

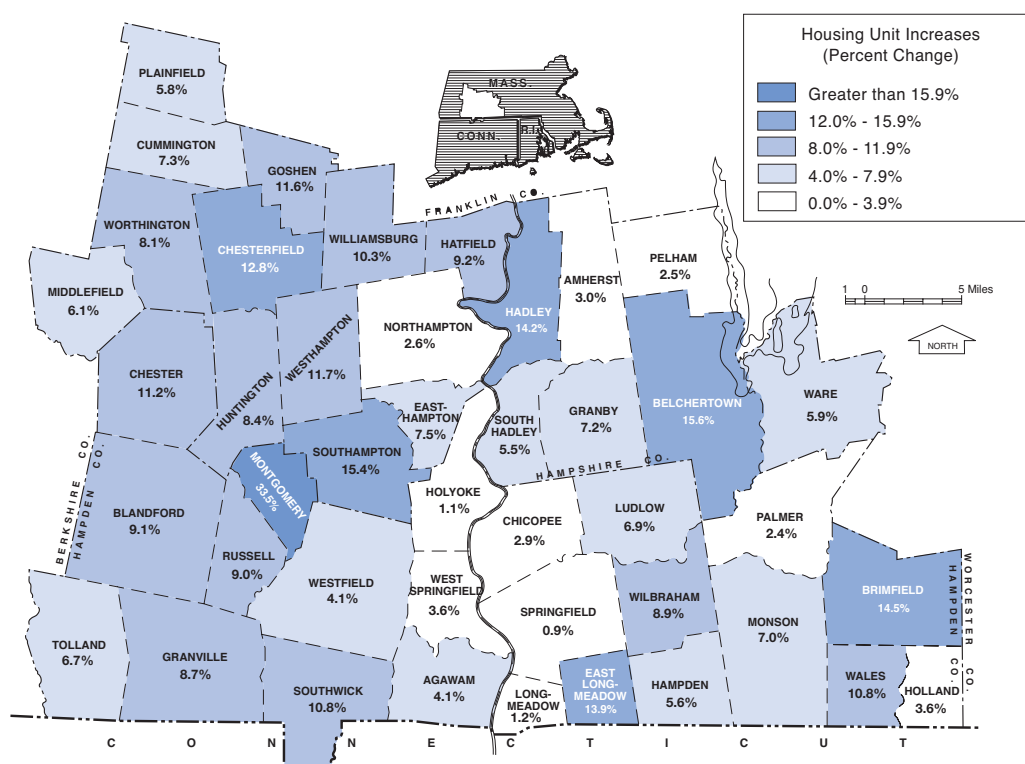
Housing and Ownership Shifts in the Pioneer Valley Region

An examination of 2000 and 2010 Census Data

From 2000 to 2010, the number of housing units grew modestly in the Pioneer Valley region, which contains both Hampden and Hampshire county areas. During that time, 10,258 housing units were added to Pioneer Valley region, bringing the total housing units to 254,778 in 2010, an increase of 4.2% from 2000. In comparison, the number of housing units in the entire Commonwealth increased by 7.1% to a total of 2,808,254.

The more urbanized Hampden County area has over three times more housing units than Hampshire County. On the other hand, the number of housing units in Hampshire County grew almost twice as fast between 2000 and 2010 as that in Hampden County. Much of the growth occurred outside of the region's major cities. The cities of Springfield, Chicopee, Holyoke, and Northampton and the towns of Amherst, Longmeadow, and Palmer experienced very slow growth in housing units compared to the rest of the region. The fastest growth was located in the outlying areas.

Figure 1: Housing Unit Growth



Prepared by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, July 2011.
Source: 2010 US Census.

By the Numbers...

- **1.2%** of housing units in the region are considered seasonal.
- The number of housing units in the Pioneer Valley region grew by **4.2%**, while the total population grew by **2.2%** during the same 10 year period.
- **6.3%** of housing units were vacant in the region, compared to **9.3%** in all of Massachusetts.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Belchertown and East Longmeadow were the top two communities in the Pioneer Valley in terms of the number of additional housing units, adding a combined 1,532 units. These two towns accounted for about 15% of the entire region's new housing units from 2000 to 2010. The number of housing units in Montgomery¹ increased by 33.5%, the fastest growth rate in the region, though it should be noted that in 2010 the Census determined that there were only 343 housing units in the town. Several other rural communities also saw a large percentage of new housing units.

