 people, while 39% are renter-occupied with an average household size of 1.91 people. The County's owner-occupied rate is 8% lower than the statewide average of 69%, and the County's renter-occupied rate is 8% higher than the statewide average of 31%.

Figure 4-1. Owner and Renter Occupancy



Source: 2022 ACS 5-year estimates


2.47
People per Household
(Owner)


1.91
People per Household
(Renter)


2.25
People per Household
(Overall)

HOUSING UNIT TYPES

The vast majority of housing unit types in the County are single-unit detached homes (69%). Mobile homes are the second-most common housing unit, comprising 12% of the existing housing stock. Multifamily buildings with three or more apartment-style units represent 11% of the housing stock. Duplexes account for 7%, while notably, townhome-style units (single-unit attached homes that share at least one wall) are only 1% of the housing stock. The breakdown of the existing housing stock shown in Table 4-1 conveys the lack of “missing middle” housing types in Prince Edward County.

Table 4-1. Housing Units by Type

Units in Structure		
Single-family unit, detached	6,283	69%
Single-family unit, attached	126	1%
2 units	622	7%
3 or 4 units	251	3%
5 to 19 units	637	7%
20 or more units	119	1%
Mobile home	1,115	12%
Total Housing Units	9,153	100%

Source: 2022 ACS 5-year estimates

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The following maps and Table 4-2 show the distribution of housing characteristics in the County’s six diverse census tracts, which contain a private college, a state university, two major highways, and a vibrant town center in the County. To better understand the local context, the County’s income data includes college students, the majority of whom are in low-income brackets. Hampden-Sydney is a private college with about 900 students, contrasted by Longwood University, a public university with approximately 5,000 students. The Town of Farmville’s population is about 7,200.

MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

Missing middle housing refers to the lack of housing types that fall between single-family homes and large apartment buildings or complexes. These types of units typically include duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, and small apartment buildings. In rural communities like Prince Edward County, where apartment complexes may not be appropriate, missing middle housing can provide more affordable and diverse living options that are compatible with existing neighborhoods and rural landscapes.

Duplexes, garden apartments, and townhomes are particularly desirable to young professionals and families, as these units can offer an appropriate balance of space and features at an affordable price. Increasing the missing middle housing stock in Prince Edward County will make it more attractive to young people who hope to settle in the County and will also accommodate people already living in the County, especially teachers and skilled workers, who would like additional housing options.



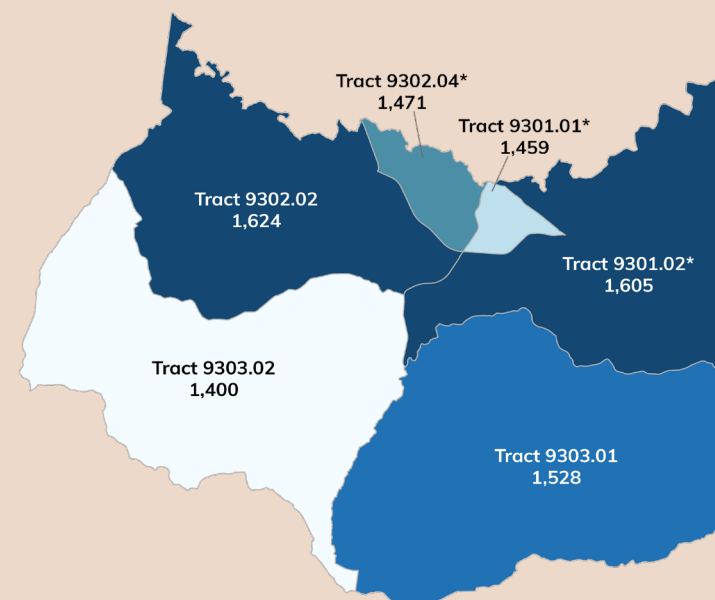
Census tracts 9302.04 and 9301.01 include Longwood University and the Town of Farmville, the densest population and employment center in the County with the highest number of college students. These two tracts have the lowest median household income and yet the highest median home values. This disparity can be explained by low college student income levels. The remaining four census tracts have a more logical relationship between median income and home values and gross rents.

Census tract 9303.02 includes Hampden-Sydney College campus and surrounding neighborhoods, and a portion of the Town of Pamplin City. This tract has the highest median household income, the highest gross rent, the third highest median home value, and the lowest density of housing units.

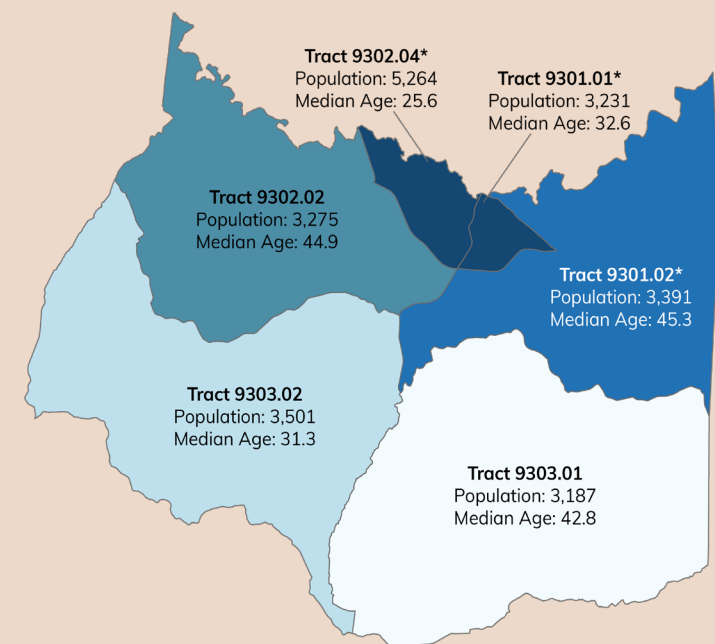
Median home values range from \$148,000 to \$191,000 in the other three census tracts (9301.02, 9302.02, 9303.01), where median household income ranges from \$58,750 to \$68,452. Tract 9302.02, in the northwest corner of the County, has the lowest median household income and lowest median home value.

Understanding where the County's vulnerable residents live is important to developing strategies to ensure that needs are adequately met. Vulnerable residents include those living below the poverty line and disabled residents, who are more susceptible to fluctuations in housing expenses and often require supportive services. Regularly tracking trends in vulnerable populations will help the County make informed land use decisions. The County should continue to work with community organizations to promote affordable housing for individuals and families with disabilities, living in poverty, and struggling to find secure housing.

