

CHAPTER 6: HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

Although the housing market is essentially a private system, local governmental policies and actions can have a definite impact on the housing market. The availability and quality of utilities, education, police and fire protection, health care, employment, commercial districts and recreation facilities, as well as tax rates, land use controls and traffic flow management, have important implications for housing. These varied factors influence the housing market and are in turn influenced by local government.

This chapter addresses the supply of housing and types of housing available in the County and in the region through a presentation of relevant data. The 2010 and 2020 Census of Population and Housing and the American Community Survey Housing Characteristics 2008 - 2012 and 2016 - 2020 5-Year Estimates are the primary sources of information for this chapter. This data has been supplemented with 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000 Census data in order to establish trends in housing characteristics. It is hoped that an adequate understanding of housing in the County will contribute to effective policy decisions during implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

HOUSING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1: Promote safe, sanitary and affordable housing for all County residents.

Objective 1: Enforce applicable codes that require minimum standards of housing construction and maintenance.

Objective 2: Use the land use and infrastructure development policies of the County as a means to promote developer responsibility for attractive housing at above-minimum standards.

Objective 3: Ensure that County ordinances support an adequate supply of good quality housing in a broad range of prices.

Objective 4: Develop realistic strategies the County can implement in support of its housing goals using existing staff and other available resources.

GOAL 2: Ensure compatible land uses adjacent to residential areas.

Objective 1: Study the impact of the zoning and subdivision ordinances of the County as they relate to housing, and develop strategies to revise them in support of this goal.

Objective 2: Prepare for orderly residential growth in accordance with the land use plan, while striving to retain the positive characteristics of existing residential neighborhoods.

Objective 3: Support growth and development of housing in defined areas and within the fiscal capabilities of the County to provide necessary infrastructure such as schools, police and fire protection, and public utilities.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Since 1980, the number of housing units in Campbell County has increased at a much greater rate than has the population as a whole. One reason is that the county has an abundant supply of affordable housing, mostly in the form of manufactured housing. Traditional single-family housing is still by far the most popular form of housing in the County, but the number of multi-family homes has started to increase at a steady rate replacing manufactured homes as the primary option for those seeking more affordable housing options.

Campbell County has historically been able to provide affordable single-family and rental housing for its citizens. The median house value in the County is estimated at \$159,400 according to the American Community Survey 2016-2020 5-year Estimate, compared to \$146,800 in the American Community Survey 2008 - 2012 5-year Estimate and \$96,900 in 2000, while the average contract rent is estimated at \$730, which is up from \$635 and \$427, respectively. The median household income reported during this same period was \$52,319, compared to \$45,432 and \$42,901, respectively. This means that while the household income has increased 18.0%, the average house value has increased by 64.5% and the cost

of rent has increased 41.5%. These changes should be expected given the nature of financial difficulties that occurred between 2000 and 2010 and the continued recovery since. Although affordable housing options are still available, the average costs of housing are increasing at a rate greater than the increase in the average family's income. As the economic recovery continues and the market stabilizes, these trends may stabilize. However, if they continue, the County may need to re-examine its policies to ensure its citizens continue to have affordable housing options available. Currently, programs offered by the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA), the Rural Housing Service, Virginia Housing Development Authority, and the Campbell County Department of Social Services provide assistance to low and moderate-income individuals and families.

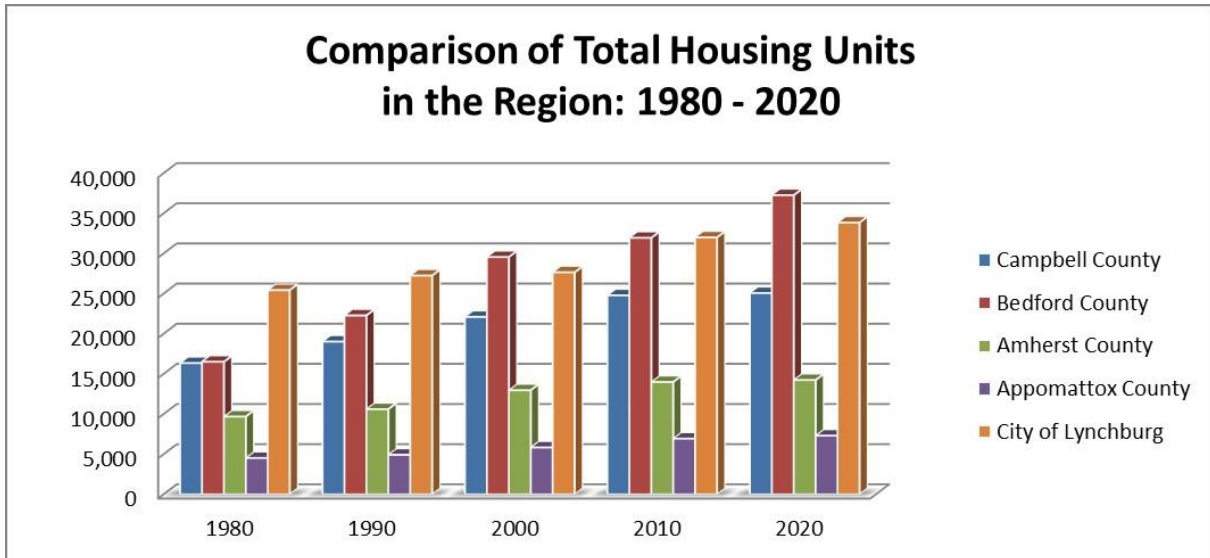
Campbell County has an adequate supply of multi-family housing units. The growth of the student population at Liberty University has contributed to the need for additional multi-family developments, continuing the trend that multi-family housing is concentrated in the northwestern part of the County. As the County expands its public utilities along other major corridors, demand for multi-family housing may increase in these areas as well.

