

Stoddard Master Plan

Housing Survey

January – March 2024

Final draft

Stoddard Master Plan: Housing Survey

The Stoddard Planning Board initiated a Housing Survey from January 19, 2024 to March 31, 2024 to obtain feedback from the residents – full time and summer – regarding the future needs for housing in Stoddard and to use that feedback to update the Stoddard Master Plan. This Survey is one of several that are planned to assist the Planning Board in updating the Master Plan of 2005.

The Master Plan is one of the primary responsibilities of the Planning Board.

“It is the duty of every Planning Board, as established by RSA 673:1, to prepare and amend a master plan to guide the growth and development of the municipality. The master plan acts as a guide for the future. It identifies the most appropriate future development of the community and aids the Planning Board in designing ordinances that achieve the Master Plan’s vision and result in smart growth, sound planning and wise resource protection.” Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission

Housing Survey Summary

- Over 60% of the respondents believe that growth (housing and population) is an important issue
- The major concerns with growth are
 - Impact to the lakes – 81%
 - Overdevelopment – 75%
 - Loss of Rural Character – 64%
 - Traffic – 57%
- Approximately 39% of the respondents were concerned with an increase in town services and school enrollment

Housing Survey Summary

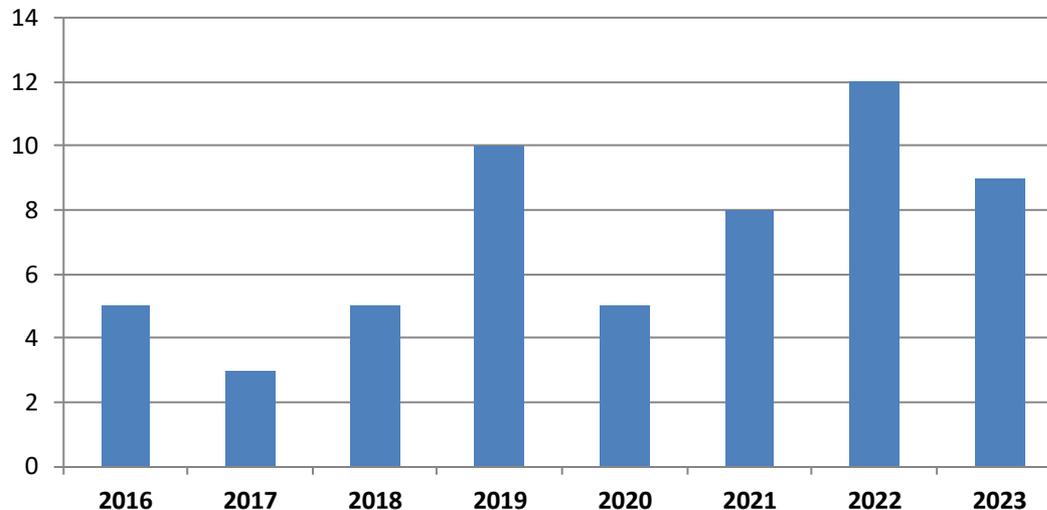
- The town residents ‘definitely do not’ see a need for several types of housing:
 - New apartment buildings – 64%
 - Manufactured home in park – 63%
 - Condominiums – 61%
- Several other types of housing follow close on the scale of “definitely do not need”
 - planned residential development, multi-family homes and conversion of large homes to apartments – 45% and
 - low income housing - 40%
- Town residents felt that there was “some need” or a “great need” for
 - Senior housing – 35%
 - Single family homes – 30%

Housing Survey Summary

- The town residents are unaware of the quiet but steady growth of Stoddard's population and housing starts relative surrounding communities.
 - 60.7% believe that Stoddard's population growth is less than or the same as surrounding communities.
 - About one quarter (29.3%) believe that Stoddard's growth is somewhat or significantly greater.
- Actual town permit applications and Southwest Regional information reflect vibrant growth in housing and population in Stoddard greater than its neighbors.

Stoddard is one of the fastest growing towns in Cheshire County

New Construction Permits



From 2016 to 2023 Stoddard has averaged just over 8 new home permits per year.

