



TIPTON COUNTY
—FOUNDATION—

TIPTON COUNTY

HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT



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Introduction

Located in central Indiana, directly north of the Indianapolis metropolitan area, Tipton County stands as a microcosm of rural American life with distinct historical, economic, and sociocultural characteristics. As the county seat, the City of Tipton serves as the nucleus of administrative, economic, and social activities in the county. The city's historical significance is evident in its architectural heritage, characterized by structures reflecting various periods of development, from early pioneer dwellings to Victorian-era buildings. Furthermore, the City of Tipton's role as a commercial and civic center underscores its importance in fostering community cohesion and regional development.

Economically, Tipton County maintains a diversified base, with agriculture serving as a cornerstone industry alongside manufacturing, retail, and services sectors. The county's fertile soils support robust agricultural production, notably corn, soybeans, and livestock, sustaining local livelihoods and contributing to the broader state economy. Meanwhile, manufacturing enterprises, ranging from automotive components to consumer goods, bolster employment opportunities and economic stability within the region, albeit with occasional challenges posed by market fluctuations and technological advancements.

Both city and county face pressing challenges regarding the availability of affordable workforce housing, posing significant obstacles to long-term economic sustainability. Despite shared aspirations for amenities and residences that cater to existing priorities and needs, the region grapples with various barriers to development, many of which relate to existing at the intersection of traditional lifestyles and necessary adaptations to embrace the shifting environment in central Indiana.

However, amidst these challenges, there are promising opportunities for fresh approaches to residential development, particularly given the area's burgeoning suburban population and ideal location to supply housing for regional economic development expansion. Tipton County's low cost of living further enhances its appeal, serving as a perennial advantage for both development initiatives and attracting millennials seeking affordable living options.



Baseline Findings

Background and Context

The historical evolution of Tipton, Indiana, spans from its inception in the mid-19th century to its contemporary status as a thriving community. Initially founded as an agrarian settlement, Tipton's growth was catalyzed by the advent of transportation infrastructure, notably the Indianapolis and Peru Railroad. This facilitated industrial expansion, leading to the establishment of manufacturing enterprises such as grain mills, furniture factories, and automotive parts plants. Throughout its history, Tipton has maintained a strong sense of community, with institutions like schools, churches, and civic organizations playing pivotal roles. Annual festivals and cultural celebrations further bolstered social cohesion and preserved the town's identity.

Architecturally, Tipton boasts significant landmarks, including the Neoclassical Tipton County Courthouse, symbolizing both civic pride and architectural excellence. Urban development initiatives, coupled with efforts to revitalize downtown areas, have underscored the town's commitment to preserving its heritage while embracing modernity. Contemporary challenges, including economic diversification and sustainability, have spurred innovative solutions and community engagement.

However, as the findings in this report will show, there has been limited development in recent decades throughout Tipton County, and where new development has taken place, it has largely served to maintain the status quo of traditional living that is favorable to many of the long-time residents in the area. However, until recently, the population throughout the county has been dropping. Schools and enrollments have been shrinking. The resident population is aging. Local leaders are facing difficult decisions around their vision for the future of the county, many of which will inevitably involve a plan for how to adapt the local housing supply to the changing needs of the community.



Demographic Trends

Although the total population in Tipton County had been on a sustained decline over the prior decade, the county's population has begun to slowly increase since 2020. Different proprietary models provide conflicting projections of future population growth; while some project population decline, others indicate that the county will experience significant growth over the next several years. Figure 1 below shows the discrepancy between two of these models, Lightcast and Esri.

The model provided by Lightcast shows significant growth in coming years, fully replacing a decade's worth of population loss in the coming five-year span. This model, as is often the case with the Lightcast models, shows an optimistic, and growth-oriented projection. It is likely that this model relies heavily on the moderate population increase in the years since 2020.

The Esri projection, on the other hand, appears to rely more heavily on a longer historic trajectory. As such, it projects a continued moderate decrease in the population of Tipton County. While many factors could influence the trajectory of the county's growth, recent infrastructure investments in the county and economic growth in surrounding counties could mean that Tipton County itself is well positioned to realize a new wave of growth.

It is important to note, however, that population growth can be somewhat restricted by a lack of available housing options. If families are looking to relocate into areas north of Indianapolis, but there are not suitable options available to them in Tipton County, then the county will not have positioned themselves to take advantage of new potential residents.