HOUSING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

HOUSING SUPPLY

There were 25,060 housing units in the County in 2020, up from 24,769 in 2010 (see chart below). This figure represents an increase of 1.17% in housing units since 2000, which is lower than the mean increase among the region's localities during the same time period of 6.38 percent. The County's housing stock makes up just over 21% of the total housing units in the region. This percentage slightly decreased between the 2010 Census and the 2020 Census. The number of housing units in Campbell County increased at a lower percentage than other localities in the region. Since 1980, Bedford County's share of the total number of housing units in the region increased from 22.8% to 31.7%, mostly at the expense of the City of Lynchburg that saw its share drop from 35.1% to 28.8%. Over this same time period, Campbell County's percentage of total housing units in the region has remained constant at approximately 22%.

Comparison of Total Housing Units in the Region: 1980 - 2020

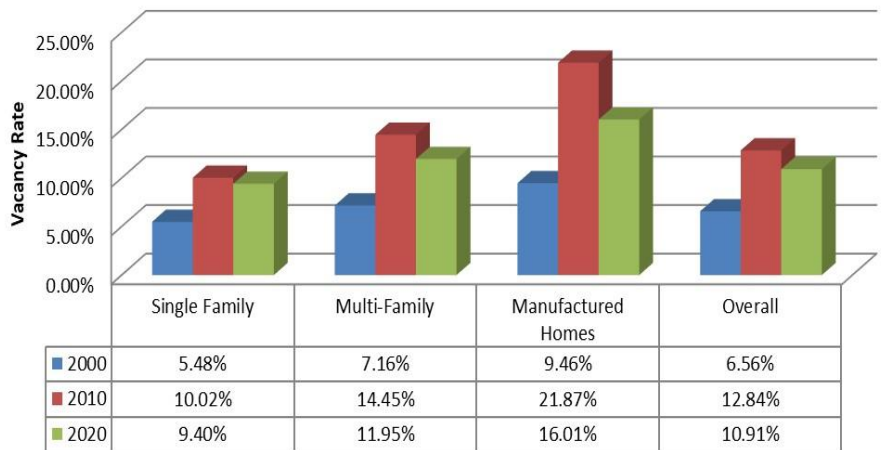


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Census

Housing vacancy rates are a common measure for determining if the supply of housing is meeting the demand for housing. The higher the vacancy rate, the more housing there is available to meet the demand. Although vacancy rates vary over time and from community to community, 5% is generally considered adequate to meet the housing needs of most area residents. (Urban Land Use Planning, Second Edition, F. Stuart Chapin, Jr., University of Illinois Press, 1972, Page 427.) Vacancy rates greater than 5% are desirable in areas experiencing significant population increases.

Vacant housing units include those available for sale and for rent, those held for occasional use, and other vacancies. According to the most recent data from the American Community Surveys, the vacancy rate for all housing types in the County is 10.91%, down from 12.84% in 2010, but still higher than the 6.56% vacancy rate in 2000. While the increase in the vacancy rate may

