

# RURAL HOUSING: ACCESSIBILITY, CAPACITY, AND FUNDING



Housing is a complex challenge across rural North Carolina that has profound economic development impacts. In Eastern North Carolina, both along the coast and inland, communities are more exposed to major hurricanes, floods, and tornados. Low-wealth individuals on the coast and numerous low-wealth communities inland are exceptionally vulnerable. In Western North Carolina, with a growing population that includes a large percentage of higher-wealth individuals, affordable housing is out of reach for many for middle class households. For rural North Carolina to prosper, we must double down on the commitment to address complex conditions such as substandard housing stock and too few developers; smaller and harder-to-fund projects; and inadequate state and federal funding.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made housing needs more acute for middle-income and low-wealth households. North Carolinians put out- due to the economic impact of the pandemic lack the resources to pay rent, mortgages, and utilities; CARES Act resources have helped, however. As of February 17, the most recent relief package so far has allocated \$135 million to rent, mortgage, and utility assistance, will support 34,000 North Carolinians.

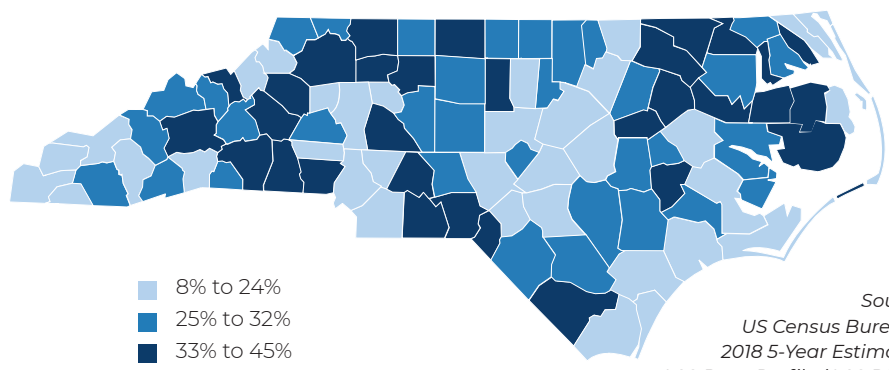
*(Source: briefing on 02/17/21 by Laura Hogshead, Chief Operating Officer of the North Carolina Office of Recovery and Resiliency.)*

## TOTAL AND UNSHELTERED HOMELESS IN NORTH CAROLINA

UNSHeltered HOMELESS POPULATION  
TOTAL HOMELESS POPULATION



## PERCENT OF HOUSING UNITS 50 YEARS OR OLDER, 2018



Source:  
US Census Bureau –  
2018 5-Year Estimates;  
ACS Data Profile (ACS DP04)

Source: Joint Center for Housing Studies Tabulations. US Department of Housing and Urban Development. 2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report.

**OF NORTH CAROLINA RENTAL HOUSING UNITS WITH INCOME BELOW \$50,000, ABOUT **564,816** ARE SPENDING **30% OR MORE** OF INCOME ON HOUSING COSTS.**

**OF NORTH CAROLINA OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS WITH INCOMES BELOW \$50,000, ABOUT **402,444** ARE SPENDING **40% OR MORE** OF INCOME ON HOUSING COSTS.**

Housing Costs by Occupant Type & Income	Rural	Urban	Regional City/ Suburban
<b>Renter-Occupied</b> Housing Units with Renter Earnings less than \$50,000	300,084	303,789	202,919
<b>Renter-Occupied</b> Housing units Earning less than \$50,000 & spending 30 percent or more on housing cost	193,544	230,470	140,801
% <b>Renter-Occupied</b> Housing units with Owner Earning less than \$50,000	64%	76%	69%
<b>Owner-Occupied</b> Housing Units with Owner Earning less than \$50,000	473,054	205,096	215,831
<b>Owner-Occupied</b> Housing units Earning less than \$50,000 & spending 30 percent or more on housing costs	194,173	112,956	95,315
% <b>Owner-Occupied</b> Housing units Earning less than \$50,000 & spending 30 percent or more on housing costs	41%	55%	44%

## RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- Increase recurring funding to the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency for the Workforce Housing Loan Fund. This fund is critical to the financial feasibility of smaller scale applications for the Low Income Housing Tax Credit.
- Increase recurring funding to the NC Housing Trust Fund from its current \$7 million to \$15 million.
- Prioritize use of non-entitlement federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to meet the growing demand for quality, affordable rural housing.
- Build a broad coalition through critical advocates, such as the North Carolina Housing Coalition and the Metropolitan Mayors Coalition, to create a systemic policy response to make high-quality housing for everyone an economic asset for every community.

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