Since the Census' definition of vacant units includes seasonal housing, the more rural communities with several second and seasonal homes have very high vacancy rates. Tolland leads all other Pioneer Valley region communities with 61.4% of the housing units considered vacant. At 6.3%, the Pioneer Valley region as a whole has a much lower percentage of vacant homes than does the Commonwealth, which stands at 9.3 percent. The percentage of vacant units in the Pioneer Valley region grew less than 1% from 2000 to 2010, compared with a change of 2.5% for all of Massachusetts.

At closer examination, it appears that the significant difference in vacant housing units between the Pioneer Valley region and the state as a whole can be accounted for by seasonal or recreational housing. In fact, when seasonal or recreational housing

units are removed from the vacant category, the percent of vacant housing units in the Pioneer Valley region matches that of the entire state at 5.2 percent. Still, with seasonal housing removed, the rate of increase in vacant units between 2000 and 2010 is much smaller for the Pioneer Valley region than for the whole state.

Once seasonal vacancies are disregarded, the urban areas of Springfield, Holyoke, and Chicopee have a higher percentage of units vacant than the state and regional averages. Palmer and Ware also experienced a significant increase in the percentage of vacancies, with Ware, Springfield, Palmer, and Chester leading the region in non-seasonal vacancy rate. Each of these communities has more than 7% of their non-seasonal housing units vacant.

¹ The Town of Montgomery believes that the 2000 Census population and housing unit count undercounted Montgomery residents and housing units, thus the increase in population and housing units from 2000 to 2010 may not be as large as the Census Bureau numbers indicate. Data from other sources such as residential parcel counts and building permits suggest that the suspicion of a 2000 undercount may be accurate.

	Total Population					Housing Units			
	2000	2010	Change	% Chg.		2000	2010	Change	% Chg.
Massachusetts	6,349,097	6,547,629	198,532	3.1%	Massachusetts	2,621,989	2,808,254	186,265	7.1%
Hampden County	456,228	463,490	7,262	1.6%	Hampden County	185,876	192,175	6,299	3.4%
Hampshire County	152,251	158,080	5,829	3.8%	Hampshire County	58,644	62,603	3,959	6.8%
Pioneer Valley Region	608,479	621,570	13,091	2.2%	Pioneer Valley Region	244,520	254,778	10,258	4.2%
Agawam	28,144	28,438	294	1.0%	Agawam	11,659	12,139	480	4.1%
Amherst	34,874	37,819	2,945	8.4%	Amherst	9,427	9,711	284	3.0%
Belchertown	12,968	14,649	1,681	13.0%	Belchertown	5,050	5,839	789	15.6%
Blandford	1,214	1,233	19	1.6%	Blandford	526	574	48	9.1%
Brimfield	3,339	3,609	270	8.1%	Brimfield	1,396	1,598	202	14.5%
Chester	1,308	1,337	29	2.2%	Chester	580	645	65	11.2%
Chesterfield	1,201	1,222	21	1.7%	Chesterfield	524	591	67	12.8%
Chicopee	54,653	55,298	645	1.2%	Chicopee	24,424	25,140	716	2.9%
Cummington	978	872	-106	-10.8%	Cummington	452	485	33	7.3%
East Longmeadow	14,100	15,720	1,620	11.5%	East Longmeadow	5,363	6,106	743	13.9%
Easthampton	15,994	16,053	59	0.4%	Easthampton	7,083	7,615	532	7.5%
Goshen	921	1,054	133	14.4%	Goshen	536	598	62	11.6%
Granby	6,132	6,240	108	1.8%	Granby	2,295	2,460	165	7.2%
Granville	1,521	1,566	45	3.0%	Granville	595	647	52	8.7%
Hadley	4,793	5,250	457	9.5%	Hadley	1,953	2,230	277	14.2%
Hampden	5,171	5,139	-32	-0.6%	Hampden	1,846	1,949	103	5.6%
Hatfield	3,249	3,279	30	0.9%	Hatfield	1,431	1,563	132	9.2%
Holland	2,407	2,481	74	3.1%	Holland	1,317	1,365	48	3.6%
Holyoke	39,838	39,880	42	0.1%	Holyoke	16,210	16,384	174	1.1%
Huntington	2,174	2,180	6	0.3%	Huntington	935	1,014	79	8.4%
Longmeadow	15,633	15,784	151	1.0%	Longmeadow	5,879	5,948	69	1.2%
Ludlow	21,209	21,103	-106	-0.5%	Ludlow	7,841	8,383	542	6.9%
Middlefield	542	521	-21	-3.9%	Middlefield	263	279	16	6.1%
Monson	8,359	8,560	201	2.4%	Monson	3,213	3,438	225	7.0%
Montgomery	654	838	184	28.1%	Montgomery	257	343	86	33.5%
Northampton	28,978	28,549	-429	-1.5%	Northampton	12,405	12,728	323	2.6%
Palmer	12,497	12,140	-357	-2.9%	Palmer	5,402	5,534	132	2.4%
Pelham	1,403	1,321	-82	-5.8%	Pelham	556	570	14	2.5%
Plainfield	589	648	59	10.0%	Plainfield	311	329	18	5.8%
Russell	1,657	1,775	118	7.1%	Russell	641	699	58	9.0%
South Hadley	17,196	17,514	318	1.8%	South Hadley	6,784	7,156	372	5.5%
Southampton	5,387	5,792	405	7.5%	Southampton	2,025	2,337	312	15.4%
Southwick	8,835	9,502	667	7.5%	Southwick	3,533	3,916	383	10.8%
Springfield	152,082	153,060	978	0.6%	Springfield	61,172	61,706	534	0.9%
Tolland	426	485	59	13.8%	Tolland	478	510	32	6.7%
Wales	1,737	1,838	101	5.8%	Wales	796	882	86	10.8%
Ware	9,707	9,872	165	1.7%	Ware	4,336	4,590	254	5.9%
West Springfield	27,899	28,391	492	1.8%	West Springfield	12,259	12,697	438	3.6%
Westfield	40,072	41,094	1,022	2.6%	Westfield	15,441	16,075	634	4.1%
Westhampton	1,468	1,607	139	9.5%	Westhampton	623	696	73	11.7%
Wilbraham	13,473	14,219	746	5.5%	Wilbraham	5,048	5,497	449	8.9%
Williamsburg	2,427	2,482	55	2.3%	Williamsburg	1,073	1,183	110	10.3%
Worthington	1,270	1,156	-114	-9.0%	Worthington	582	629	47	8.1%