Map 4-1. Number of Housing Units by Census Tract



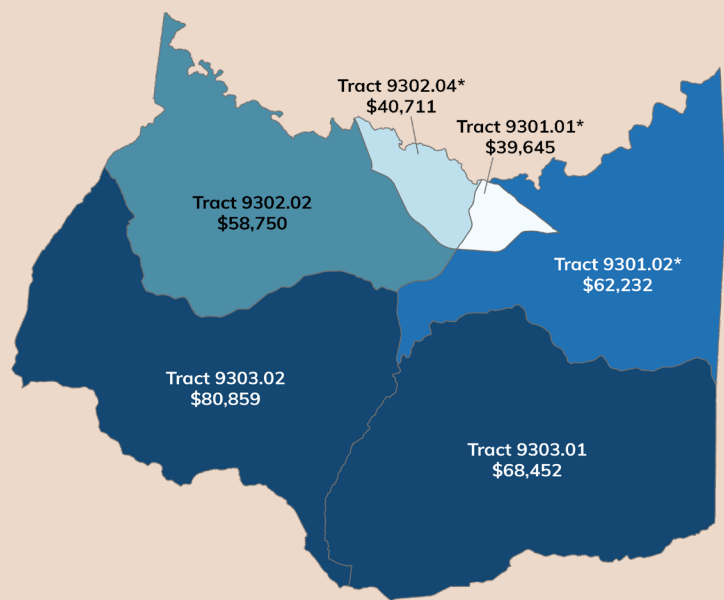
Map 4-2. Density of Population by Census Tract



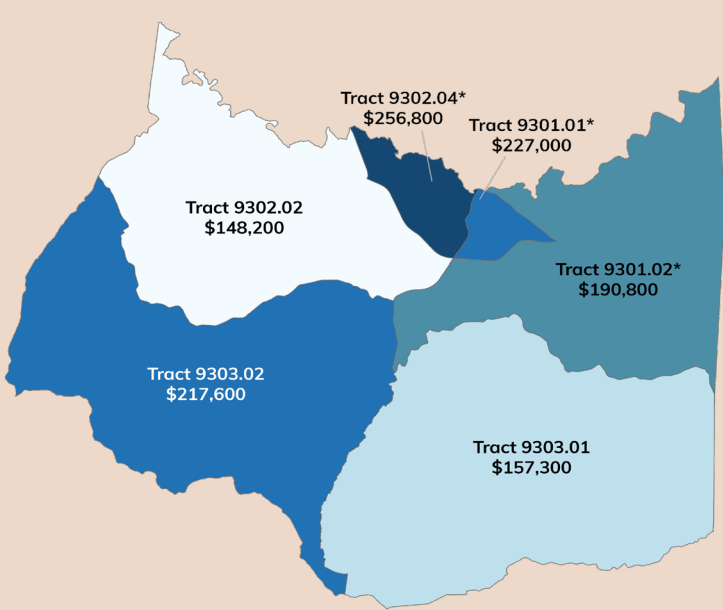
*Note: The Town of Farmville is included in these tracts.

Source: 2022 ACS 5-year estimates

Map 4-3. Median Household Income by Census Tract



Map 4-4. Median Home Value by Census Tract



Map 4-5. Median Gross Rents by Census Tract

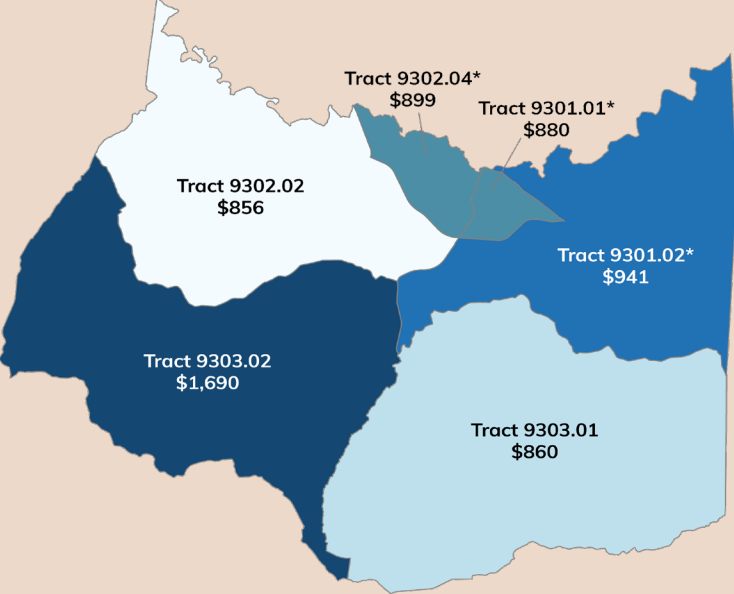


Table 4-2. Housing Characteristics by Census Tract

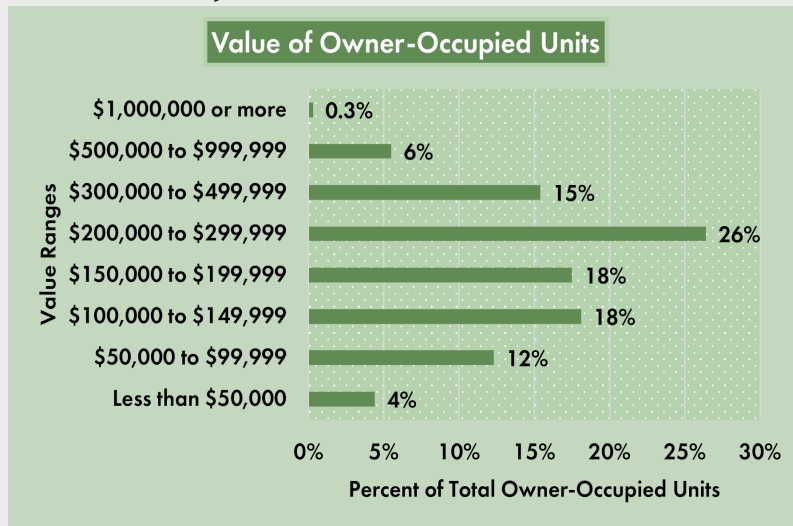
Housing Characteristics per Census Tract in Prince Edward County					
Census Tract	Number of Housing Units	Population	Median Household Income	Median Home Value	Median Gross Rents
9301.01*	1,459	3,231	\$39,645	\$227,000	\$880
9301.02*	1,605	3,391	\$62,232	\$190,800	\$941
9302.02	1,624	3,275	\$58,750	\$148,200	\$856
9302.04*	1,471	5,264	\$40,711	\$256,800	\$941
9303.01	1,528	3,187	\$68,452	\$157,300	\$860
9303.02	1,400	3,501	\$80,859	\$217,600	\$1,690

*Note: The Town of Farmville is included in these tracts.

Source: 2022 ACS 5-year estimates

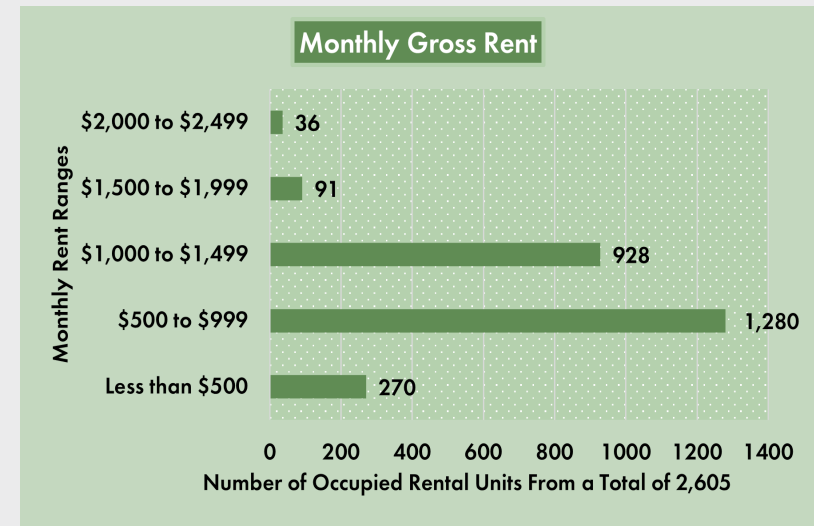
The following tables and figures show the costs of housing in Prince Edward County and the community's ability to pay these costs. Figure 4-2 shows the values of most homes in the County range from \$100,000 to \$300,000. As shown in Figure 4-3, monthly gross rents in Prince Edward County mostly range from \$500 to \$1,499, with the majority paying between \$500 and \$999.