Campbell County : Vacancy Rate by Occupied Housing Type

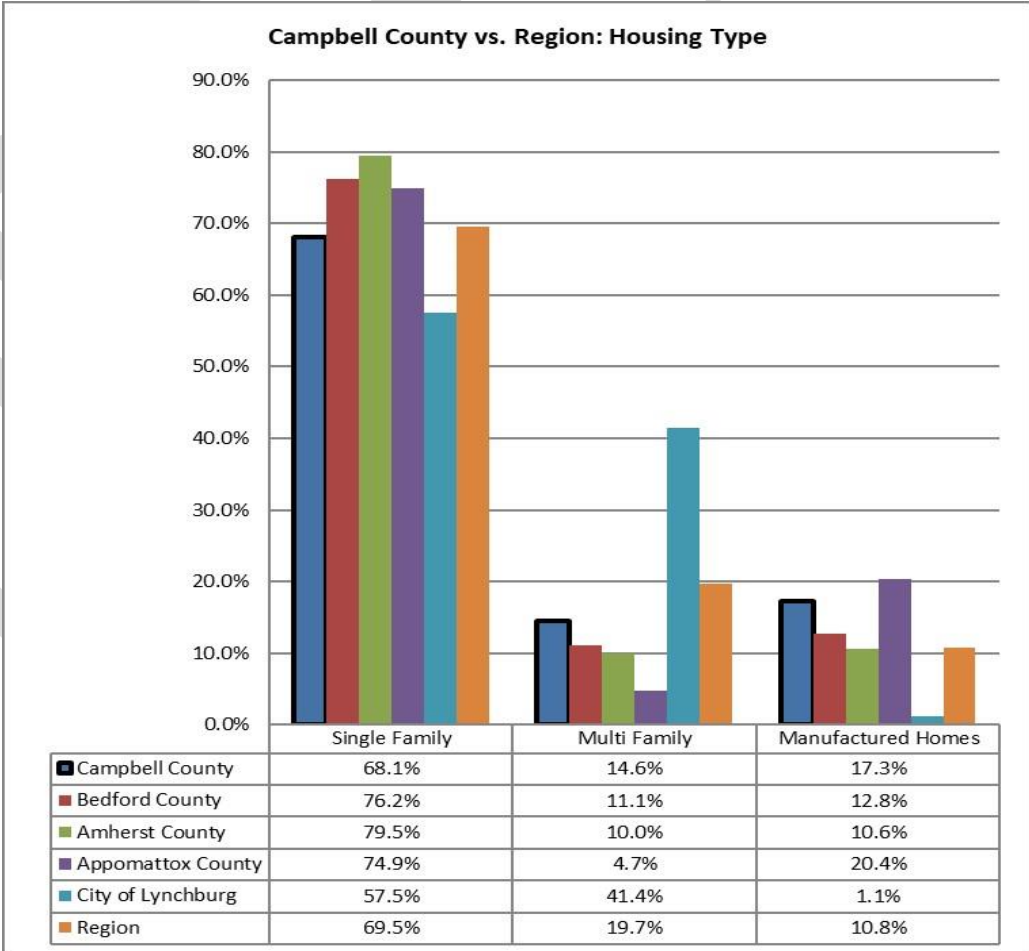


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census; American Community Survey Physical Housing Characteristics for Occupied Housing Units, 2008 – 2012 and 2016-2020 5-Year Estimates

partially be due to the boom and bust of the housing industry that occurred between 2000 and 2010, American Community Survey estimates show that the vacancy rates for all housing types have stabilized and slightly decreased since 2010. The overall reduction in the number of mobile homes in the County reflects the decreasing demand for this type of housing based on the increasing availability of other affordable housing options, namely multi-family developments. The decrease in the vacancy rate for multi-family and single-family housing shows that the housing market has recovered from the Great Recession that significantly impacted housing and new construction activities. Since 2000, Campbell County has seen the highest increase of new housing units in the multi-family category. This reflects a growing interest in downsizing to less expensive housing, as well as accommodating an expanding student population as Liberty University continues to increase its student population.

HOUSING TYPES AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Single-family housing is the prevalent housing type not only in Campbell County, but throughout Central Virginia as well. Single-family housing includes conventional single-unit detached and attached housing. Amherst has the highest percentage of single-family housing (79.5%) of all the jurisdictions in the area while 68.1% of the housing in Campbell County is single-family.

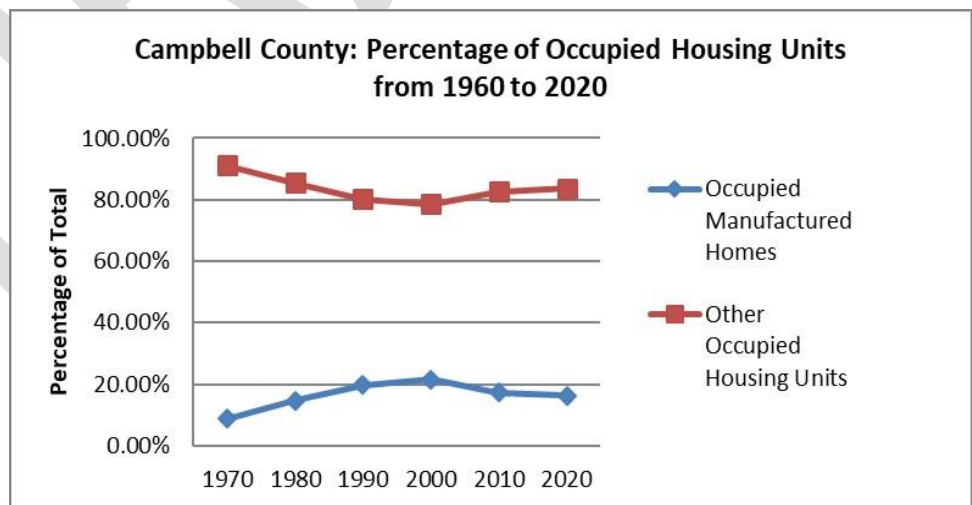


Source: American Community Survey Selected Housing Characteristics, 2016-2020 5-Year Estimates