	Occupancy Status								
	2000 Vacancy Rate	2010 Vacancy Rate	% Chg.	2000 Seasonal Units %	2010 Seasonal Units %	% Chg.	2000 Non-Seasonal Vacancy Rate	2010 Non-Seasonal Vacancy Rate	% Chg.
Massachusetts	6.8%	9.3%	2.5%	3.6%	4.1%	0.5%	3.2%	5.2%	2.0%
Hampden County	5.7%	6.4%	0.7%	0.9%	0.9%	0.0%	4.8%	5.4%	0.7%
Hampshire County	4.5%	6.2%	1.7%	1.7%	1.9%	0.2%	2.9%	4.4%	1.5%
Pioneer Valley Region	5.4%	6.3%	0.9%	1.1%	1.2%	0.1%	4.3%	5.2%	0.9%
Agawam	3.4%	3.9%	0.5%	0.6%	0.4%	-0.2%	2.8%	3.5%	0.7%
Amherst	2.7%	4.7%	2.0%	0.7%	0.9%	0.2%	2.0%	3.7%	1.7%
Belchertown	3.2%	4.2%	0.9%	1.0%	1.2%	0.2%	2.3%	3.0%	0.7%
Blandford	13.3%	14.3%	1.0%	10.3%	10.1%	-0.2%	3.0%	4.2%	1.1%
Brimfield	10.5%	10.6%	0.1%	7.8%	6.7%	-1.1%	2.7%	3.9%	1.2%
Chester	13.8%	15.8%	2.0%	9.0%	9.3%	0.3%	4.8%	6.5%	1.7%
Chesterfield	14.7%	13.5%	-1.2%	11.8%	11.3%	-0.5%	2.9%	2.2%	-0.7%
Chicopee	5.4%	5.6%	0.2%	0.4%	0.3%	-0.1%	5.0%	5.3%	0.3%
Cummington	15.5%	16.7%	1.2%	11.3%	12.2%	0.9%	4.2%	4.5%	0.3%
East Longmeadow	2.1%	4.2%	2.0%	0.2%	0.6%	0.4%	1.9%	3.6%	1.7%
Easthampton	3.2%	5.1%	1.9%	0.4%	0.6%	0.2%	2.9%	4.5%	1.6%
Goshen	31.9%	30.4%	-1.5%	29.1%	26.4%	-2.7%	2.8%	4.0%	1.2%
Granby	2.1%	3.5%	1.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.1%	1.8%	3.1%	1.3%
Granville	6.6%	6.0%	-0.5%	2.9%	2.6%	-0.3%	3.7%	3.4%	-0.3%
Hadley	3.0%	5.5%	2.5%	0.5%	1.3%	0.8%	2.5%	4.2%	1.7%
Hampden	1.5%	2.6%	1.1%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	1.4%	2.2%	0.9%
Hatfield	3.5%	5.1%	1.6%	0.8%	0.9%	0.1%	2.7%	4.2%	1.5%
Holland	31.8%	27.2%	-4.6%	28.1%	23.0%	-5.1%	3.7%	4.2%	0.5%
Holyoke	7.7%	6.2%	-1.4%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	7.5%	5.9%	-1.6%
Huntington	13.5%	14.4%	0.9%	9.4%	9.4%	0.0%	4.1%	5.0%	1.0%
Longmeadow	2.5%	3.5%	1.0%	0.8%	1.2%	0.4%	1.7%	2.2%	0.6%
Ludlow	2.3%	3.6%	1.3%	0.3%	0.5%	0.2%	2.0%	3.1%	1.1%
Middlefield	19.0%	21.9%	2.9%	12.9%	17.6%	4.7%	6.1%	4.3%	-1.8%
Monson	3.7%	4.6%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	0.0%	2.8%	3.7%	0.9%
Montgomery	1.6%	3.8%	2.2%	1.2%	1.7%	0.5%	0.4%	2.0%	1.7%
Northampton	4.2%	5.7%	1.5%	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%	3.2%	4.7%	1.5%
Palmer	6.0%	7.9%	1.9%	0.6%	0.7%	0.1%	5.4%	7.2%	1.7%
Pelham	2.0%	3.7%	1.7%	0.9%	1.1%	0.2%	1.1%	2.6%	1.6%
Plainfield	21.9%	18.2%	-3.6%	15.8%	14.0%	-1.8%	6.1%	4.3%	-1.9%
Russell	4.7%	6.2%	1.5%	1.1%	1.7%	0.6%	3.6%	4.4%	0.8%
South Hadley	2.9%	5.1%	2.2%	0.4%	0.9%	0.5%	2.5%	4.2%	1.6%
Southampton	2.0%	3.8%	1.8%	1.1%	1.2%	0.1%	0.9%	2.6%	1.7%
Southwick	6.1%	5.3%	-0.8%	1.3%	1.6%	0.3%	4.8%	3.6%	-1.2%
Springfield	6.6%	8.0%	1.4%	0.3%	0.2%	-0.1%	6.3%	7.8%	1.5%
Tolland	64.6%	61.4%	-3.3%	61.7%	56.5%	-5.2%	2.9%	4.9%	2.0%
Wales	17.1%	16.6%	-0.5%	13.3%	12.5%	-0.8%	3.8%	4.1%	0.3%
Ware	7.1%	10.2%	3.1%	1.2%	1.1%	-0.1%	6.0%	9.1%	3.2%
West Springfield	3.6%	4.5%	1.0%	0.5%	0.5%	0.0%	3.0%	4.0%	0.9%
Westfield	4.2%	4.6%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.0%	3.7%	4.1%	0.5%
Westhampton	13.0%	10.5%	-2.5%	10.6%	8.8%	-1.8%	2.4%	1.7%	-0.7%
Wilbraham	3.1%	3.4%	0.3%	0.5%	1.0%	0.5%	2.6%	2.4%	-0.2%
Williamsburg	4.3%	5.5%	1.2%	1.5%	1.5%	0.0%	2.8%	4.0%	1.2%
Worthington	13.6%	17.0%	3.4%	10.3%	12.1%	1.8%	3.3%	4.9%	1.7%

