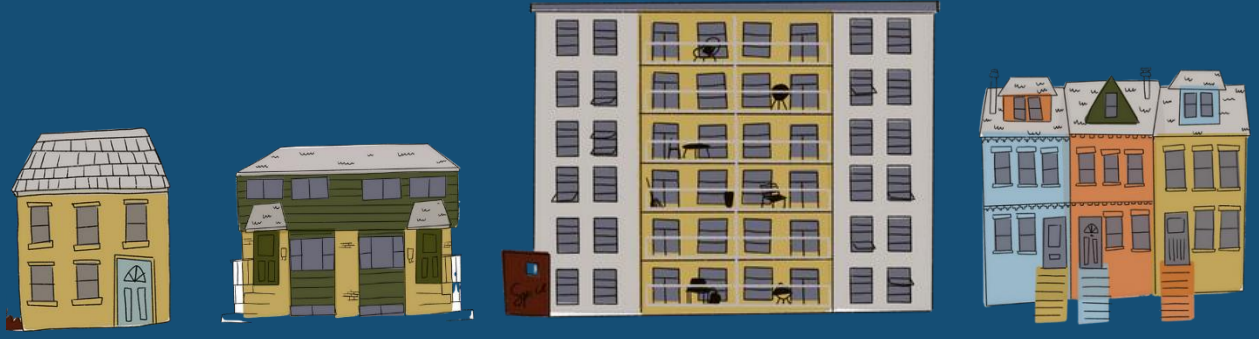


# Town of Middleton Municipal Housing Needs Report

2023



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# 1 Introduction

The purpose of a housing needs assessment is to understand the current and anticipated housing conditions across a given geography, in the case of this and accompanying reports, the conditions across the province of Nova Scotia and its municipalities. Generally, this work strengthens the ability of local stakeholders and governments to:

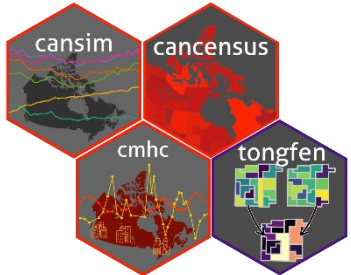
- Identify current and future housing needs and
- Identify existing and projected gaps in housing supply

Empowering municipalities and the province to become effective partners in housing provision requires reliable data to identify the stock necessary to meet current and future needs and how to drive related policy and investment. The insights generated by a needs assessment can help to inform ongoing land use and social planning initiatives at the local level, as well as provide hard evidence in support of advocacy to more senior levels of government.

The goal of this municipal report is to share appropriate, available, and accurate data to municipal governments so that they further understand their current housing situation and what they might anticipate. It is important to note that the same data methodologies and calculations are applied across each municipality, based on available data. This means that reports cannot consider all the nuanced conditions of individual communities that would be known best by municipal staff, stakeholders, and residents.

The report should be considered a form of base knowledge, intended for local review and discussion. Municipalities should use local information to provide additional context and information for discussion and decision-making as they see fit. For more details about methodologies, provincial trends, and definitions, please refer to the **Provincial Report**.

Note that all data references the municipality unless noted otherwise. There were fewer than 20 public survey respondents from the Town of Middleton and cannot be included. Data for all municipalities with fewer than 20 respondents is not reported publicly, to ensure the confidentiality of individual identities as well as to avoid statistically unreliable results.



## 2 Key Findings

### **Housing shortage**

As of the end of 2022, there was a gap between housing demand and the available supply of about 85 units, including both market and non-market housing.

Projections suggest that to keep pace with population growth, the municipality will need 165 new units by 2027 (including the existing shortage of 85) and 215 by 2032. About 5 new units could be completed annually based on historical construction trends. If that pace continues, it will leave a remaining gap of 140 units by 2027 and 165 by 2032.

### **Population**

The municipality's population grew 2% between 2016 and 2021, while the province's population rose 5%. Overall, the municipality grew across many of the defined age cohorts between 2016 and 2021, with noticeably strong growth among 25-to-44-year-old cohort. This is largely related to the inflow outside of Nova Scotia since 2016/2017, including to the Annapolis Census Division.

Finance & Treasury Board (FTB) estimates suggest that the total 2022 population was 1,925, with a projected increase of 8% between 2022 and 2027. Senior and young adult populations should increase during that time, with decreases only occurring among 45- to 64-year-olds. Growth from 2027 to 2032 may be notably muted compared to the five years prior (2%), with growth mostly occurring among senior populations. This demonstrates a short-term need to accommodate families, but a long-term vision to meet the needs of an expanding senior cohort.

### **Households**

Middleton's total household growth slightly outpaced total population, bolstered by growth in the couples with children cohort - i.e., the share of 4-person households rose by 7% between 2016 and 2021.

Estimates suggest that total households reached 955 in 2022, with a further potential increase of 7% from 2022 to 2027 (65 total). Household losses should predominantly occur older working professional led households (45- to 64-year-olds). The greatest rate of growth should be among senior-led households.

Growth may continue from 2027 to 2032, but of a noticeably lesser magnitude (3%). Households led by the 65- to 84-year-old senior group may grow only marginally during that time - elderly (85+) led households may grow about 29%. Again, this reinforces the need for senior appropriate or generally accessible housing over the foreseeable future.

## **Non-market housing**

As of January 2023, Middleton has a public-housing inventory of 50 units, of which 11 are for families and 39 for seniors.

## **Short-term rentals (STRs)**

Less than 0.5% of the municipality's housing inventory may have been used as a short-term commercial rental in 2021 (the last full year of data). This means upwards of 2 units might have been removed from the long-term market, though it is uncertain exactly how many would have been long-term rentals or purchased for permanent occupancy if not used as a STR.

## **Shelter costs**

Average rents reported by the Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC) increased 1% from 2020 to 2021, down from an 8% increase between 2019 and 2020. The recent increases reflect a slight rise in vacancy among the rental market - Middleton has had an overall vacancy rate fluctuating just below 5% since 2019 with a recent rise to 5.5% as of 2021. Median Middleton home prices increased 104% from 2019 to 2022, compared to 12% between 2016 and 2019. The rapid rise in prices is a combination of low interest rates (until recently) and other factors driving increased demand.

## **Affordability**

In the municipality, affordability has fallen since 2016. About 58% of all couples, 80% of all lone-parent households, and 97% of all single person households earned below the estimated income required to afford the 2022 median sale price of a local dwelling. For rentals, at least 15% of **renting** couples, 39% of **renting** lone-parents, and 77% of **renting** single persons earned below the estimated income required to afford the 2021 average local rents.