Figure 4-2. Value of Owner-Occupied Units in Prince Edward County



Source: 2022 ACS 5-year estimates

Figure 4-3. Monthly Gross Rent in Prince Edward County



Source: 2022 ACS 5-year estimates

Evaluating housing costs in relation to income provides a more nuanced picture of the cost of living than raw housing cost numbers. Generally, household income correlates closely with cost-burden and this holds true for the Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC) region. Households paying more than 30% of household income on housing (including rent/mortgage and the associated utilities and maintenance) is considered cost-burdened.

As shown in Table 4-3 on page 67, Prince Edward's household income is the mean (middle) for the region, and Figure 4-4 shows that both owner and renter cost-burden are also the mean (middle) for the region.

When compared to the state's 25% owner cost-burden, the region made up of select localities in the CRC is lower, except for Amelia County (25%). The region's renter cost-burden ranges from a low of 41% in Buckingham County to a high of 59% in Charlotte County; the state's 48% falls in the middle of the region's range, as shown in Figure 4-4. Prince Edward County's owner cost-burden is 19% compared to Virginia's 25%, and its renter cost-burden is 50% compared to Virginia's 48%. The County's poverty rate of 18% is second highest in the region, and 8% higher than Virginia's 10% (Table 4-5). Economic goals and strategies to boost the County's household income are discussed in depth in Chapter 5, *Economic Growth and Development*, of this Plan.

Figure 4-4. Cost-burden Comparison of Select Localities Within the CRC and the Commonwealth of Virginia

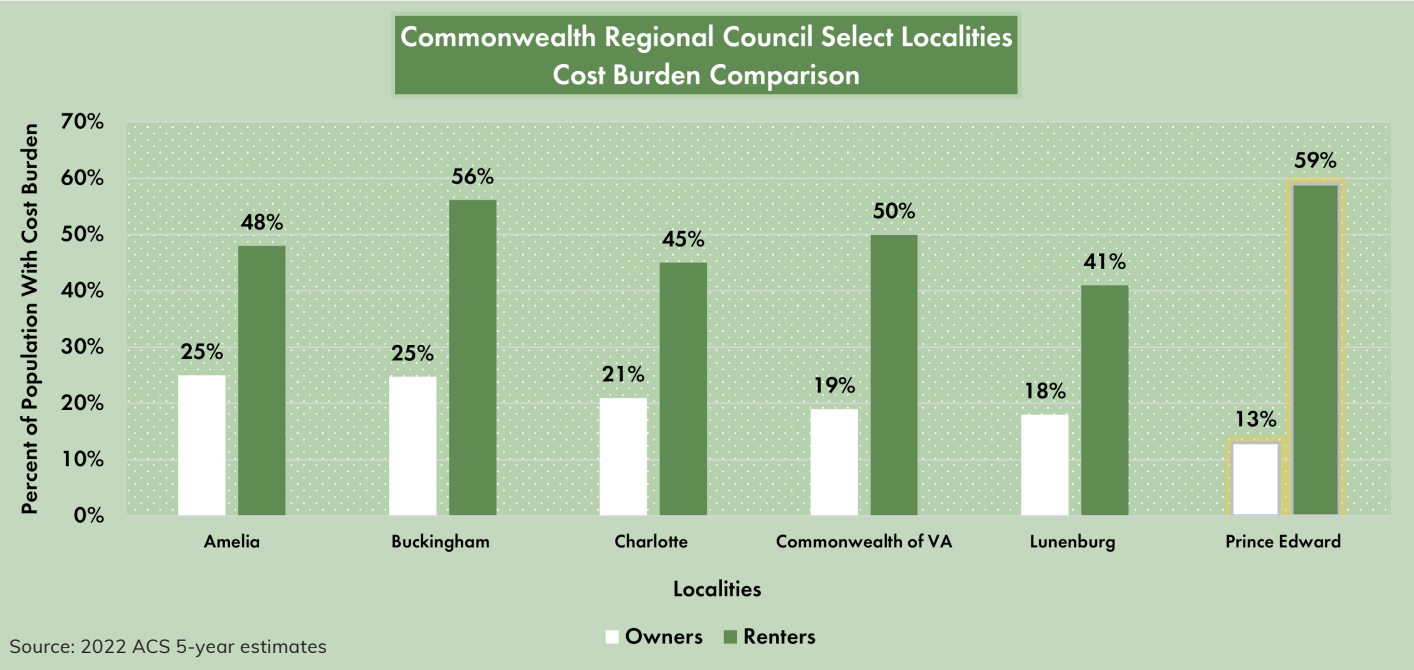


Table 4-3. Median Household Income Comparison of Localities Within the CRC and the Commonwealth of Virginia

Commonwealth Regional Council Localities Median Household Income	
County	Median Household Income
Commonwealth of VA	\$87,249
Amelia	\$63,438
Buckingham	\$59,894
Prince Edward	\$57,304
Lunenburg	\$54,438
Charlotte	\$51,548

Source: 2022 ACS 5-year estimates

Table 4-4. Poverty Level Comparison of Localities Within the CRC and the Commonwealth of Virginia

Commonwealth Regional Council Localities Poverty Level	
County	Percent Below Poverty Level
Charlotte	20%
Prince Edward	18%
Buckingham	14%
Lunenburg	13%
Amelia	11%
Commonwealth of VA	10%

Source: 2022 ACS 5-year estimates

How can manufactured homes remain a quality source of housing?

- Ensure the Zoning Ordinance continues to provide standards for high quality manufactured home parks in suitable areas.
- Publicize information about weatherization, energy efficiency retrofits, and well/septic upgrade programs.
- Explore methods to phase out or rehabilitate mobile homes constructed before 1976 (when safety and building standards were implemented), including grant and homeowner assistance programs.



HOUSING QUALITY & MAINTENANCE

Proper maintenance of Prince Edward's housing stock is crucial to the County's success. Not only do well-maintained properties exude a sense of pride, but they also provide safer and healthier housing for residents, which raises their quality of life and ability to function well in the community. Deteriorated or vacant dwellings become threats to health and safety and risk becoming structurally compromised and blighted, negatively affecting the surrounding area or neighborhood.

Table 4-5 shows the age of the County's housing stock and condition of certain housing characteristics. Approximately 81% of the County's 9,153 housing units were built prior to 2000. While older housing in good condition is an asset, it does require maintenance and upgrades related to weatherization, energy efficiency, accessibility, and building system repairs. Vacant structures make up 19% of total housing units, compared to the statewide average of 9.3%.