The age distribution in Tipton County is slightly older than the state and national average. The median age was 44.4 years in 2022, which is higher than the state's median of 38.2 years. Roughly 1 in 5 Tipton County residents are over 65 years old. As the Baby Boomer generation ages over the next decade, the population is also likely to age. Currently, an outsized concentration of county residents are approaching retirement age. As the senior population continues to grow, demand for housing which specifically suits the needs of an older demographic can be expected to increase.

Figure 1: Tipton County Population Trend and Projections

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates with projections from ESRI and Lightcast

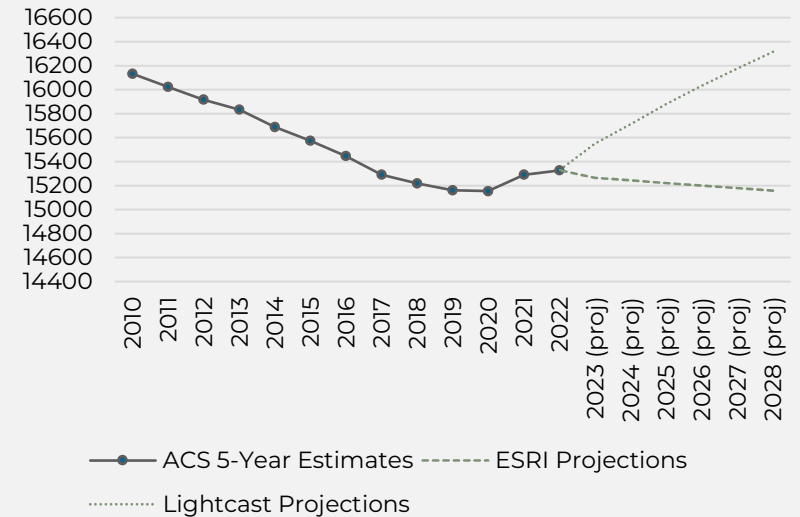
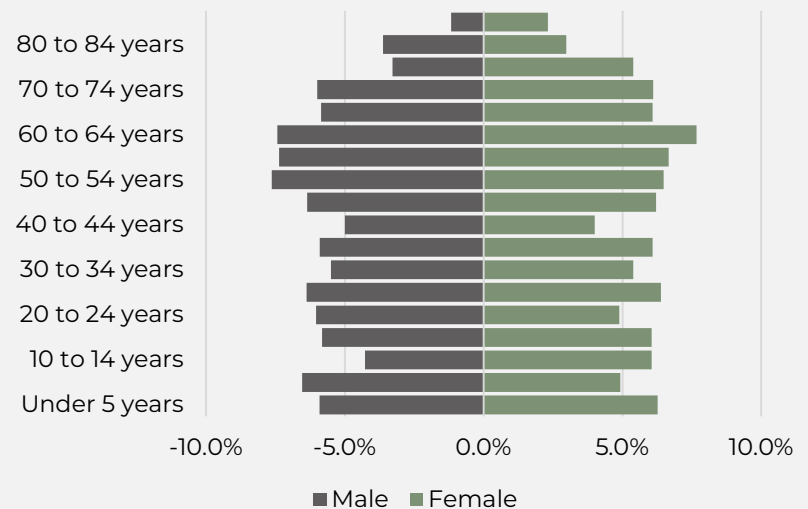


Figure 2: 2022 Age and Gender Distribution

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2017-2022





Economic Trends

INDUSTRY MIX

The largest industry supersector (an industry categorized at the 2-Digit NAICS level) in Tipton County is “Manufacturing,” which employed 1,760 individuals and nearly 30% of the county’s workforce in 2023. This supersector has an employment concentration of 3.69, which means there are 3.69 times more manufacturing jobs in Tipton County than in other comparable communities throughout the U.S. Another important industry is the “Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting” supersector, which employs 784 individuals and has an employment concentration of 10.84. Average earnings for these industries are approximately \$76,000 and \$67,000, respectively. Given the fact that they make up a combined 41% of the county’s workforce, the estimated earnings of their workers can provide valuable information about housing demand and affordability in the county.