## **Housing need**

When a household lives in a dwelling that requires more than 30% of its before-tax household income, is overcrowded, and needs major repairs- and no alternative exists - it is in Core Housing Need. In 2021, about 19% of Middleton's households (170 total) lived in Core Housing Need. Need is particularly prevalent among:

- 33% of renter households (155 total);
- 25% of lone parent households (20 total); and
- 32% of single persons / roommate households (125 total)

Generally, the number of people in and rates of Core Housing Need across segments has decreased since 2016. However, comparing 2021 to 2016 rates (particularly for affordability) is difficult given the influence of the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) on incomes. Overall, the municipality reported a higher rate of Core Housing Need than Nova Scotia overall (10%) due mostly to a higher share of renter households.

# 3 Housing Supply

## 3.1 Market Housing

As of the 2021 Census, there were 977 private dwellings across Middleton, 94% of which were occupied by usual residents (those who live in Middleton permanently). The rest of the inventory may either be occupied solely by foreign residents and/or by temporarily present persons (like students), and unoccupied dwellings. For those dwellings occupied by usual residents, Table 3-1 summarizes the totals and distribution by structure type for Middleton. The greatest share of current supply is held by the single-detached home (52%), followed by low-rise- apartments (26%).

Table 3-1: Total & Share of Dwellings Occupied by a Usual Resident by Structure Type

Total	Single-detached	Semi-detached	Row house	Duplex apt	Apt (< 5 storeys)	Apt (5+ storeys)	Movable	Other
920	480	30	150	25	240	0	0	0
100%	52%	3%	16%	3%	26%	0%	0%	0%

Source: 2021 Census

### 3.1.1 Construction Activity

The pace of construction is represented by the annual total units permitted, units started, and units completed - these are separate but related phases of the same unit construction process.

*“There have been no new builds in the last 5 years. Cost of materials is high and there’s no trades available.”*

*“Developers are reaching out to build multi-unit housing, like duplexes and fourplexes. The bylaws are creating barriers to these developers.”*

A permit signifies the anticipated future housing to be built, a start reflects how many permits led to a shovel in the ground, and completion represents how many units were actually added to the occupiable supply. Construction takes time and its pace varies depending on the building type. Consequently, the number of units permitted in one year cannot be directly linked to starts or completions in another. The **Provincial Report** offers a detailed explanation of each element.

Permit activity refers to the total number of units permitted by a municipality. Table 3-2 shows the number of units permitted in the municipality. Note that 2022 data reflects an extrapolated September 2022 total and negative values mean there were more demolitions than new builds. Starts and completions data is not available.

Table 3-2: Construction Activity by Dwelling Type

Units permitted							
	2010	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022*
Total	30	0	3	-6	1	1	0
Single	0	0	2	-1	1	1	0
Semi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Row	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
Apartment	15	0	1	-5	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

\* total 2022 units extrapolated from September 2022 year to date total

Source: Statistics Canada Custom CSD Tables 34-10-0001, 34-10-0066

Table 3-3 summarizes the change in unit size and tenure between the 2016 and 2021 Censuses. The distribution of new units shows what sizes are most occupied by renter and owner households. These Census results indicate that the occupied rented supply is growing at a faster pace than ownership relative to percent change, though some of the change may be more related to converted tenure than actual construction - owned dwellings decreased 1% and rented dwellings increased 8%.

Table 3-3: Change in Units by Size & Tenure between Census Periods

	Total	Studio / 1-bedroom	2-bedroom	3+ bedroom
<b>Owned dwellings</b>				
Owned (2016) - 48% of total HHs	430	10	65	345
Owned (2021) - 46% of total HHs	425	0	60	360
Change in units	-5	-10	-5	15
Share of change	100%	33%	17%	50%
<b>Rented dwellings</b>				
Rented (2016) - 52% of total HHs	460	135	255	80
Rented (2021) - 54% of total HHs	495	145	280	60
Change in units	35	10	25	-20
Share of change	100%	18%	45%	36%

Source: Statistics Canada Tables 98-400-X2016220 & 98-10-0240

Note that not all additional units in the table necessarily reflect a new unit, and some may represent conversions from rental to ownership or vice versa. Between 2016 and 2021, total dwellings (not only occupied by a usual resident) decreased from 995 to

977 - an 18-unit change. This suggests that there was an increase in permanent households, even as the inventory possibly decreased.

Table 3-4: Change in Total Dwellings versus Dwellings Occupied by Usual Residents

Dwellings	2016	2021	% change
Total dwellings (a)	995	977	-2%
Dwelling occupied by a usual resident (b)	890	920	3%
Share (b / a)	89%	94%	

Source: Statistics Canada 2016 & 2021 Census

### 3.1.2 Housing Accelerator Fund Considerations

The Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) is a program introduced by the Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation (CMHC) with the objective to bolster the housing supply at an accelerated pace. Local governments within Canada - including First Nations, Métis and Inuit governments who have delegated authority over land use planning and development approvals - are eligible to apply to the HAF. Interested municipalities can find the HAF’s pre-application reference material [here](#). Note that a Housing Needs Assessment (such as this one) is required as part of a complete application (though not needed immediately for the initial submission).

An applicant is required to provide two projections to CMHC. The applicant must calculate their own projections based on reasonable assumptions and data sources, including Statistics Canada and/or its own administrative data. There is no prescribed formula; however, projections should be based on a three-year period ending September 1, 2026. The two projections are:

- The total permitted housing units projected without program funding.
- The total number of permitted housing units projected with program funding. This second projection is known as the “housing supply growth target.”

For additional guidance, Table 3-5 summarizes the growth by unit type (more closely defined with HAF application requirements) and tenure between 2016 and 2021. The table demonstrates that missing middle housing was the most notable form added to the market.

CMHC does not prescribe a formula for projections, leaving this decision up to the municipality who would know best about on-the-ground construction activity (not only by the numbers but also through discussions with local builders/developers).

Table 3-5: Unit Change by Estimated HAF Dwelling Type & Tenure, 2016 & 2021 Census

	Total	Single <sup>a</sup>	Missing middle <sup>b</sup>	Multi-unit <sup>c</sup>
<b>Total dwellings</b>				
Total (2016)	890	490	395	0
Total (2021)	920	475	455	0
Change in units	30	-15	60	0
Share of change	100%	20%	80%	0%
<b>Owned dwellings</b>				
Owned (2016)	430	410	15	0
Owned (2021)	425	410	15	0
Change in units	-5	0	0	0
Share of change	-	-	-	-
<b>Rented dwellings</b>				
Rented (2016)	460	80	380	0
Rented (2021)	495	65	440	0
Change in units	35	-15	60	0
Share of change	100%	20%	80%	0%

<sup>a</sup> Single means single-detached homes, which are buildings containing 1 dwelling unit, which is completely separated on all sides from any other dwelling or structure.