Of the County's 7,416 occupied housing units, approximately 75% are heated with electricity, 11% with gas, and 8% with a different type of fossil fuel. Approximately 5% of the homes are heated with other forms of fuel, while 66 homes (0.9%) appear not to have heat, as shown in Table 4-6. Further, 227 homes (3%) lack plumbing, complete kitchens, and/or telephone service. These homes should be targeted for state and federal housing assistance programs shown in Table 4-11.

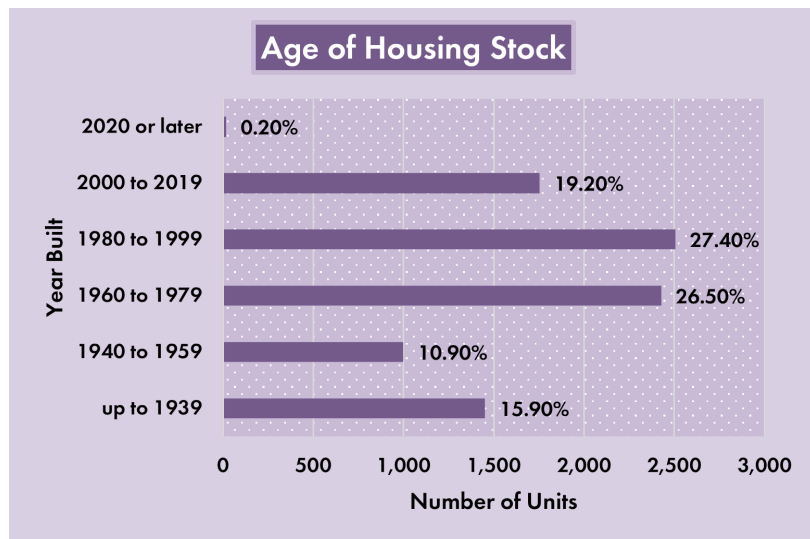
Manufactured homes can be an affordable pathway to homeownership in rural communities. However, there are numerous challenges associated with not only maintaining the quality of existing manufactured housing but regulating where manufactured housing is placed. The County must find a balance between continuing to promote manufactured housing as a viable affordable housing option and ensuring that existing manufactured housing remains in good condition for health and safety reasons.

Table 4-5. Housing Stock Age and Characteristics in Prince Edward County

Housing Characteristics	Number	Percent
House Heating Fuel		
Utility gas	133	1.8%
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	660	8.9%
Electricity	5,581	75.3%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	556	7.5%
Coal or coke	22	0.3%
Wood	333	4.5%
Solar energy	3	0.0%
Other fuel	62	0.8%
No fuel used	66	0.9%
Other Utilities		
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	20	0.3%
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	194	2.6%
No telephone service available	13	0.2%

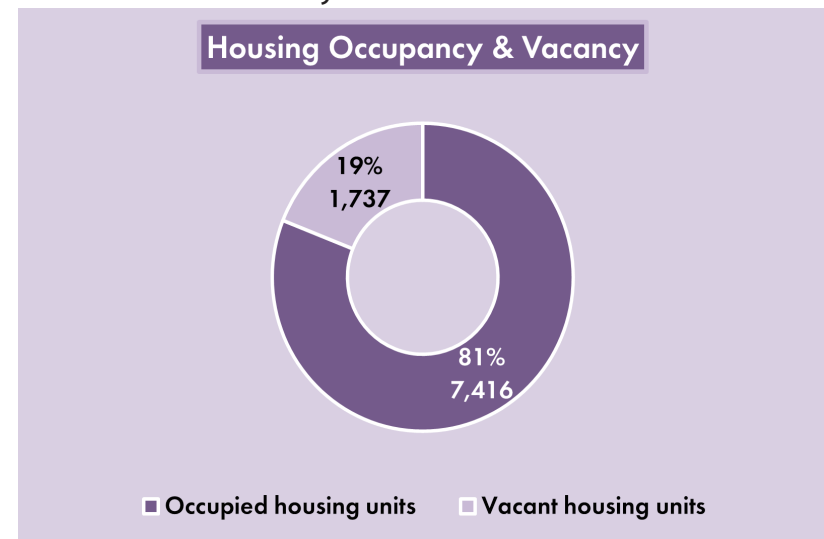
Source: 2022 ACS 5-year estimates

Figure 4-5. Age of Housing Stock in Prince Edward County



Source: 2022 ACS 5-year estimates

Figure 4-6. Housing Occupancy and Vacancy in Prince Edward County

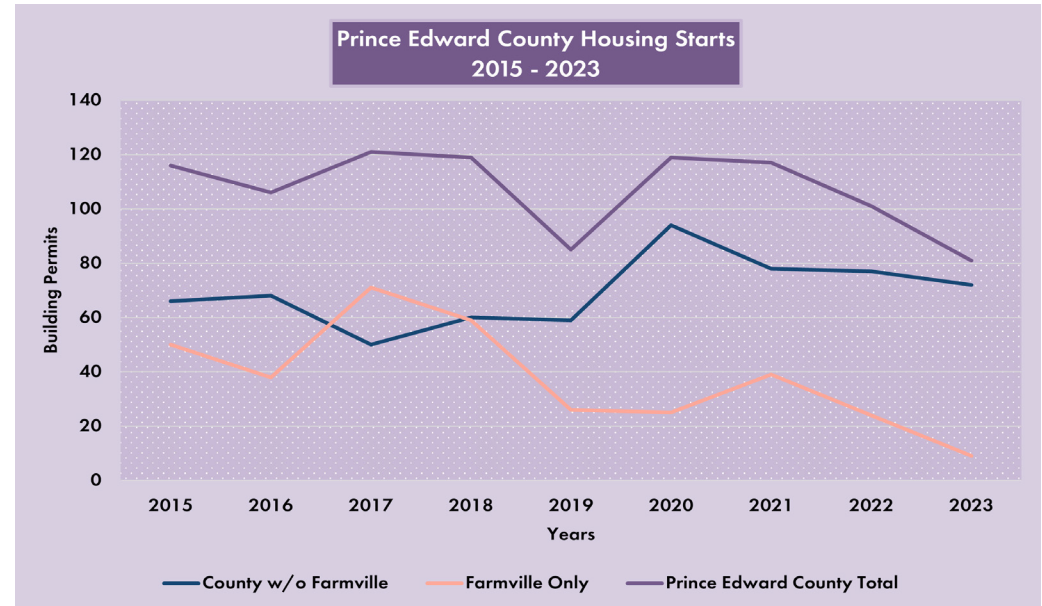


Source: 2022 ACS 5-year estimates

NEW HOUSING

Despite the expressed need for housing during community engagement, new housing starts have remained low since 2015, as shown in Table 4-6 and Figure 4-7. In 2023, 72 new units were added in Prince Edward County outside of the Town of Farmville, including single-unit dwellings, duplex dwellings, and mobile homes. Nine units were added within the Town of Farmville for a total of 81 new units countywide. For the 72 units built in the County, the average value per unit was \$167,028, as shown in Table 4-7. Only 22 multi-family units have been added since 2015 — all built in Farmville. Between 2015 and 2023 a total of 965 new units have been added to the market, an average of 107 per year.