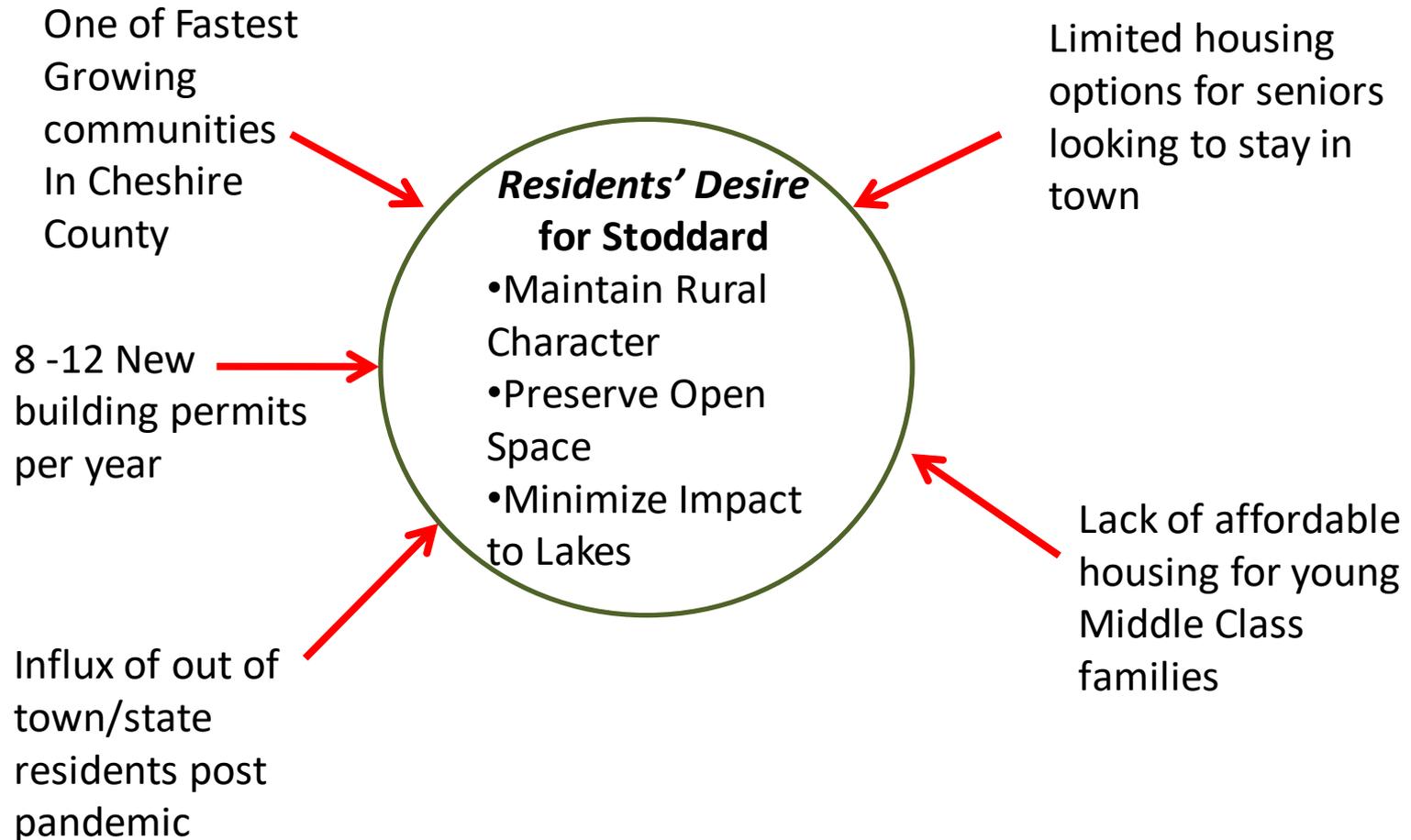
Stoddard experienced exceptional growth from 2006 to 2010 with 84 new permits, averaging 16.8 per year.

Census data and reports from Southwest Regional Planning show that Stoddard was one of the fastest growing towns in Cheshire County between 1990 and 2020.