<sup>b</sup> Missing middle refers to ground-oriented housing types that exist between single-detached and mid-rise apartments. This includes garden suites, secondary suites, duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, row houses, courtyard housing, low-rise apartments (less than 4 storeys). Note that this definition for low-rise does not match the Statistics Canada cut off of less than 5 storeys.

<sup>c</sup> Multi-unit refers to apartments that are 4-or-more storeys. The HAF further defines these by whether they are in close proximity to rapid transit or not, which is not possible to summarize based on the data available.

Source: Statistics Canada Tables 98-400-X2016220 & 98-10-0240

A simple example includes using most recent permitting data (the five-year average between 2017 and 2021), applying the historical shares of new construction between 2016 and 2021, and comparing the potential units permitted to the estimated total demand over the three years (based on Housing Shortage data – Section 4). The results, shown in Table 3-6, are for discussion purposes and not a prescribed logic – the municipality can form its own approach based on other data provided and internal resources.

Table 3-6: Example of Simple HAF Permit Projection

	Historical share of new housing	Possible annual units permitted	Estimated 3-year units permitted <sup>a</sup>	Estimated 3-year unit demand <sup>a</sup>	Gap that HAF can help reduce
Total	100%	5	15 (A)	130 (B)	115
Single	20%	0	0	25	25
Missing middle	80%	5	15	105	90
Multi-unit	0%	0	0	0	0

Relationship between units permitted and shortage	
C: Estimated September 2023 housing stock: <sup>b</sup>	980
Projected permitted unit growth over 3 years without HAF (A / C x 100):	1.5%
Projected permitted unit growth over 3 years needed to meet demand (B / C x 100):	13.3%
% increase in units permitted to meet shortage (B / A - 1) x 100:	767%

Relationship between units permitted and HAF requirements (rounded up to nearest 5)	
D: Estimated September 2023 housing stock: <sup>b</sup>	980
E: Projected annual units permitted (based on '16-'21 average - see Table 3-2)	5
Required units permitted over 3 years to meet minimum 1.1% average annual growth rate <sup>c</sup> (D x 1.1% x 3 years)	35
Required additional units permitted over 3 years to meet minimum 10% increase <sup>d</sup> over historical average (E x 10% x 3 years)	5

<sup>a</sup> Units permitted between September 2023 and September 2026; 3-year unit demand includes 2022 shortage

<sup>b</sup> 2021 Census (Statistics Canada) + 2021 permits + 2021 permits x 2/3 (September 2023 estimate)

<sup>c</sup> Average annual units permitted (min. 1.1%) = Total number of units permitted with HAF support / 3 years / Total dwelling stock (results rounded up to nearest 5)

<sup>d</sup> Increase in units permitted (min. 10%) = (Projected average housing supply growth rate with HAF) / Projected average housing supply growth rate without HAF - 1 (results rounded up to nearest 5)

Note that the final column provides the straight-lined shortage anticipated by the end of the HAF. This may not represent the total possible intervention by the HAF, as this depends on the choices made by the municipality. Rather, it highlights the total shortage the HAF can help reduce. Furthermore, values are rounded to the nearest 5 and the "possible annual units permitted" reflects the approximate change in annual households between 2016 and 2021.

## 3.2 Non-Market Housing

### 3.2.1 Public Housing

Of the 11,200 total inventory of publicly owned dwelling units (as administered by the Nova Scotia Provincial Housing Authority), 50 are in Middleton. Most units are 1-bedroom apartments, mostly attributed to the high volume of senior-specific units available - 78% of all units and 100% of 1-bedroom units were for seniors.

About 50% of Middleton public housing tenants have lived in public housing for more than 5 years, most of whom have been there more than 10.

Table 3-7: Public Housing Inventory, January 2023

		Total	Family	Senior
Total unit inventory		50	11	39
Inventory by unit size	Studio	0	0	0
	1-bedroom	39	0	39
	2-bedroom	0	0	0
	3+ bedroom	11	11	0
	Not reported	0	0	0
Inventory by dwelling type	Single family	0	0	0
	Row	39	0	39
	Apartment	11	11	0
	Not reported	0	0	0
Length of tenure in public housing	Less than 1 year	7%	10%	6%
	1 to 5 years	41%	70%	33%
	5 to 10 years	22%	0%	28%
	10+ years	28%	10%	33%
Household income	Median income (mth)	\$1,595	\$1,265	\$1,690
	Median income (ann)	\$19,140	\$15,180	\$20,280

Source: derived from Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing data

*"We have no shelters in area."*

*"Public housing needs a lot of repairs. Many times, it goes unreported because if it is reported then the house will be closed. So, tenants are withholding reporting issues."*

### 3.2.2 Rent Supplements

As of March 2023, 120 households across the Annapolis Census Division (no data is specifically available for the Town of Middleton) were receiving rent supplement support, equivalent to 187 total people. About 28% were families, 40% were senior households, and 33% were classified as non-elderly households. Table 3-8 further details the percentage share of rent supplements that served a specific vulnerable population.

Table 3-8: Rent Supplement Demographics, Annapolis Census Division, March 2023

	Total	Family	Senior	Non-elderly
Total rent supplements	120	33	48	39
People benefiting	187	95	50	42
Average HH size	1.6	2.9	1.0	1.1
Average dependents	0.5	1.6	0.0	0.0
Share of supplements serving a vulnerable group:				
Indigenous person(s)	6%	15%	0%	5%
Person(s) w/ a disability	31%	30%	23%	41%
At risk of homelessness	10%	12%	2%	18%
Homeless	0%	0%	0%	0%
Newcomer(s)	1%	3%	0%	0%
Mental health / addictions	25%	33%	15%	31%
Racialized person(s)	4%	3%	2%	8%
Veteran(s)	0%	0%	0%	0%
Fleeing domestic violence	7%	21%	0%	3%
Young adults	4%	12%	2%	0%

Source: derived from Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing data

### 3.2.3 Non-Profit Co-operatives and Shelters

Formal datasets related to third-party affordable housing organizations and their unit inventories are limited. The **Provincial Report** offers some discussion about what shelters exist provincially, with some detail by Economic Region.

## 3.3 Post-Secondary Student Housing

The Town of Middleton is home to Nova Scotia Community College's (NSCC's) Annapolis Valley campus. NSCC enrolled about 10,100 students in 2021-2022 across Nova Scotia, distributed across their 14 campuses. More than 300 students attended the Annapolis Valley and Centre for Geographic Sciences (Lawrencetown) campuses

in 2022. While Lawrencetown has on-campus housing, there is none specific to the Annapolis Valley campus in Middleton, with no identified plans to include on-campus housing in the near future.