Figure 4-7. Housing Starts in Prince Edward County from 2015 to 2023



Source: Prince Edward County

Table 4-6. Residential Building Permits in Prince Edward County from 2015 to 2023

Residential Building Permits, 2015-2023		2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Prince Edward County, excluding Farmville	Single-unit & duplex dwellings	36	37	24	33	38	45	49	45	46
	Mobile homes	30	31	26	27	21	49	29	32	26
	County w/o Farmville Subtotal	66	68	50	60	59	94	78	77	72
Town of Farmville	Single-unit dwellings	46	35	62	50	12	18	14	7	5
	Duplex dwellings	0	0	8	8	3	1	1	0	1
	Multi-family	4	3	1	1	0	4	9	0	0
	Mobile homes	0	0	0	0	11	2	15	17	3
	Farmville Only Subtotal	50	38	71	59	26	25	39	24	9
Prince Edward County Total		116	106	121	119	85	119	117	101	81

Source: Prince Edward County

Table 4-7. Value of Residential Housing Starts in Prince Edward County from 2015 to 2023

Value of Housing Starts in Prince Edward County, 2023			
2023 Residential Building Permits	Project Value Totals	Permits Issued	Average Value Per Project
Single-unit & duplex dwellings	\$10,855,936	46	\$235,999
Mobile homes	\$2,549,487	26	\$98,057
Total for all units	\$13,405,423	72	\$167,028

Source: Prince Edward County

MARKET FORCES & TRENDS

SHORT-TERM RENTALS

Short-term rentals have positive economic impacts such as generating supplemental income for the owner and supporting increased tourism by providing lodging. However, this trend also drives up housing prices and can decrease available long-term housing. Prince Edward County's Zoning Ordinance currently allows short-term rentals by right in the A1 and A2 Districts, and by special use permit in the R1, R2, R3, and CR Districts. The Zoning Ordinance also includes use and design standards and a definition of short-term rental. The County's use permissions and design standards need to be updated pursuant to changes in state code and to meet the community's evolving needs.

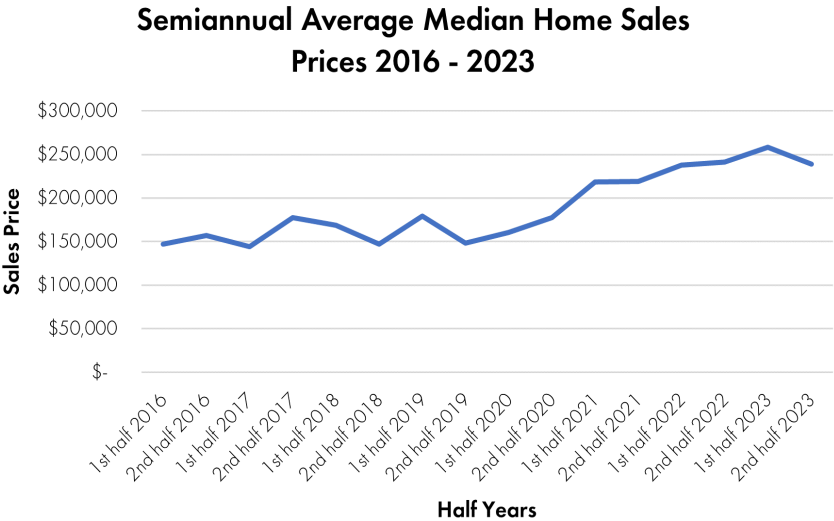
POST-PANDEMIC HOUSING IMPACTS

Nationally, median home prices surged during the COVID-19 pandemic and have continued to climb as the pandemic has waned. The average median home sales price in Prince Edward County increased by almost \$92,000 from the beginning of 2016 to the end of 2023, as shown in Figure 4-8. When compared to other CRC localities, the other counties' prices have increased more than Prince Edward's, with the exception of Charlotte County, as shown in Figure 4-9.

During the pandemic many people began working remotely from home. This is one factor that contributed to home sales price increases. While the work-from-home trend has leveled off to some degree, a significant number of people are continuing to work remotely.

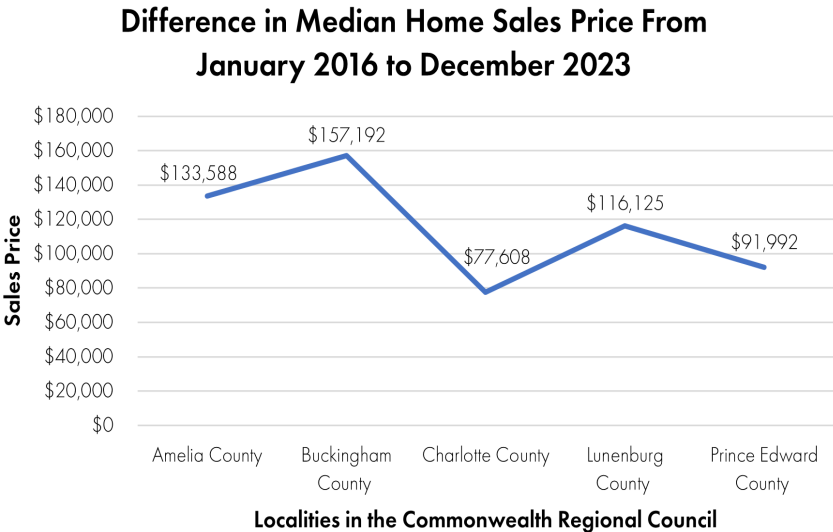
Prince Edward is poised to attract remote workers who appreciate natural amenities, a low cost of living, and the connectedness of small communities. With Farmville as a vibrant cultural and activity center, the extension of high-speed internet throughout the County, abundance of outdoor recreation offerings, and improved public education and housing, the County will be well-positioned to increase this segment of the population.

Figure 4-8. Semiannual Average Median Home Sales Prices in Prince Edward County from 2016 to 2023



Source: Virginia REALTORS

Figure 4-9. Comparison of Difference in Median Home Sales Price from January 2016 to December 2023 within select localities the CRC



Source: Virginia REALTORS

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING RESIDENTS

According to Virginia Realtors, there are three factors that help localities attract residents who can work from home:

1. Reliable high speed internet access
2. Recreation and cultural amenities
3. Quality public schools

CLIMATE MIGRATION

As the climate changes and sea levels rise, people living in coastal areas will adapt by moving to places that they perceive to be climate resilient. This is known as climate migration. With its central Virginia location, conveniently accessible to larger cities, and a low cost of living, Prince Edward County is strategically positioned to accept people migrating away from the east coast as sea level rises. By increasing availability of housing, the County will be prepared to welcome this in-migration.

EXPANDING HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

When planning where to locate new neighborhoods and growth areas, many factors must be considered, including but not limited to commuting patterns, transportation and utility infrastructure, schools, employment centers, and demographics. Chapter 8, *Community Character and Development* establishes key growth areas and potential regulatory amendments that will facilitate desirable residential growth in Prince Edward County, such as mixed-use and higher-density residential uses in appropriate locations.