Source: Town of Stoddard Compliance Officer – Permits issued

Source: Southwest New Hampshire Regional Housing Needs Assessment – 2023 - Report

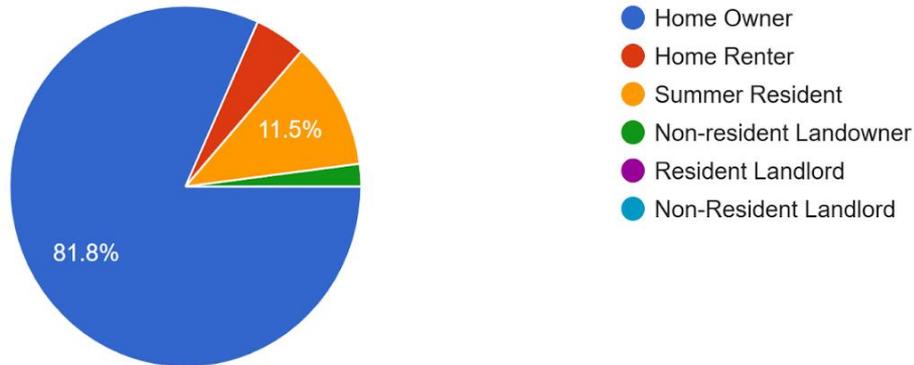
Challenges to keeping Stoddard Stoddard



Who Responded

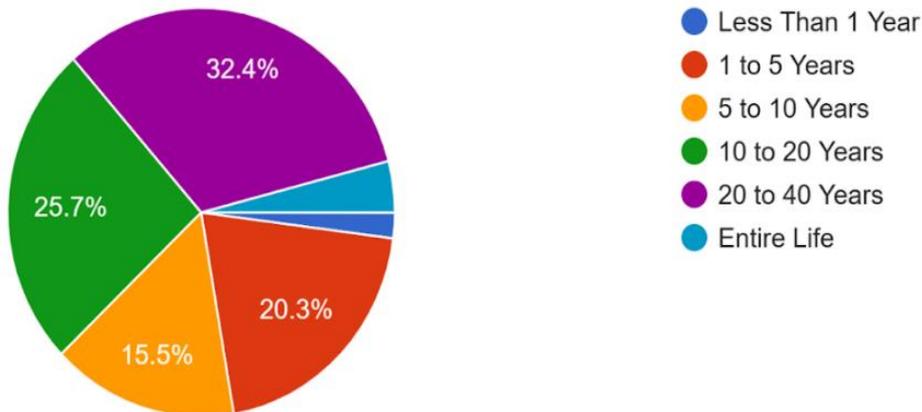