While there no further detailed data about NSCC, the presence of a student population in a town of 1,875 (as per the 2021 Census) does impose additional stress on local housing market. This is especially true for considerable rental markets like Middleton - 54% of its households living permanently in the municipality were renting their shelter.

### 3.4 Short-term Rentals (STRs)

Between 2018 and 2022, there has been an increase of 3 unique STR listings across the municipality. Of the 9 total in 2022, 67% were entire homes or apartments, of which 33% were potentially<sup>1</sup> “commercial” units - meaning they were available or reserved more than 50% of the year.

If 2021 commercial units are compared to the 2021 dwelling stock (977 - as per the Census), about 0.3% of the municipality’s housing inventory may have been used as a short-term commercial rental.

Table 3-9: Short-Term Rental Activity and Inventory

	Data by year				Percent change		
	2018	2020	2021	2022	'18-'20	'20-'22	18-'22**
Total unique STRs	6	10	11	9	+67%	-10%	+50%
Entire home/apt	4	6	7	6	+50%	0%	+50%
Hotel room	0	0	0	0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Private room	2	4	4	3	+100%	-25%	+50%
Shared room	0	0	0	0	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Avg annual revenue	\$1,154	\$2,027	\$4,369	\$6,616	+76%	+226%	+473%
Total market ('000s)	\$7	\$20	\$48	\$60	+193%	+194%	+760%
Commercial STRs*	4	4	3	2	0%	-50%	-50%

\* A commercial STR is one that was listed as available and/or has been reserved more than 50% of the days in a calendar year.

\*\* 2022 data reflects as of September 2022. Commercial STRs use 9 months for their calculations versus a full year.

Source: derived from AirDNA data

<sup>1</sup> Noted as “potentially” since 2022 data is only up to September.

## 4 Housing Shortage

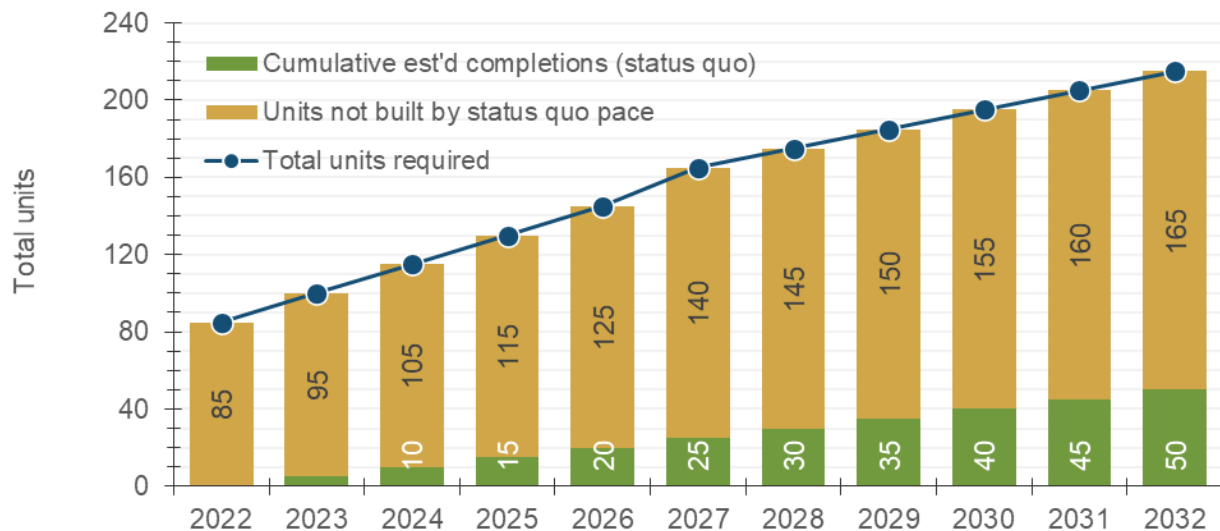
Based on demographic modeling results (see **Provincial Report** for details), the municipality’s potential housing shortage (as of the end of 2022) may be 85 units.<sup>2</sup> Note that this estimate represents the sum of all units, be they rented or owned in terms of their tenure, or market or non-market housing.

Figure 4.1 offers a summary of the trajectory of the housing shortage over the next decade under a base population growth scenario provided by Nova Scotia’s Department of Finance and Treasury Board.

In five years, the municipality may have a total dwelling demand (existing shortfall plus anticipated demand) of about 165 units, which could grow to 215 by 2032.

Based on the recent change of new households from 2016 to 2021, demand could outpace anticipated new supply. About 5 new units could be completed annually over the next decade, if recent trends continue. That leaves a remaining shortage of 140 units by 2027. By 2032, the remaining shortage after status quo construction could be 165 units. Note that status quo construction follows the method used in the provincial report, being average historical permits adjusted by 5% to account for permit withdrawals or cancellations. Results are rounded to the nearest 5.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 4.1: Anticipated Unit Gap based on Total Units Required and Estimated Completions, Demographic Model Results



<sup>2</sup> The allocation of unit shortages is based on results for the Census Division, apportioned to its respective municipalities based on their share of local household change between 2016 and 2021.

<sup>3</sup> All municipalities use the same approach for consistency. However, for smaller municipalities, the combination of fewer units permitted and rounding practices can under or over represent anticipated construction activity. As such, greater attention should be directed to the projected demand, instead of anticipated supply, which can be later cross-reference with internal municipal data.

Table 4-1 summarizes possible guides for constructing unit sizes over the next half-decade (note that numbers are rounded to the nearest 5). As previously described, the municipality may need to build 165 units by 2027 to meet demand. Based on historical preferences,<sup>4</sup> about 30% could be studio/1-bedroom dwellings (50 units), 40% 2-bedroom dwellings (65), and 30% 3+ bedroom dwellings (50 units). This includes the existing unit shortfall.

Table 4-1: Estimated Current & Anticipated Unit Shortfall by Unit Size, 2022 to 2027

	Total	Studio + 1-bedroom	2-bedroom	3+ bedroom
<b>A:</b> Current shortfall (end of 2022)	85	25	35	25
<b>B:</b> Anticipated demand by <b>2027</b>	80	25	30	25
<b>C:</b> Total units required by <b>2027</b> (A + B)	165	50	65	50
<b>D:</b> Anticipated 5 year supply (status quo pace*)	25	10	10	5
<b>E:</b> Total shortfall	140	40	55	45
<b>F:</b> Total extra units required annually (E / 5 years)	30	10	10	10

\* The distribution of supply is based on household preferences, not actual anticipated build out.