HOUSING CHOICE & AFFORDABILITY

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing has become a widespread urgent need throughout the country, and Prince Edward County is no exception. The County's cost-burdened households struggle to meet basic needs such as food, transportation, and healthcare. Without intervention and new housing solutions, the number of cost-burdened renters and homeowners is likely to increase due to increasing home sales prices, rising rents, an aging population that often lives on a fixed income, and historically high indebtedness of first-time home buyers.

NEW HOUSING

New housing is a high priority for Prince Edward County. Population projections predict little to no population growth due to low birth rates and declining older populations. However, projections are not destiny; strategies to attract new residents and retain those who are here can be successful. New housing is critical to the success of these strategies. An adequate mix of housing options, including new units of all types, are needed to build a stronger workforce, provide housing for professors and staff of Longwood University and Hampden-Sydney College, and attract new families and individuals to the County.

Prince Edward County needs a variety of new housing options from single unit attached and detached dwellings, to multi-unit buildings, to planned residential development. Mixed housing developments that provide a variety of homes, and mixed-use developments that provide a mix of residential, commercial, public, and office uses are excellent ways to provide housing in livable communities.



WORKFORCE HOUSING

Workforce housing is affordable to employees in essential roles, such as education, healthcare, law enforcement, and public service. Community input stressed the need for increased housing development to attract a strong workforce to the County. The demand for housing in the County outmatches the housing supply, forcing qualified workers to live elsewhere. The extra time and expense of commuting further strains household budgets.

Providing more workforce housing is an investment in the economic viability of the County. To ensure an available, qualified workforce, and retain and attract a younger population who might otherwise seek jobs elsewhere requires better housing options. Encouraging housing variety such as apartments, duplexes, and townhouses through zoning ordinance amendments and density bonus incentives will facilitate more workforce housing options.

HOUSING FOR AGING POPULATIONS

From aging in place in one's current home, to retirement communities, to assisted living facilities or nursing homes, a variety of living arrangements are needed for those over the age of 60. During community engagement, residents expressed the need for more senior housing and healthcare options.

The desire to age in place is influenced by many factors that make up quality of life. Older adults who live in their own homes are more likely to have well-established social, familial, and medical connections. These residents also contribute to the community in valuable ways. The County can support older adults who wish to remain in their homes as long as possible by participating in supportive resources and services.

Living arrangements for County residents over 60 include 1,555 who live alone, 3,265 who live in family households, 255 who live in nonfamily households, and 175 who live in group quarters (Table 4-9). As shown in Table 4-8, Prince Edward County has 2,526 adults over the age of 60 living in owner occupied housing, and 961 in rental units.

Continuing to ensure that older residents have safe, secure, and affordable housing requires the County to work with community organizations and track data to anticipate future needs. Locating new senior housing near activity centers, daily needs, public transportation, and healthcare facilities supports high quality of life. Encouraging progressive housing opportunities ranging from independent living to supportive care facilities are additional ways to support our older population.

What strategies would support aging in place?

- Eliminate zoning barriers to development of housing opportunities for older adults.
- Ensure that active adult communities and assisted living facilities develop close to healthcare and community services.
- Encourage age-restricted development where appropriate.
- Facilitate the development of smaller residential units and lot sizes for downsizing.
- Create ordinance provisions for capital projects for walkable communities with integrated green space, sidewalks, and benches.
- Work with regional and state partners to effectively communicate grant funding and loan assistance for accessibility modifications and weatherization for older homes.

Table 4-8. Economic and Housing Demographics in Prince Edward County's Population Over 60

Economic and Housing Demographics in Prince Edward County's Population Over 60				
In Owner Occupied Housing Units	In Renter Occupied Housing Units	In Labor Force	Below Poverty Level	Receives SNAP/Food Stamps
2,526	961	1,170	955	706

Source: Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service

Table 4-9. Living Arrangements in Prince Edward County's Population Over 60

Living Arrangements in the Population Over 60 Years in 2020				
Total	Living Alone	Living in Family Households	Living in Nonfamily Households	Living in Group Quarters
5,250	1,555	3,265	255	175

PATHWAYS TO HOMEOWNERSHIP

With 2,896 Prince Edward residents renting their homes and 50% of them considered cost-burdened, increasing opportunities for homeownership is a priority. While homeownership is a significant way to build wealth and stabilize living expenses, the lack of affordable housing options is a barrier to homeownership in the County. College graduates who are burdened with debt, low-income families and individuals, and other vulnerable populations are less likely to own their homes. Creating pathways to homeownership is an impactful way to ensure the wellbeing of all residents.

Increasing homeownership includes taking advantage of programs offered at the local, state, and federal levels. By working with regional partners to promote and distribute information about these programs the County can help reach those who can benefit from them.

HOUSING DIVERSITY & ALTERNATIVES

Community engagement input and housing data demonstrate that more housing is needed for Prince Edward County's continued viability. Further, a progressive mix of solutions is needed to diversify the housing stock to address the needs of a diverse community.

Mixed-use development, accessory dwelling units, small homes, and manufactured homes, residential planned communities, and cluster developments are additional means of diversifying housing choices that will support livability, community wellness, and prosperity by providing options at all income levels and ensuring that each resident and family has access to housing that fits their unique needs and lifestyle.

How can Prince Edward County support housing diversity?

- Review the Zoning Ordinance for amendments that encourage housing diversity in multiple zoning districts.
- Encourage developers to include affordable and mixed housing options in new project proposals.
- Work with the Commonwealth Regional Council partners to implement Virginia's Heartland Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. (See page 81 for more details)