Multi-family housing is the second most frequently occurring housing type in Central Virginia. In fact, 41.4% of the housing units in Lynchburg are multi-family. In the County, 14.60% of housing is multi-family. Multi-family housing includes all conventional housing with two or more units per structure.

In all the localities in the region, single family housing is the predominant type of housing. Although across the region as a whole, the second most frequently occurring type of housing is multi-family, this is skewed by the number of multi-family units available in the City of Lynchburg; each of the counties in the region have a higher percentage of manufactured housing units compared to multi-family housing. In Campbell County, more than 17% of the total housing units are manufactured homes. Of the 12,585 manufactured homes in the region, 4,496 (35.7%) are in Campbell County. This actually represents a reduction of manufactured homes in Campbell County between the 2008-2012 American Community Survey and 2016-2020 American Community Survey (5.92%). Single family and multi-family housing units increased at rates of 4.13% and 27.35% respectively.

The desire for home ownership is often tempered by the ever-increasing cost of purchasing or constructing conventional housing. In the past, this has resulted in an increase in the number of manufactured homes, a common alternative to conventional housing in many rural areas of Virginia. As illustrated in the following chart, since 2000, the number of manufactured homes in Campbell County has not increased at a greater pace than the numbers associated with other housing types.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000; American Community Survey Physical Housing Characteristics for Occupied Housing Units, 2008 – 2012 and 2016-2020 5-Year Estimates

In order to continue to provide affordable housing options in the County, several programs are offered by federal, state, and local agencies. The Rural Housing Service, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture, administers programs for home purchase and home repair for low-income families in rural areas. The Campbell County Department of Social Services administers 164 Section 8 vouchers to provide affordable rental housing to low-income residents throughout the County. The Department manages the Source vouchers for the Virginia Housing Development Authority. These housing programs, combined with the relative abundance of manufactured homes in the County, appear to be addressing the housing needs of low and moderate-income families.

FINANCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

The median value of owner-occupied housing in Campbell County between 2016 and 2020 was \$159,400. In 2000, Campbell County had the second highest median value of owner-occupied housing in the area, behind only Bedford County. The data collected between 2008 and 2012 showed that Appomattox was the only locality in the region with a lower median value. However, data collected between 2016 and 2020 shows that Campbell County now has the lowest median value. Lynchburg City's values are 2.20% higher, Amherst County's are only 0.31% higher, and Appomattox County's are only 0.57% higher. This shows that housing values are equalizing across the different localities in the region. Bedford County's housing values remain higher, likely due to the elevated values of housing near and around Smith Mountain Lake.

As referenced earlier, the median owner-occupied housing value has increased more than fifty percent in Campbell County. Owner-occupied housing in Campbell County typically falls in the middle value ranges (\$100,000 - \$149,999, \$150,000 - \$199,999, and \$200,000 - \$299,999). Bedford County continues to have the highest percentage of housing units in the upper value ranges (\$200,000 - \$299,999, \$300,000 - \$499,999 and \$500,000 or more).

HOUSING PLAN

Campbell County will implement these strategies in regard to housing:

1. Use the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan for guidance in making policy decisions on housing-related issues.
2. Review the zoning and subdivision ordinances of the County as they relate to residential development to ensure support for the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.
3. Provide public infrastructure in designated growth areas to encourage orderly and efficient development of new housing.
4. Make the public aware of the location and significance of designated residential growth areas as outlined in the land use section of the Comprehensive Plan.
5. Encourage the private sector to identify and rehabilitate substandard housing throughout the County, utilizing non-profit and government resources where available.
6. Determine an appropriate role for County government in housing and assign that role to existing staff through the priority initiatives approved by the Board of Supervisors.

SUMMARY

Today, Campbell County has an adequate supply of housing in a variety of areas and prices. There are some individual household needs that are generally being met by governmental and non-profit housing assistance programs available to County residents. Future projections indicate that the population will continue to increase, but at a slower rate, and households will continue to decrease in size. This will continue the demand for new and replacement housing. Campbell County will follow its goals, objectives and strategies to influence the private market to supply quality housing. Growth will be targeted in areas where there is sufficient infrastructure to support the population.

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