*“There’s been a shift in the types of housing that are needed. We need tiny homes, and secondary suites.”*

*“We have a low tax base which restricts our ability to get caught up on aging infrastructure without handouts from the province.”*

<sup>4</sup> In this case, unit sizes reflect the preference for unit size, not the historical distribution of unit sizes in the existing inventory. Briefly, historical distributions of household sizes by household family types are used to estimate require bedrooms. The estimated share of unit sizes is then distributed into forecasted demand calculations. More explanation about how preference distributes can be found in the Housing Shortage section of the Provincial report.

# 5 Housing Affordability

## 5.1 Homeownership

Housing is becoming more expensive. This is not simply a claim of observing the appreciation of property as a commodity but also as an increase relative to other periods, levels of income, and availability.

### 5.1.1 Market Activity

Median sale prices across Nova Scotia have seen increases since 2016, with significant increases since 2019. Middleton’s median sale price has increased from \$114,000 to \$261,500 between 2016 and 2022. This represents a 129% increase in median price.

Table 5-1: Median Sale Prices by Dwelling Type & Select Years

	Price				Percent Change		
	2010	2016	2019	2022	'10-'16	'16-'19	'19-'22
Total	\$134,000	\$114,000	\$128,000	\$261,500	-15%	+12%	+104%
Single	\$134,000	\$114,000	\$129,500	\$263,000	-15%	+14%	+103%
Semi	-	-	\$128,000	-	-	-	-
Row	-	-	-	\$260,000	-	-	-

Source: NSAR MLS®

The increase in price can, at least in part, be attributed to an overwhelming increase in demand. Figure 5.1 illustrates the sale-to-list-price ratio compared to the median days a dwelling was on the market. The number of days on the market is a general indicator of market demand (fewer days means more interest and more days means less interest). As the number of days on the market decreases, there is generally a rise in sale prices (and sale to list price ratios).

As of 2021, the median sale price about equalled its listing price, diverging from the historical trend of homes normally being sold for slightly less than what they were asking. The number of days a dwelling was on the market plummeted to below 20 days, but the real sale price was almost even with the list price from 2021 to 2022.

Figure 5.1: Historical Median Days on Market v. Median Sales / List Price Ratio



Source: NSAR MLS®

The shift in demand leading to faster home purchases is largely attributed to substantial population growth regionally and provincially over recent years, fuelled by both interprovincial and international in-migration in a market where housing supply growth is not keeping up with the increased pace.

### 5.1.2 Homeownership Affordability

Table 5-2 details the percentage share of households, separated by household types, that could afford a home based on their respective income levels versus the median sale prices from 2022. The affordability threshold is the same used by Statistics Canada and CMHC - 30% of before-tax household income spent on shelter costs. Shelter cost calculations include the direct and indirect costs related to shelter. More detail is provided in the **Provincial Report**.<sup>5</sup>

Lone parents and single persons are least likely to have income levels necessary to afford to own a home. Single-detached homes and row houses were the only available types of dwellings within the municipality in 2022, and 78% of lone-parent households and 95% of single-person households fall below the income levels necessary to purchase these dwellings. About 55% of couple households could not afford 2022 median sale prices of single detached dwelling or row houses.

<sup>5</sup> Since Census Division data is used, readers will notice estimate similarities between municipalities belonging to the same Census Division.

Table 5-2: Estimate of Sales Affordability by Income Level (All Households)

		2022 median sale price:			\$263,000	\$260,000
		% of HHs below income level			Single Detached Dwelling	Row
Income level	Attainable sales price	Couples	Lone parents	Single persons		
\$30,000	\$89,500	4%	16%	51%	no	no
\$40,000	\$119,500	14%	31%	65%	no	no
\$50,000	\$149,500	25%	46%	77%	no	no
\$60,000	\$179,500	35%	59%	84%	no	no
\$70,000	\$209,500	44%	71%	91%	no	no
\$80,000	\$239,000	55%	78%	95%	no	no
\$90,000	\$269,000	62%	83%	97%	yes	yes
\$100,000	\$299,000	68%	88%	97%	yes	yes
\$110,000	\$329,000	74%	88%	98%	yes	yes
\$120,000	\$359,000	79%	88%	98%	yes	yes
\$130,000	\$388,500	82%	88%	98%	yes	yes
\$140,000	\$418,500	86%	88%	98%	yes	yes
\$150,000	\$448,500	90%	88%	98%	yes	yes

Homeownership	Total Dwelling	Single Detached Dwelling	Row
Est'd income needed to buy median home	\$87,500	\$88,000	\$87,000
<b>% of total households below income</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>72%</b>

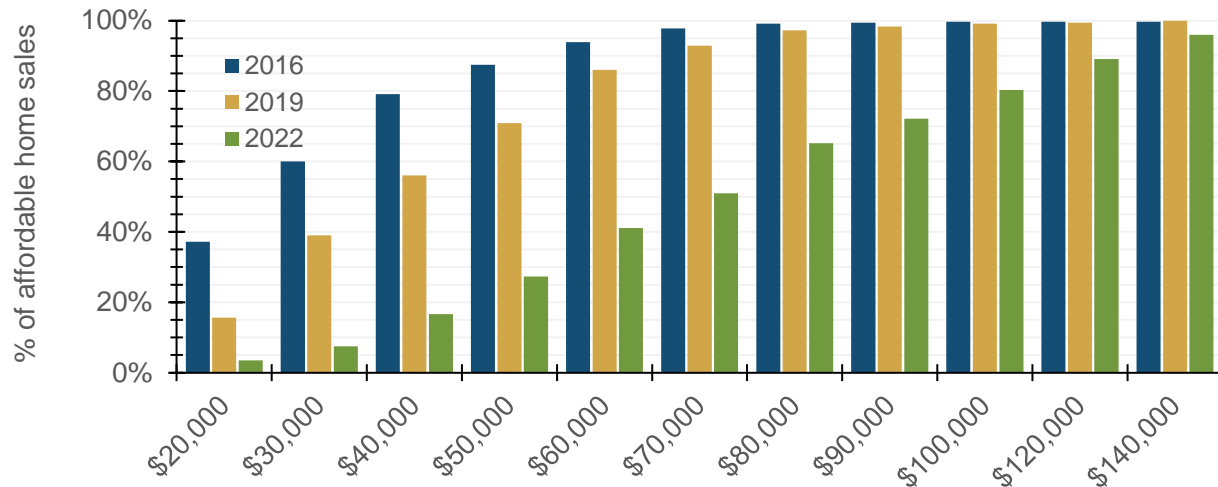
Source: derived from Statistics Canada tables (see provincial report), Bank of Canada, NSAR MLS®

About 72% of all local households earned an income below what would be needed (around \$87,500) to purchase the median home in 2022. This highlights the importance of housing interventions to address the shortage identified above to reduce typical housing prices to reasonably affordable levels.