	Renter vs. Owner-Occupied Housing				
	2000		2010		% Change in Owner Occupied housing units
	Owner-occupied housing units %	Renter-occupied housing units %	Owner-occupied housing units %	Renter-occupied housing units %	
Massachusetts	61.7%	38.3%	62.3%	37.7%	0.6%
Hampden County	61.9%	38.1%	62.1%	37.9%	0.2%
Hampshire County	65.0%	35.0%	66.4%	33.6%	1.4%
Pioneer Valley Region	62.6%	37.4%	63.2%	36.8%	0.5%
Agawam	73.6%	26.4%	74.2%	25.8%	0.6%
Amherst	45.0%	55.0%	46.0%	54.0%	1.0%
Belchertown	80.8%	19.2%	82.2%	17.8%	1.4%
Blandford	89.0%	11.0%	92.5%	7.5%	3.5%
Brimfield	87.5%	12.5%	87.1%	12.9%	-0.4%
Chester	83.4%	16.6%	83.6%	16.4%	0.2%
Chesterfield	86.8%	13.2%	89.6%	10.4%	2.8%
Chicopee	59.3%	40.7%	58.8%	41.2%	-0.5%
Cummington	75.1%	24.9%	76.2%	23.8%	1.1%
East Longmeadow	87.5%	12.5%	85.2%	14.8%	-2.3%
Easthampton	60.7%	39.3%	62.1%	37.9%	1.4%
Goshen	86.3%	13.7%	89.9%	10.1%	3.6%
Granby	84.6%	15.4%	85.8%	14.2%	1.2%
Granville	87.2%	12.8%	86.5%	13.5%	-0.7%
Hadley	74.7%	25.3%	69.3%	30.7%	-5.4%
Hampden	90.7%	9.3%	90.5%	9.5%	-0.2%
Hatfield	73.3%	26.7%	71.8%	28.2%	-1.5%
Holland	87.1%	12.9%	89.7%	10.3%	2.6%
Holyoke	41.5%	58.5%	41.6%	58.4%	0.1%
Huntington	78.1%	21.9%	78.5%	21.5%	0.4%
Longmeadow	90.9%	9.1%	89.6%	10.4%	-1.3%
Ludlow	77.5%	22.5%	77.2%	22.8%	-0.3%
Middlefield	92.0%	8.0%	93.6%	6.4%	1.6%
Monson	80.5%	19.5%	82.0%	18.0%	1.5%
Montgomery	96.4%	3.6%	95.5%	4.5%	-0.9%
Northampton	53.5%	46.5%	56.3%	43.7%	2.8%
Palmer	65.4%	34.6%	67.3%	32.7%	1.9%
Pelham	83.7%	16.3%	82.5%	17.5%	-1.2%
Plainfield	85.6%	14.4%	88.1%	11.9%	2.5%
Russell	81.5%	18.5%	82.2%	17.8%	0.7%
South Hadley	74.0%	26.0%	73.9%	26.1%	-0.1%
Southampton	87.0%	13.0%	87.4%	12.6%	0.4%
Southwick	81.3%	18.7%	81.7%	18.3%	0.4%
Springfield	49.9%	50.1%	49.8%	50.2%	-0.1%
Tolland	86.4%	13.6%	87.3%	12.7%	0.9%
Wales	85.0%	15.0%	82.5%	17.5%	-2.5%
Ware	65.6%	34.4%	66.9%	33.1%	1.3%
West Springfield	58.2%	41.8%	58.0%	42.0%	-0.2%
Westfield	67.8%	32.2%	67.5%	32.5%	-0.3%
Westhampton	93.7%	6.3%	92.6%	7.4%	-1.1%
Wilbraham	89.3%	10.7%	87.6%	12.4%	-1.7%
Williamsburg	74.5%	25.5%	74.8%	25.2%	0.3%
Worthington	88.5%	11.5%	89.5%	10.5%	1.0%