Residence Status

148 responses



How Long Have You Lived In Town

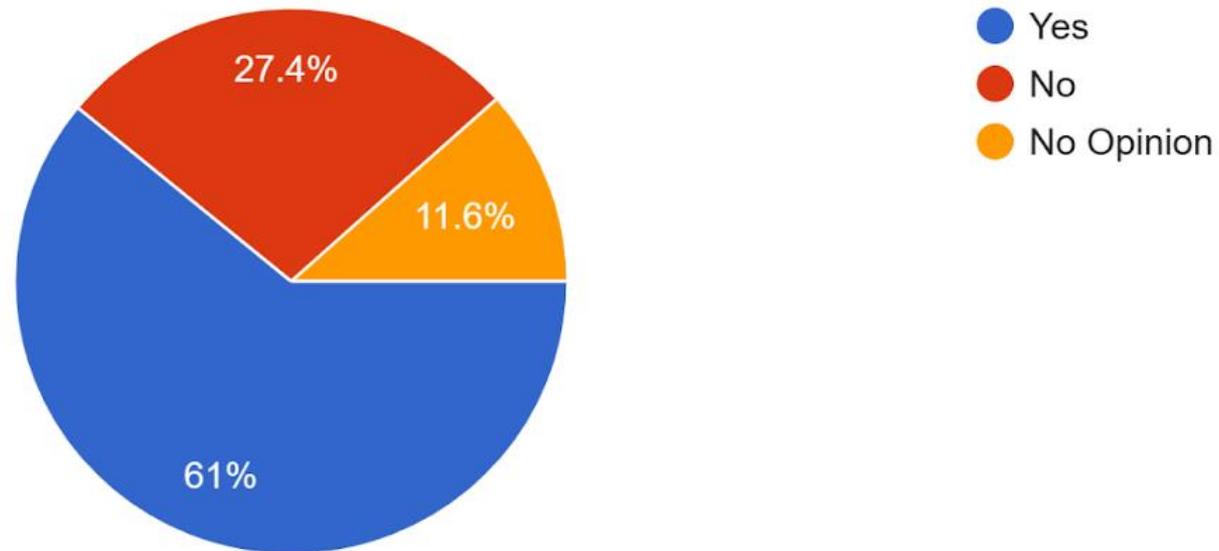
148 responses



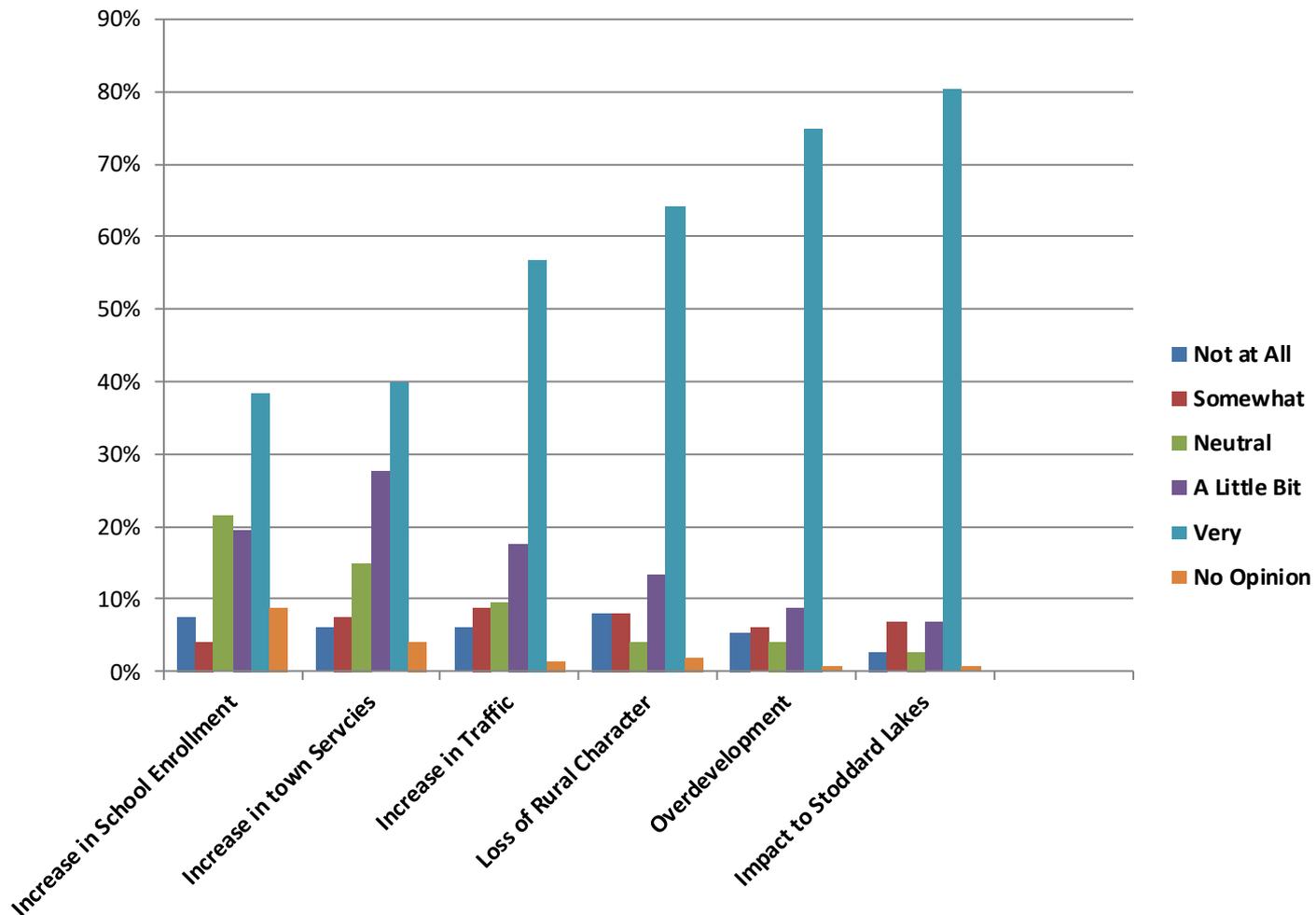
A large majority see growth as an important issue

Do you feel that growth (homes and population) is an important issue in Stoddard?