Figure 5.2 presents the levels of affordability for respective household income levels between 2016 and 2022 for Annapolis Census Division (no data is specifically available for the Town of Middleton). It illustrates the percentage of home sales in each year that would be affordable (30% of household income) at a given income level.

While there were already signs of decreasing affordability from 2016 to 2019, the region suffered a significant shock from 2019 to 2022. For instance, a \$70,000 income could afford 93% of home sales in 2019. In 2022, this fell to 51%.

Figure 5.2: Estimated % of Households that can /cannot Afford Typical Sale Prices, Annapolis Census Division



Source: derived from Statistics Canada Custom Census 2021 tables), Bank of Canada, NSAR MLS®

## 5.2 Rental Market

### 5.2.1 Market Activity

Table 5-3 reports the rental data for Middleton (based on data from the combined area of Middleton and Berwick). The overall average rent in 2021, per PVSC data, was \$688. This is an increase in rent of 10% from 2018. There has been a 6% increase in studio units rents, a 9% increase in 1-bedroom units rents, a 10.5% increase in 2-bedroom units rents, and a 10% increase in 3+ bedroom units rents over the same period.

Table 5-3: Overall Rental Vacancy and Average Rents by Unit Size & Select Years

	Price				Percent Change		
	2018	2019	2020	2021	'18-'19	19-'20	20-'21
Total	\$627	\$631	\$679	\$688	+1%	+8%	+1%
Studio	\$554	\$554	\$561	\$585	0%	+1%	+4%
1-bed	\$610	\$610	\$646	\$663	0%	+6%	+3%
2-bed	\$661	\$661	\$730	\$731	0%	+10%	+0%
3+ bed	\$718	\$718	\$786	\$787	0%	+10%	+0%
Vacancy	4.9%	4.9%	4.8%	5.5%			

Source: PVSC Custom Tables

Middleton’s vacancy rate has increased from 4.9% to 5.5% between 2018 and 2021, which falls within the healthy vacancy range of 3% to 5%, based on PVSC data. This runs contrary to the trend of diminishing vacancy rates seen across the province as a whole and the trends reported related to affordability. The increase may be a result of limitations related to PVSC as a data source for vacancy data.

### 5.2.2 Rental Affordability

Table 5-4 details the percentage share of **renter** households, divided by household type and income levels, that can afford 2021 average rent for various unit types. As with ownership, lone-parent and single person households face the highest income barrier to affordability. About 17% of lone-parent households and 64% of single person households fall below the income level required to afford the average rent for a studio apartment in 2021.

Table 5-4: Estimated of Rent Affordability by Income Level (Renter Households)

		2021 average rent:			\$585	\$663	\$731	\$787
		% of HHs below income level			Studio	1-bed	2-bed	3+ bed
Income level	Attainable rent	Couples	Lone parents	Single persons				
\$20,000	\$330	0%	0%	25%	no	no	no	no
\$25,000	\$420	4%	5%	53%	no	no	no	no
\$30,000	\$500	4%	17%	64%	no	no	no	no
\$35,000	\$590	15%	31%	69%	yes	no	no	no
\$40,000	\$670	15%	39%	77%	yes	yes	no	no
\$45,000	\$750	18%	51%	81%	yes	yes	yes	no
\$50,000	\$840	25%	58%	84%	yes	yes	yes	yes
\$55,000	\$920	29%	63%	88%	yes	yes	yes	yes
\$60,000	\$1,000	35%	71%	88%	yes	yes	yes	yes
\$65,000	\$1,090	44%	80%	90%	yes	yes	yes	yes
\$70,000	\$1,170	44%	80%	90%	yes	yes	yes	yes
\$75,000	\$1,260	51%	80%	91%	yes	yes	yes	yes
\$80,000	\$1,340	55%	80%	91%	yes	yes	yes	yes

Renting	Average	Studio	1-bed	2-bed	3+ bed
Est'd income needed to rent average unit	\$41,100	\$34,900	\$39,600	\$43,600	\$47,000
<b>% of renter households below income</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>58%</b>

Source: derived from Statistics Canada Custom Census 2021 tables), PVSC

It should be noted that the affordability is reported based on the ability to afford the rent for the entire unit, not split between tenants. Furthermore, the affordability threshold is the same used by Statistics Canada and CMHC - 30% of before-tax household income spent on shelter costs. Shelter cost calculations include the direct and indirect costs related to shelter. More detail is provided in the **Provincial Report**.

Approximately 52% of local renter households earned an income below what would be needed (about \$41,100) to afford the average rental unit. Readers will notice that the financial barriers to own appear to be significantly higher than to rent. While this may be the case, it is important to recognize the data source impacts to this discussion.

Sales data for homeownership only considers asking prices, not the existing mortgages held by homeowners at the same time. Rental data includes both asking and occupied rents, meaning that the rents reported underrepresent what households would pay changing units.

## 6 Housing Need

Three housing indicators are used to evaluate housing need: adequacy (housing condition), suitability (enough space), and affordability. Core housing need is a specific condition of housing where a household falls under one of the indicators and cannot find reasonable housing without spending 30% or more of their before-tax income. Deep unaffordability (also known as “severe” unaffordability) is when a household is spending 50% or more of their before-tax income on housing.

Generally, housing indicators and Core Housing Need data demonstrate the number and share of households particularly impacted by precarious living conditions. These are the households where increased supply or non-market interventions would positively impact most, as many might not have the means or supports to escape these conditions without intervention.

### 6.1 Housing Need by Tenure

Table 6-1 shows the share of households currently living in conditions that meet the three housing criteria, separated by tenure.<sup>6</sup>

In Middleton, overall households living in unaffordable dwellings decreased by 38%, those living in unsuitable dwellings decreased by 11%, and those living in inadequate dwellings increased by 19% between 2016 and 2021.

Table 6-1: Housing Need Criteria by Tenure, 2021

		Total	Owner	Renter
Total Households:		890	410	475
Households living in <b>inadequate</b> conditions	Total households	95	35	55
	<i>Change since 2016</i>	+19%	+17%	+10%
	Share of households	11%	9%	12%
Households living in <b>unsuitable</b> conditions	Total households	40	-	40
	<i>Change since 2016</i>	-11%	-	0%
	Share of households	4%	-	8%
Households living in <b>unaffordable</b> conditions	Total households	180	25	155
	<i>Change since 2016</i>	-38%	-58%	-33%
	Share of households	20%	6%	33%

Source: Statistics Canada Custom Census 2016 & 2021 Tables

<sup>6</sup> Note that numbers expressed in the housing need tables may differ from those reported by Statistics Canada on individual community Census Profiles. This is because the custom data table applies a different universe than the Census Profile. More information can be found in the Provincial Report.