Figure 3: Top Five Industries by Job Count in Tipton County

Industry	2023 Jobs	Employment Concentration	Avg Earnings Per Job
MANUFACTURING	1,760	3.69	\$76,046
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, FISHING AND HUNTING	784	10.84	\$66,927
GOVERNMENT	745	0.85	\$52,418
CONSTRUCTION	546	1.54	\$65,935
HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	514	0.65	\$54,845

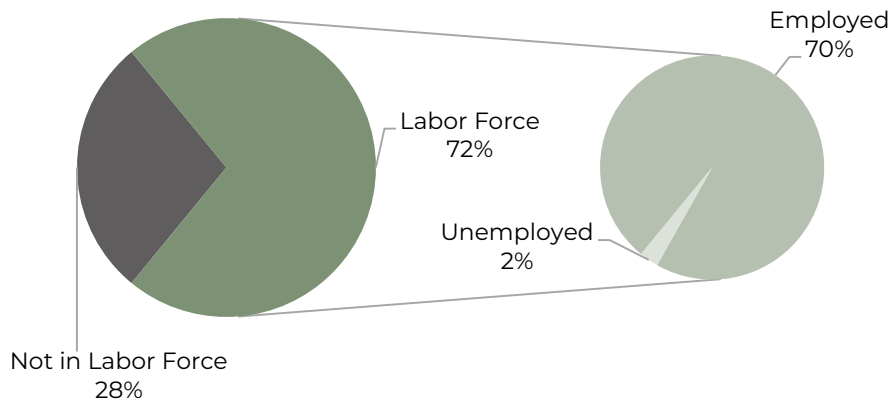
Source: Lightcast Q1.2024

The Figure 3 depicts the largest industry supersectors in the county in terms of total employment. The “Manufacturing” industry employs the most workers in the county and provides the highest average earnings per job. All of the top industries pay their average worker more than \$50,000., annually. The “Manufacturing,” “Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting,” and “Construction” industries are all highly concentrated in Tipton County.

LABOR MARKET

In Tipton County, there are approximately 12,500 individuals who are considered a part of the available labor force (over 16 years old, not in the military, and not institutionalized). Of those, just under 9,000 are either currently employed or actively seeking employment. Around 250 people are unemployed, which equates to 2.8% of the labor force. As noted in the Demographics section of the report, a large part of the working population can be expected to retire over the next decade as the Baby Boomer generation ages. Of the 12,500 individuals considered in the available labor force, roughly 3,300 are ages 65 and older. These shifting demographic trends can have far-reaching effects on the local labor force.

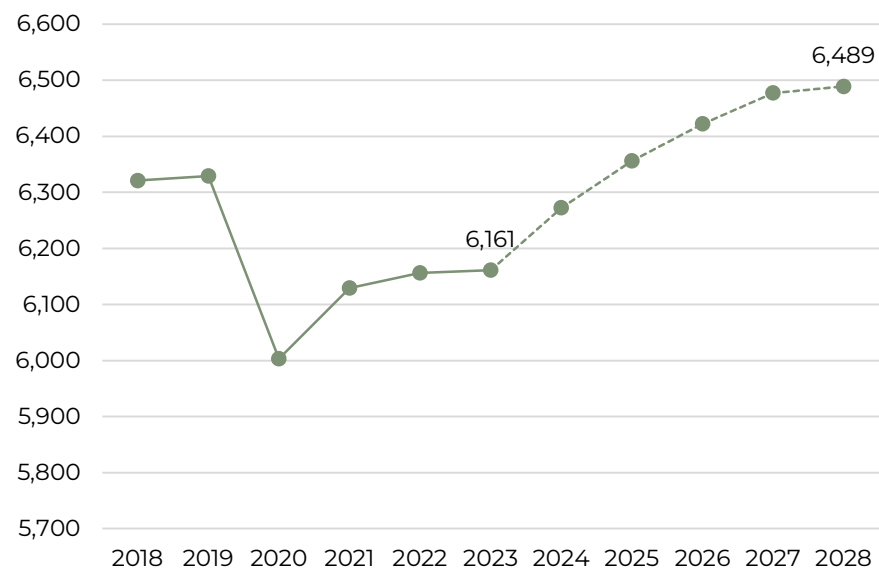
Figure 4: 2023 Labor Force Breakdown



Source: Lightcast Q1.2024.

In 2023, there were 6,161 workers employed in Tipton County. Although jobs decreased by 160 workers between 2018 and 2023, employment is projected to grow by 328 workers over the next 5 years. Some of the decline in the working population is linked to the overall population decline experienced in recent years, and projected growth could result in a rebound of the labor force. The projections presented in Figure 5 align with the population growth projected in the Lightcast model.

Figure 5: Tipton County Employment Trend (2018-2028)



Source: Lightcast

The unemployment rate in the county has remained slightly lower than that of the state over the past decade. At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, unemployment spiked to 6.3%; however, it has declined in recent years and an average annual unemployment rate of 3.0% was reached in 2023¹.