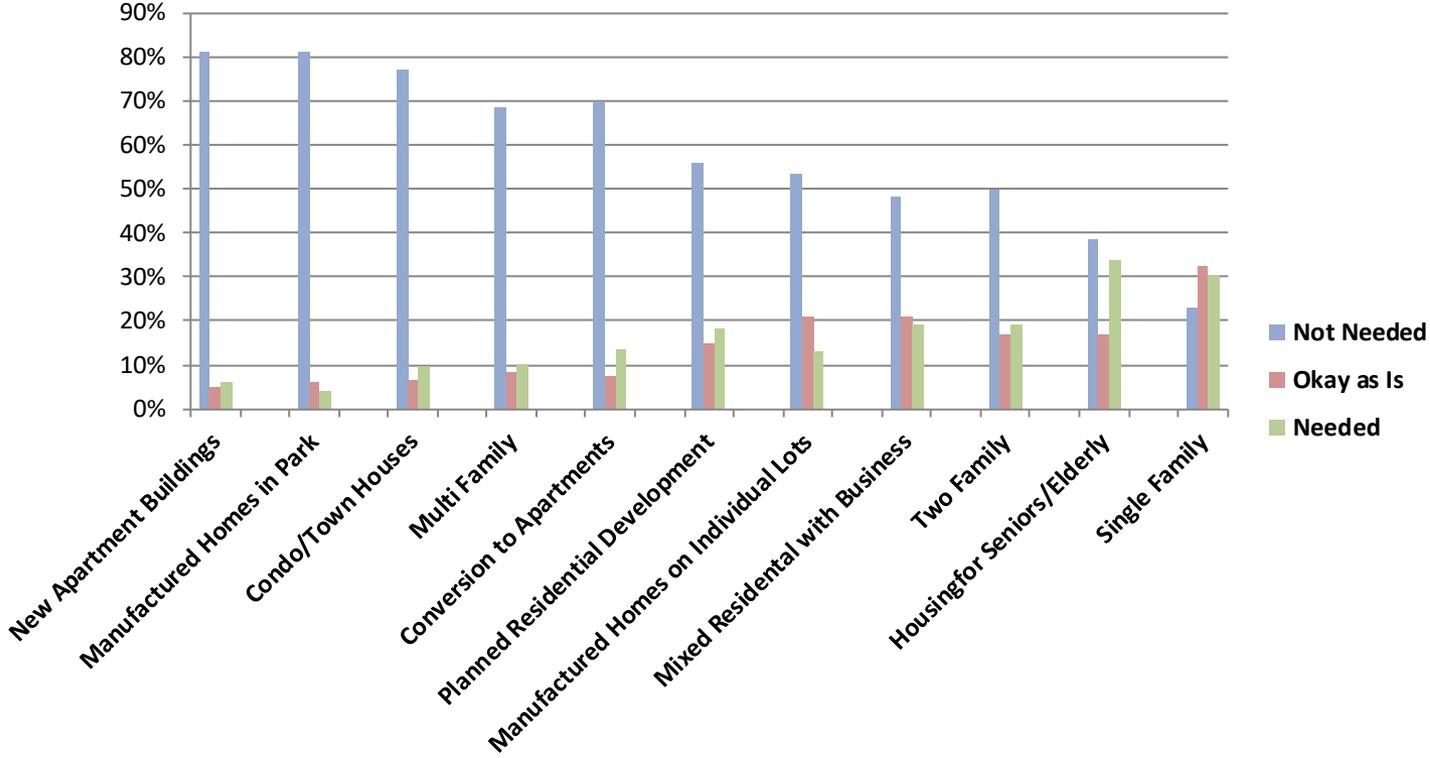
146 responses



The major concerns are impact to the lakes, overdevelopment, loss of rural character, traffic