Renter households are more often affected by the criteria of housing need, specifically unaffordability. This trend is found in Middleton as well, where 33% of renters – and 20% of all households – remain in unaffordable dwellings, notwithstanding significant decreases (58% for owners and 33% for renters) between Census periods.

Table 6-2 shows the municipality’s households currently meeting the conditions of Core Housing Need and those in deep unaffordability, as well as the changes in those categories between 2016 and 2021. Since 2016, there has been a 35% decrease in overall Core Housing Need, with decreases across tenures. Notwithstanding, 19% of all households faced core need in 2021.

Since 2016 there has been an overall decrease of 42% to households living in deep unaffordability, but 11% of all renters remain in these conditions.

Table 6-2: Core Housing Need & Deep Unaffordability by Tenure, 2021

		Total	Owner	Renter
Total Households:		890	410	475
Households living in <b>Core Housing Need</b>	Total households	170	10	155
	<i>Change since 2016</i>	-35%	-80%	-28%
	Share of households	19%	2%	33%
Households living in <b>deep unaffordability</b>	Total households	55	-	50
	<i>Change since 2016</i>	-42%	-	-33%
	Share of households	6%	-	11%

Source: Statistics Canada Custom Census 2016 & 2021 Tables

### 6.2 Housing Need by Household Type

Table 6-3 and Table 6-4 present information related to housing indicators and Core Housing Need, respectively, by household type. No data related to suitability was available to report.

Generally, renter and single person / roommate households experience parallel issues when it comes to housing. About 34% of singles / roommates faced financial challenges related to shelter in 2021.

Lone parents also faced considerable housing challenges, reporting the highest rate of inadequacy (25%) and the second highest rate of unaffordability (25%).

Table 6-3: Housing Need Criteria by Household Type, 2021

		Couple w/o child(ren)	Couple w/ child(ren)	Lone parent	Single / roommates
Total Households:		235	145	80	385
Households living in <b>inadequate</b> conditions	Total households	-	20	20	30
	<i>Change since 2016</i>	-	-	-20%	-25%
	Share of households	-	14%	25%	8%
Households living in <b>unaffordable</b> conditions	Total households	20	-	20	130
	<i>Change since 2016</i>	-56%	-	-50%	-26%
	Share of households	9%	-	25%	34%

Source: Statistics Canada Custom Census 2016 & 2021 Tables

Since 2016, single persons / roommate households living in Core Housing Need decreased 22%, yet 32% of that population remains in Core Housing Need. Lone parents reported the next most prevalent core need (25%), notwithstanding a 56% decrease between census periods.

Table 6-4: Core Housing Need & Deep Unaffordability by Household Type, 2021

		Couple w/o child(ren)	Couple w/ child(ren)	Lone parent	Single / roommates
Total Households:		235	145	80	385
Households living in <b>Core Housing Need</b>	Total households	20	-	20	125
	<i>Change since 2016</i>	-50%	-	-56%	-22%
	Share of households	9%	-	25%	32%
Households living in <b>deep unaffordability</b>	Total households	-	-	-	55
	<i>Change since 2016</i>	-	-	-	-15%
	Share of households	-	-	-	14%

Source: Statistics Canada Custom Census 2016 & 2021 Tables

# 7 Demographic Profile

## 7.1 Population

### 7.1.1 Current Population

Between 2016 and 2021, the population of the Town of Middleton increased by 2%. By comparison, Nova Scotia’s growth rate was 5% between those same years. Table 7-1 below illustrates the municipality’s population change compared to those at the provincial level.

The municipality grew across many of the defined age cohorts between 2016 and 2021, with noticeably strong growth among 25-to-44-year-old cohort, largely due to net positive migration trends. This has led to an increase of demand for housing to the municipality among younger age cohorts that might also come with or may eventually have a family.

Table 7-1: Total Population by Age Cohort (2021) and Five-Year Percent Change

		0 to 14	15 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 to 84	85+	Total
Nova Scotia	Total	136,710	106,185	234,180	276,990	192,285	23,035	969,380
	Share	14%	11%	24%	29%	20%	2%	100%
	5yr %Δ	+2%	-1%	+9%	-2%	+19%	+6%	+5%

		0 to 14	15 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 to 84	85+	Total
Town of Middleton	Total	255	195	355	490	470	105	1,875
	Share	14%	10%	19%	26%	25%	6%	100%
	5yr %Δ	+11%	-3%	+9%	-4%	+6%	-13%	+2%

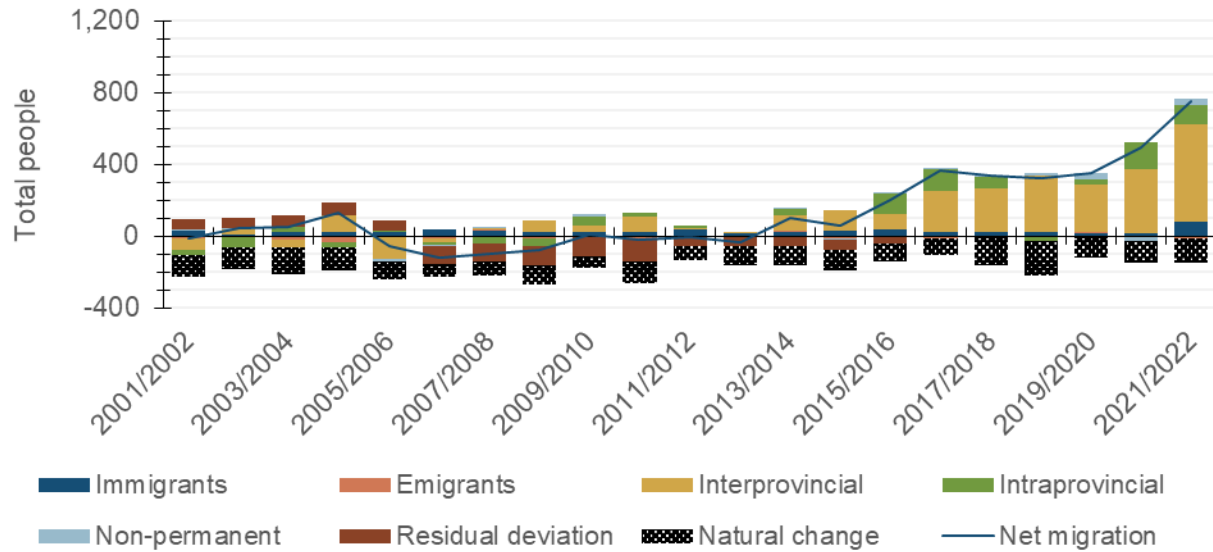
Source: Statistics Canada Census 2016 & 2021

### 7.1.2 Migration

Shown in Figure 7.1 is the net-migration for the **entire** Annapolis Census Division (data is not available at the municipal level - the entire Census Division includes all related urban and rural municipalities) between 2001/02 and 2021/22, inclusive of totals for intra-provincial and international migration, as well as emigration.