The communities with the largest percentages of seasonal housing tend to lie on the extreme western and eastern edges of the Pioneer Valley region and are well outside of urban areas. Overall, the percentage of seasonal homes in the Pioneer Valley region is 1.2%, which is less than one-third of the state average. Still, a few communities within the region have extremely high rates of seasonal housing, such as Tolland, where more than 56% of all housing units were considered seasonal in 2010.

The Pioneer Valley region's owner-occupied housing unit rate is slightly higher than that of the state overall (63.2% versus 62.3% respectively in 2010). The cities lead the area in renter-occupied units, along with the college town of Amherst. Only Holyoke, Amherst, and Springfield have more renter-occupied housing units than owner-occupied units. From 2000 to 2010, the percentage of owner-occupied housing units climbed overall in Massachusetts and the Pioneer Valley region.

The more rural communities of Montgomery, Middlefield, Westhampton, and Blandford have more than 90% owner-occupied housing units, and this trend of primarily owner-occupied units was true of rural communities as well. Additionally, the suburban town of Longmeadow was just over 90% owner-occupied. Hadley saw the biggest shift away from owner-occupied housing units from 2000 to 2010, with an increase of more than 5% in the percentage of renter-occupied housing units. Blandford and Goshen saw the biggest shift to owner-occupied units, with both seeing an increase in owner-occupied units of about 3.5 percent.

Prepared in cooperation with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, and the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration - U.S. Department of Transportation. The views and opinions of the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the U.S. Department of Transportation.



Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

60 Congress Street - Floor 1 • Springfield, MA 01104-3419

(413) 781-6045 • Fax: (413) 732-2593 • www.pvpc.org