Residents do not see a need for/desire for high density housing



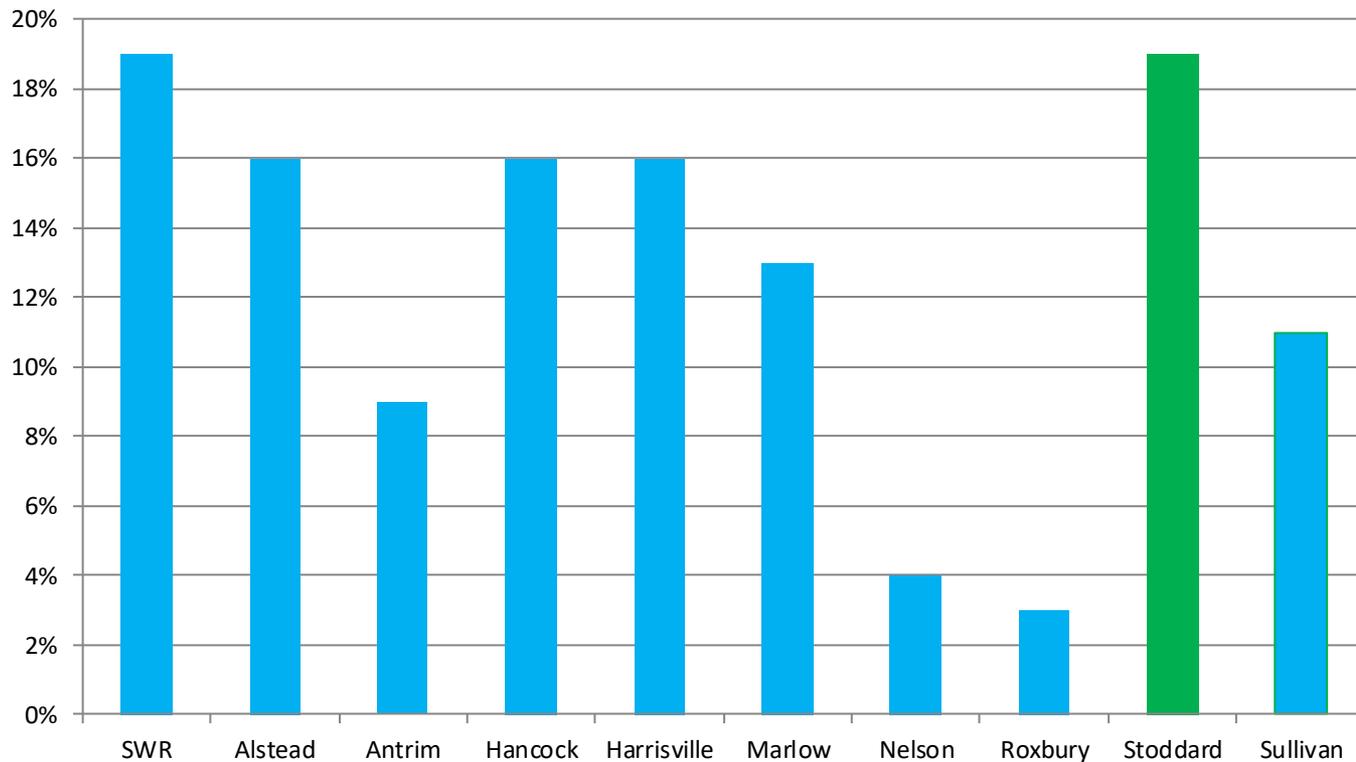
The town residents do not see a need for housing types that promote population growth, higher density building, or impact the rural character of town. Housing for seniors/elderly and single family homes were the two that had the greatest need.

Southwest Regional Planning Commissions confirms Stoddard's above average growth

- Stoddard has been growing above the Statewide Average
 - *“Population trends across Southwest NH communities vary, with about half experiencing growth from 2010 to 2020 and half seeing a decline. Only four communities (Rindge, Stoddard, Surry, and Windsor) within the SWRPC region saw growth rates which exceeded the statewide average of 4.6 percent.” (page 8)*
- Stoddard is growing with the influx of new people
 - *“..the greatest increases in net migration were observed in Peterborough (638), followed by Keene (401) and Stoddard (122).” page 14*
- Stoddard has a high level of new housing permits relative to surrounding towns (page 45)
- Stoddard has lowest level of Owner occupied homes and the highest level of vacant (.i.e. Seasonal Rental) units in the SWR. page 28