Between 2016 and 2021, the Census Division’s net-migration steadily increased to a two-decade high in 2021/2022 with a total of 753 newcomers.

Figure 7.1: Historical Components of Migration, Annapolis Census Division



Source: Statistics Canada Table 17-10-0140

### 7.1.3 Anticipated Population

The municipality’s anticipated population is derived from applying the historical share of local total populations by age cohort to the regional projections by age cohort produced by the Department of Finance & Treasury Board (FTB) in February 2023. In other words, results assume that the municipality will represent the same share of the region’s population over the projection horizon.<sup>7</sup> This does not consider nuanced population changes by community.

Table 7-2: Anticipated Total Population by Age Cohort and Five-Year Percent Change

		0 to 14	15 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 to 84	85+	Total
2027	Total	290	205	430	480	555	125	2,085
	Share	14%	10%	21%	23%	27%	6%	100%
	5yr %Δ	+12%	+2%	+13%	-2%	+13%	+19%	+8%

		0 to 14	15 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 to 84	85+	Total
2032	Total	295	195	425	465	595	160	2,135
	Share	14%	9%	20%	22%	28%	7%	100%
	5yr %Δ	+2%	-5%	-1%	-3%	+7%	+28%	+2%

Source: derived from Department of Finance & Treasury Board February 2023

<sup>7</sup> Since a municipality represents the same share of its region (i.e., Census Division) over time for projections (population and households), similar rates of growth will exist for each of the municipalities within the region. Therefore, readers reviewing multiple reports may notice a likeness between them.

Estimates suggest that the total 2022 population was 1,925, with a projected increase of 8% between 2022 and 2027. Senior and young adult populations should increase during that time, with decreases only occurring among 45- to 64-year-olds.

Growth from 2027 to 2032 may be notably muted compared to the five years prior (2%), with growth mostly occurring among senior populations. This demonstrates a short-term need to accommodate families, but a long-term need to meet the needs of an expanding senior cohort.

## 7.2 Households

### 7.2.1 Current Households

Table 7.3 illustrates the various characteristics of households in the Town of Middleton. The tables show tenure splits for maintainer by age cohort, household types, and household sizes respectively, as well as the 5-year 2016 and 2021 period percent change in those populations. The primary household maintainer is the person within a household who pays the rent, mortgage, taxes, or other major expenses for the dwelling. For households in which multiple incomes are present, the first name listed on a census questionnaire is taken to be the primary maintainer.

Between 2016 and 2021, there was an overall 4% increase in households, with an overall tenure split of 46% owner households and 54% renters.

As can be seen, couples with children have seen the biggest change, with a 21% increase since 2016. Families in Middleton are also trending to be larger with a 50% increase in 5+ person families between census periods.

*“Many newly immigrated families, migrant workers, refugees, health care professionals and students are unable to find housing.”*

Note that the percent change of households can increase faster than population (or even if there is population decline). As residents age, their likelihood of forming or leading a household increases. For instance, a child growing up and moving out of their family home turns one household into two. This can also occur if there is notable growth among smaller household sizes.

Table 7-3: Households by Tenure & Characteristics (2021) and Five-Year Percent Change

		15 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 to 84	85+	Total
Household Maintainer Age	Total	50	205	320	290	60	925
	Owner	0%	47%	50%	48%	33%	46%
	Renter	100%	53%	50%	52%	67%	54%
	5yr %Δ	-9%	+8%	+7%	+12%	-20%	+4%

		Couple w/o Child	Couple w/ Child	Lone Parent	Non-census*	Other**	Total
Household Type	Total	240	145	85	415	40	925
	Owner	72%	72%	18%	26%	100%	46%
	Renter	28%	28%	82%	74%	0%	54%
	5yr %Δ	-4%	+21%	0%	+8%	-27%	+4%

		1-person	2-person	3-person	4-person	5+ person	Total
Household Size	Total	390	320	90	75	45	925
	Owner	24%	60%	50%	100%	67%	46%
	Renter	76%	40%	50%	0%	33%	54%
	5yr %Δ	+4%	+2%	-10%	+7%	+50%	+4%

Source: Statistics Canada Custom Census 2016 & 2021 Table

### 7.2.2 Anticipated Households

A similar apportionment as for the anticipated population is performed for anticipated households. Note that anticipated households are a major input to housing demand calculations, but do not equate exactly to demand. Housing demand projections incorporated adjustments to reflect total dwellings (not only those occupied by a usual resident which projections would solely consider).

Estimates suggest that total households reached 955 in 2022, with a potential increase of 7% from 2022 to 2027 (65 total). Household losses should predominantly occur older working professional led households (45- to 64-year-olds). The greatest rate of growth should be among senior-led households.

Growth may continue from 2027 to 2032, but of a noticeably lesser magnitude (3%). Households led by the 65- to 84-year-old senior group may grow only marginally during that time - elderly (85+) led households may grow about 29%. Again, this

reinforces the need for senior appropriate or generally accessible housing over the foreseeable future.

Table 7-4: Anticipated Households by Maintainer Age and Five-Year Percent Change

		15 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 to 84	85+	Total
2027	Total	50	245	315	325	85	1,020
	Share	5%	24%	31%	32%	8%	100%
	5yr %Δ	+0%	+11%	-2%	+8%	+31%	+7%

		15 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 to 84	85+	Total
2032	Total	50	245	305	340	110	1,050
	Share	5%	23%	29%	32%	10%	100%
	5yr %Δ	+0%	+0%	-3%	+5%	+29%	+3%

Source: derived from Statistics Canada 2016 Census, Department of Finance & Treasury Board February 2023

## 8 Conclusion

The above information provides context for the Town of Middleton's housing conditions. Recent increases in demand coupled with limited growth in supply, have led to higher-than-expected local housing prices.

The current estimated unit shortage for the Town of Middleton is 85. Demand, including the existing shortage, is estimated to increase to 165 by 2027. Using current construction trends, 5 new units are estimated to be introduced into the market annually over the next 5 years, leaving a gap of 140 units by 2027. Unless completions exceed the estimated annual rate of construction, ongoing trends within both rental and ownership markets ought to be expected to continue.