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS



TINY OR SMALL HOMES



MANUFACTURED HOMES



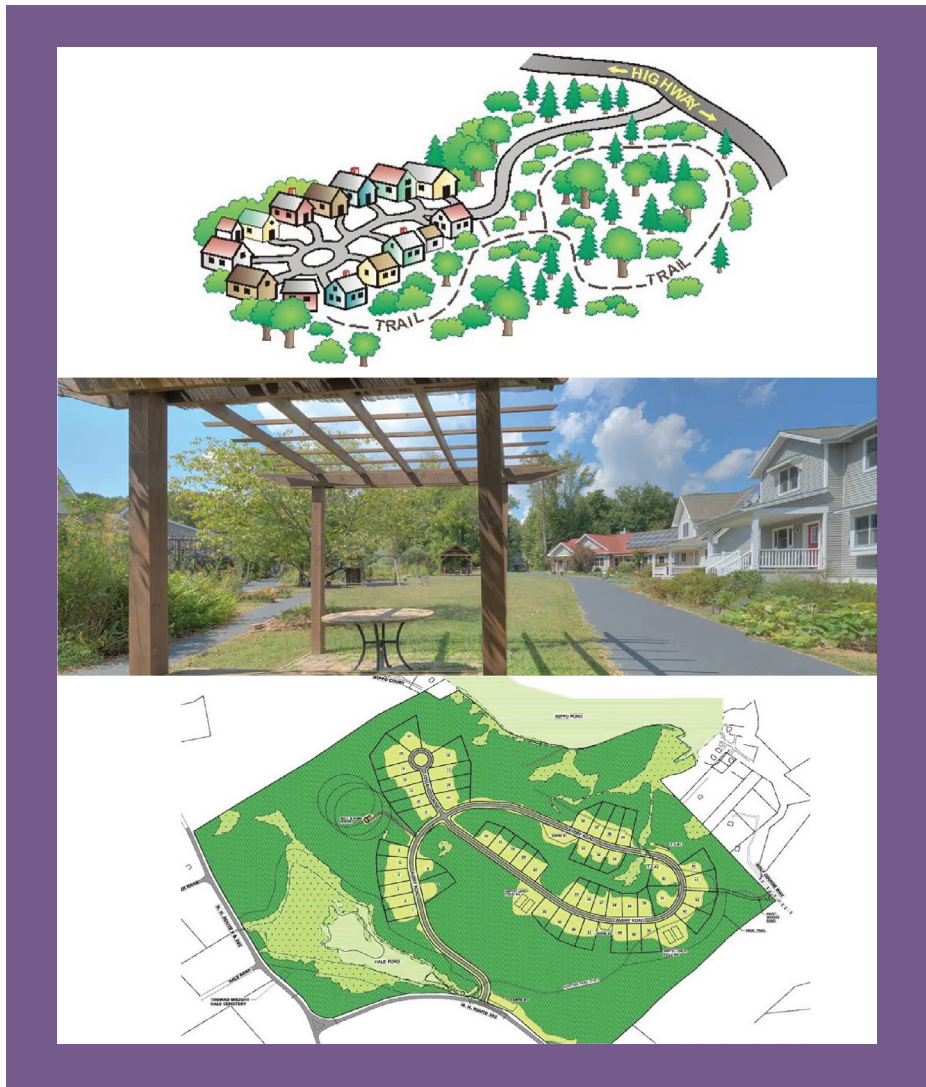
Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are often a garage or basement apartment or in-law suite (a.k.a. “granny flat”). They are mutually beneficial to the homeowner and the tenant. While providing affordable housing, the apartment also makes homeownership affordable to the owner. Additionally, ADUs can facilitate aging in place, or caregiving situations. Accessory apartments are currently permitted by-right, with use and design standards, in the agricultural and residential zoning districts, except for the college residential district.

Cottage communities and tiny homes offer options to those wanting a simpler, more affordable lifestyle. Cottage communities often consist of small single-unit homes grouped around a community center or communal space. Tiny homes can also operate as an ADU, or as a standalone dwelling. Small homes require less land, cost less to build, and provide options for low- and moderate-income buyers and renters. Reviewing zoning regulations to ensure permitting these options will help diversify the County’s housing stock.

Manufactured homes have long been a means for affordable homeownership. However, this type of housing has not been immune to rising housing prices. Prince Edward County currently has 1,115 manufactured homes — 12% of all housing. Numerous challenges are associated with maintaining the quality of existing mobile and manufactured housing, and with regulating where it is permitted. The County’s manufactured home park district (MHP) recognizes the importance of this housing option and provides standards for the development of new manufactured home communities.

CLUSTER SUBDIVISIONS

Cluster subdivisions group residential lots into smaller areas by decreasing lot size, creating denser neighborhoods that result in more preserved open space than a traditional neighborhood. When sidewalks, benches, and other community amenities are provided, cluster subdivisions achieve the shared goal of rural preservation and livable communities.



CREATING LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

Several infrastructural components are key to creating a community with a high quality of life. These include housing, neighborhoods, outdoor recreation, and multi-modal transportation. Long-term mental and physical health are supported by new residential development and redevelopment that includes pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure along with a mix of active and passive recreation amenities. Locating housing adjacent to multi-modal connections, essential service areas, employment centers, and educational resources builds the foundation for a livable community for all.

ZONING ORDINANCE & POLICIES

As shown on Table 4-1, 69% of the County's existing housing stock is composed of single-unit houses, 1% is townhomes and 12% is manufactured homes, with only 18% being two- or more-unit buildings. The Zoning Ordinance should be evaluated to identify standards and regulations that limit the housing market. By amending the Zoning Ordinance to permit alternative housing types, adjust standards that cater solely to single-unit detached dwellings, and reduce minimum lot sizes where appropriate the ordinance will promote residential development.

Adopting new zoning tools also encourages new housing. A mixed-use zoning district will facilitate a diversity of unit types in livable, walkable communities. Additionally, residential cluster subdivisions can be used as a land development tool to build housing in areas with utility, broadband, and transportation infrastructure, which are also located near essential services, educational, and employment centers while preserving the rural landscape of the County. By amending the Cluster Housing Overlay District to allow appropriately scaled cluster developments in both agricultural and residential districts the County will help achieve desired densities of new housing while preserving natural areas and maintaining the surrounding landscape.

DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

Opportunities for moderate- to high-density housing are limited by the availability of public water and sewer connections. Public water and sewer infrastructure exists in the area around Farmville – the same area cited during public engagement as the preferred area for new housing. Residential clusters using energy efficiency and green building practices would be appropriate here and can help lower housing costs due to reduced infrastructure footprints and lower maintenance costs.

HOUSING TYPES BY ZONING DISTRICT

Table 4-10 shows the zoning districts where various residential use types are allowed by the County's Zoning Ordinance. Scrutinizing these provisions along with the use and design standards to eliminate barriers that may limit the County's ability to attract more housing options is an important step toward meeting the County's housing needs. Chapter 8, *Community Character and Development* addresses land use in depth, including goals and strategies that address housing and communities.

Table 4-10. Prince Edward County Housing Use Types as Permitted by Zoning District

Housing Type	A1	A2	R1	R2	R3	MHP	C1	CR	VC
	Agricultural Conservation	Agricultural Residential	Low Density Residential	General Residential	Medium Density Residential	Manufactured Home Park	General Commercial	College Residential	Village Center
P = Permitted By-Right SUP = Special Use Permit Required									
Accessory apartment	P	P	P	P	P				P
Assisted care residence	SUP	SUP		SUP	SUP		P		SUP
Dormitories	SUP	SUP							
Farm employee	P	P							
Life care facility	SUP	SUP					P		
Manufactured home	P	P		SUP		P			
Multi-family					P			SUP	SUP
Nursing home	SUP	SUP					P		
Residential human care facility	P	P	P	P	P				
Short-term tourist rental	P	P	SUP	SUP	SUP			SUP	
Single-family, attached			SUP	SUP	P			P	P
Single-family, detached	P	P	P	P	P			P	P
Temporary Family Healthcare Structure	P	P							
Townhouse		SUP	SUP	SUP	P				SUP
Two-family dwelling	P	P	SUP	SUP	P			P	SUP

Source: Prince Edward County Zoning Ordinance



Prince Edward County's Residential Planned Community District (RPC) allows applications for residential, civic, and/or commercial use types as part of a planned unit district. This option requires a detailed master plan.

In 2021, 1,061 acres were rezoned to RPC for a phased residential development called The Manor. The property is located along U.S. Route 15, south of Farmville and east of Hampden-Sydney College. Phase 1, as developed, has 28 residential units built contiguous to a golf course. Phases 2 – 5 have the potential to build out a maximum of 1,679 additional residential lots, 180 apartments, and 22 acres of commercial uses. RPC developments can accommodate a variety of new housing.

MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

Mixed-use developments provide a blend of residential, commercial, office, and sometimes public uses. These developments are typically in urban or suburban locations, close to employment centers, transportation options, and utility infrastructure. Mixed-use development creates walkable neighborhoods and attractive housing with a compact community lifestyle currently not available in the County outside of Farmville. Additionally, mixed-use neighborhoods help increase density in the areas that can best support it while preserving rural areas. Prince Edward County currently does not have a mixed-use zoning district but would benefit from creating one. This type of development would be appropriate near the Town of Farmville and within key growth areas in the County.



HOUSING PARTNERS & INITIATIVES

REGIONAL HOUSING COLLABORATION

Regional, state, and local community organizations work in partnership with Prince Edward County to provide grants and other programs to help financially struggling residents pay for housing and living essentials. These organizations include the Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC), Piedmont Habitat for Humanity, and STEPS Incorporated.

The CRC's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2019 (CEDS) includes affordable and workforce strategies to help accomplish the goal of strengthening the region's workforce. A thorough housing study for the region would be beneficial to help its localities plan for housing needs more specifically. By working with its regional partners to implement the CEDS the County can effectively achieve its housing goals.

Additionally, many programs exist at the state and federal levels to help repair and improve housing, and to assist with homeownership. Table 4-11 provides a list of these resources. Additional programs provide tax credits for landlords who improve housing and provide affordable housing.

COMMONWEALTH REGIONAL COUNCIL 2019 CEDS

Goal 1 - Strengthen the Region's Workforce - Housing Strategies



Diversify housing stock by removing barriers to small-lot, attached, and multi-family residential.

Identify vacant housing stock and work with owners to convert to low-moderate income (LMI) owner occupied housing.

Work with regional and local housing partners to leverage funds for conversion of vacant or underutilized dwellings to LMI housing.

Work with housing partners to improve the provision of and access to mortgage credit repair and counseling classes.

Table 4-11. State and Federal Housing Assistance Programs

#	Available Program	Organization	Link
1	Essential Home and Accessibility Repair Program (EHARP)	Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development	dhcd.virginia.gov/eharp
2	Indoor Plumbing Rehabilitation Program (IPR FLEX)	Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development	dhcd.virginia.gov/ipr
3	Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)	Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development	dhcd.virginia.gov/wx
4	Weatherization Deferral Repair (WDR)	Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development	dhcd.virginia.gov/wdr
5	Livable Home Tax Credit (LHTC)	Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development	dhcd.virginia.gov/lhtc
6	Single Family Housing Repair Loans and Grants	USDA Rural Development	rd.usda.gov/programs-services
7	Virginia Housing Plus Second Mortgage	Virginia Housing	virginiahousing.com/homebuyers/plus-second-mortgage
8	Down Payment Assistance Grant	Virginia Housing	virginiahousing.com/partners/lenders/down-payment-assistance-grant
9	Virginia Housing Accessibility Grants	Virginia Housing	virginiahousing.com/renters/accessibility-grants
10	Housing Tax Credit Program	Virginia Housing (Sponsored by U.S. Treasury Department)	virginiahousing.com/partners/rental-housing/rental-housing-tax-credits
11	Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM)	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	hud.gov/program_offices/housing/sfh/hecm

HOUSING & INFRASTRUCTURE

Efficient and affordable transportation services linking commercial centers and residential areas particularly those with high concentrations of affordable housing can reinforce housing and job security for Prince Edward residents. Further exploration of transportation within the County can be found in Chapter 7, *Transportation and Connectivity*, of this Plan. Chapter 8, *Community Character & Development*, includes strategies to steer growth in the area surrounding Farmville, where utility and transportation infrastructure exists, and can be expanded.

Broadband, or high-speed internet, has become a necessity for most households. From homework, exams, and class projects to parent and student portals, modern education requires internet connectivity. Broadband also enables people to work from home, have a home-based business, have access to job resources, pay bills, stay connected with friends and family, and much more. Highspeed internet connectivity has become a necessity for 21st century living. A key infrastructure investment to install high-speed internet fiber over 1,190 miles in Prince Edward, Lunenburg, and Cumberland Counties is targeted to be complete in 2026. As the fiber expands, connectivity is increasing – bringing important infrastructure to existing County residents while also attracting new residents.

GOALS & STRATEGIES

Prince Edward County is a community with high-quality housing and neighborhoods that are available, accessible, and affordable to all residents.

4.1 PROTECT & IMPROVE THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

4.1.1

Work with regional and state partners to effectively communicate grant funding and loan assistance programs for accessibility modifications, energy efficiency retrofits, well/septic upgrades, and weatherization to extend the life of existing homes and maintain community character; publish and maintain an easily accessible resource list for community members.

4.1.2

Adopt and enforce property maintenance codes to avoid degradation and blight of residential properties.

4.1.3

Support those in mobile homes constructed before 1976 that do not meet current HUD standards, or are otherwise in states of disrepair, through federal and state rehabilitation grants and homeowner assistance programs.

4.1.4

Review and update use and design standards for high quality manufactured home parks in suitable areas.

4.1.5

Review use permissions and use performance standards for short-term rentals to best ensure appropriate siting of short-term rentals to protect the existing housing stock from oversaturation.

4.2 EXPAND HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

- 4.2.1** Work with regional partners in ongoing efforts to implement the housing strategies of Goal 1 of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) 2019 to strengthen the region's workforce.
- 4.2.2** Encourage the development of townhomes, garden apartments, and duplexes by amending the Zoning Ordinance to permit such unit types by-right in residential districts.
- 4.2.3** Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow accessory apartments in the College Residential District.
- 4.2.4** Encourage progressive housing opportunities ranging from independent living to supportive care facilities for residents over the age of 55; create opportunities for such developments by-right in residential and commercial districts.
- 4.2.5** Work with community organizations to promote affordable housing for individuals and families with disabilities, living in poverty, and struggling to find secure housing.
- 4.2.6** Regularly track data trends for vulnerable populations to inform land use decisions.
- 4.2.7** Work with regional partners and community service organizations to provide education about local, state, and federal homeownership programs available to County residents.
- 4.2.8** Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow for cottage communities featuring small, detached housing units.

4.3 CREATE LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

- 4.3.1** Direct development to targeted growth areas where public utilities are available to support a range of housing types and densities.
- 4.3.2** Prioritize expansion of public water and sewer infrastructure in the County's targeted growth areas to ensure adequate services to support residential development.
- 4.3.3** Amend the Zoning Ordinance to include a mixed-use district that facilitates a diversity of unit types and densities in livable, walkable communities.
- 4.3.4** Amend the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate density bonus options to incentivize affordable housing and enhanced site design where higher densities are appropriate in key growth areas.
- 4.3.5** Encourage active adult communities and assisted living facilities to develop close to activity centers, daily needs, public transportation, and healthcare facilities to support a high quality of life.
- 4.3.6** Prioritize transportation improvements in the County's growth areas to ensure adequate transportation infrastructure to support residential development.
- 4.3.7** Amend the Cluster Housing Overlay District to allow appropriately scaled cluster developments in both agricultural and residential districts to achieve desired densities while preserving natural areas and maintaining the surrounding landscape.