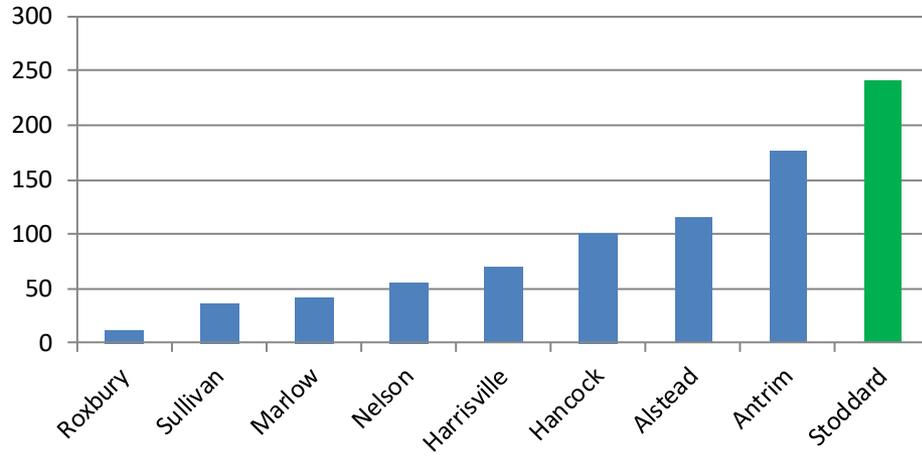
Stoddard is growing faster than the surrounding towns and on average with the growth of the entire SWR

Percentage Change in Housing units 1990 - 2020

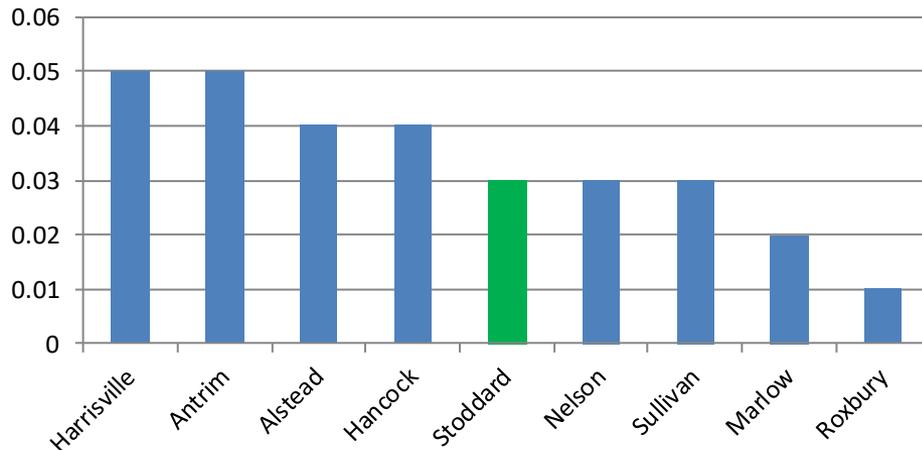


Stoddard has a high number of permits but still retains a low density of housing

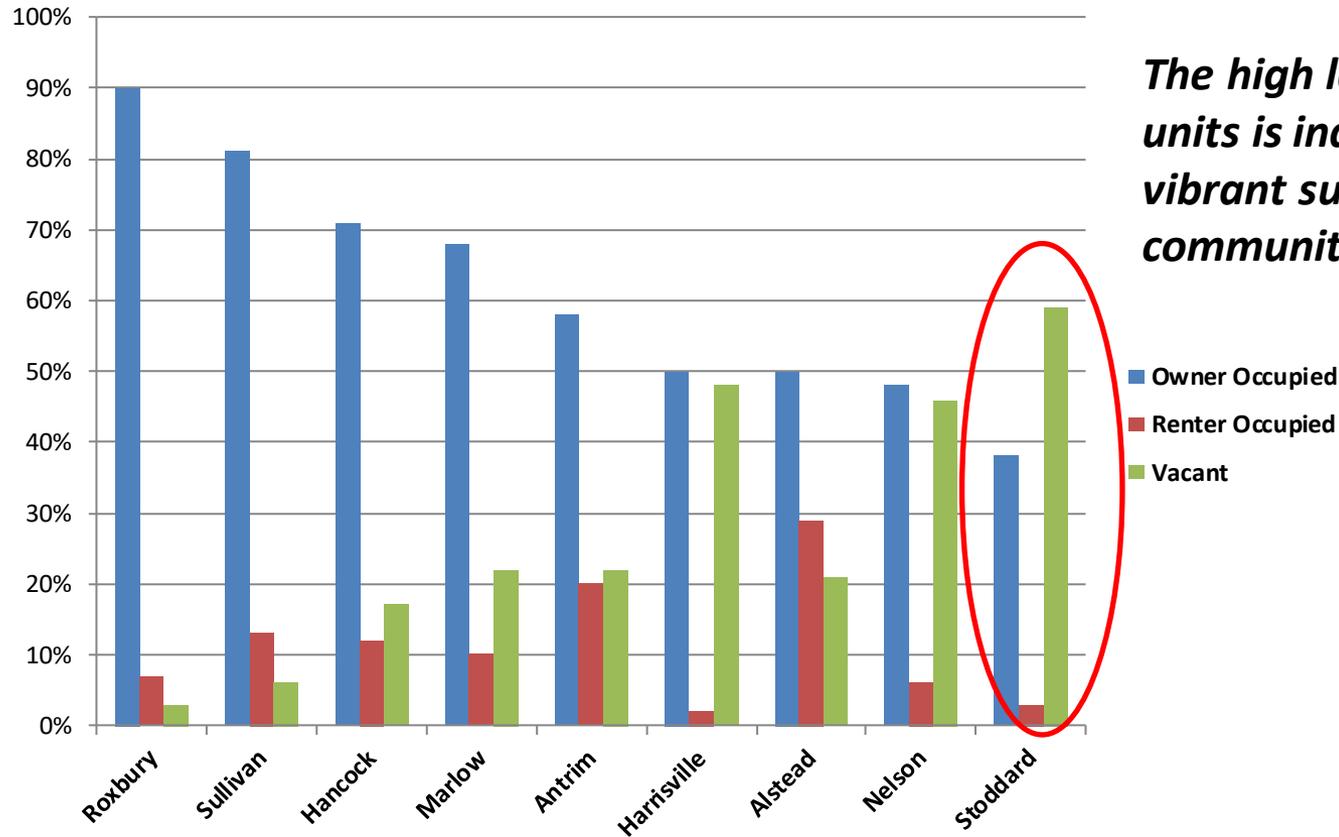
Units Permitted 2000-2020



Units per acre



Stoddard has the lowest level of owner occupied homes and the highest level of vacant units in the Southwest Region.



The high level of vacant units is indicative of a vibrant summer community.

Survey comments

Maintaining Stoddard's rural character should be top priority.

Lets try to keep our town where it is.... Its a lovely place!

Keep Stoddard a rural town, do not plan to change the town.

Please lets keep Stoddard as very low key. Why ruin a good thing.

Keep Stoddard rural and a tight knit community.

Keep Stoddard the way it is.

Stoddard is a rural community that should be maintained. Residents live here for the non congested life. We do not need or want over development; it would ruin the character of the town.

Survey comments

I've visited Stoddard for about 35 years monthly and finally had an opportunity to relocate here. I love it just the way it is. It has a small town charm, and it would be a shame to take that away. People want big city amenities, they should find a big city to live in.

I do not believe that our town needs any more development. We love Stoddard as it is. A rural town with untouched land for our wildlife. That's what makes it great. That's why we love it here. If people want to build, they can go to Keene.

I see no reason to seek to increase the population of the town. The beauty of Stoddard is that it has a small town feel. A population increase will put more strain on town resources. Highland Lake is already overcrowded on many weekends.

Survey comments

We only need housing to accommodate seniors who have been here for decades and won't be able to afford their property taxes soon.

The only additional housing we need is for seniors who want to remain in Stoddard but won't be able to afford their property taxes if they have resided in a large home or a waterfront home. Thank you for reaching out to gather opinions. As it stands people are widely abusing the ADU mandate from the state, building second homes in their property to rent out.

We need housing for working families and young people who would like to buy an affordable home. If we don't provide homes for these groups we won't have nurses, repair people, teachers, or business owners.

Young families have a hard time affording to live here; the town is getting old

Survey comments

My concerns are more with maintaining small growth in small increments..... At this time, I don't see Stoddard as a viable option for an elderly population. Multi-family dwellings are an invitation to more road use and parking problems. I just don't see how Stoddard can support, without huge investment in services, the type of growth apartment buildings or duplexes or planned housing would bring.

I like the idea of some sort of "co-housing" like the development in Peterborough... though I don't know where it could go without eating into land that is already set aside and in conservation. But some sort of smallish clustered houses. It seems to me that we don't have a huge amount of residential buildable land that doesn't already have something on it.

I have a real concern about the rapidly rising real estate costs, and many individuals and families simply cannot afford housing at this time. -.....lower and mid-income housing certainly should be considered.

Survey comments

Really appreciate The Town and Conservation Commission working together to maintain The Rural Character of Stoddard through the decades. Thanks for the Survey. 👍👍

Having a good plan for various forms of housing is imperative for well planned growth & development for the future of the town