OCCUPATIONS

The most common occupations in Tipton County are production-related, examples of which include occupations in manufacturing, metalworking, or machinery. There are well over 1,000 workers in the county who hold these production occupations, and they make up more than 3 times the share of the workforce than is typical at the national level. “Management,” “Office and Administrative Support,” and “Transportation and Material Moving” occupations are the next most common occupations in the county, collectively employing more than 1,600 workers. Notably, the median earnings for the largest occupation groups in the county are lower than the average earnings for the largest industries. This is due to the fact that averaging wages often skews the result, because it includes top-paid executives that make up a small share of the workforce but often-times make significantly more. For that reason, occupational wage data, and specifically median wage data, is a better metric to assess individual wealth and affordability in a region.

Figure 6: Largest Occupation Groups in Tipton County

Occupation	2023 Jobs	Employment Concentration	Median Annual Earnings
PRODUCTION OCCUPATIONS	1,067	3.23	\$43,779.8
MANAGEMENT OCCUPATIONS	641	1.41	\$61,478.82
OFFICE & ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT OCCUPATIONS	554	0.78	\$39,955.94
TRANSPORTATION & MATERIAL MOVING OCCUPATIONS	508	0.96	\$42,871.72
SALES & RELATED OCCUPATIONS	396	0.74	\$34,170.03
CONSTRUCTION & EXTRACTION OCCUPATIONS	384	1.39	\$50,377.40
FOOD PREPARATION & SERVING RELATED OCCUPATIONS	334	0.69	\$24,670.90
INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE, & REPAIR OCCUPATIONS	322	1.34	\$54,849.59

Source: Lightcast Q1.2024





COMMUTING PATTERNS

Assessing the occupations within the County alone does not paint a complete picture of the labor force, however, as many members of the workforce commute into and out of the county for their jobs. Taken together, Tipton County has a net negative commuting pattern, meaning that more people commute out of the county for work than commute in.

According to 2021 estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, about 3,400 people live outside of Tipton County and travel into it for work; roughly 4,800 people live in Tipton County and travel beyond its border for work. On the whole, 1,400 fewer people travel into the county for work than travel out of it. Largely, this indicates that Tipton County is home to a significant number of workers from neighboring counties and communities. As such, a full assessment of the housing needs within the county will need to account for the population and employment conditions of those surrounding areas. Only about 25% of workers who live Tipton County also have jobs there.

Figure 7: Net Commuter Flow

Source: U.S. Census OnTheMap



It is worth noting that current commuter data is extremely difficult to acquire. The vintage of these estimates is 2021 because more recent data is not available. The incoming and outgoing commuter numbers in Figure 7 may have changed in the time between their calculation and this report, specifically due to the fact that an automotive plant has reported closed in the intervening months.

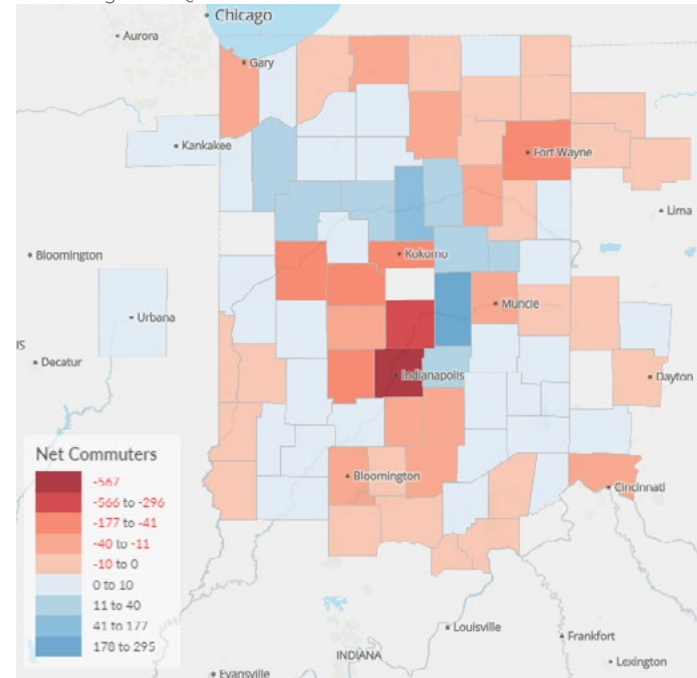
Commuters crossing county borders mostly flow into and out of Howard County, Hamilton County, Madison County, and Marion County.² Because workers move so fluidly across such a broad geography, the local economy is very closely connected to regional trends and developments. As surrounding communities – such as the Indianapolis metropolitan area and Kokomo – experience growth, Tipton County is positioned to capitalize on that growth in a way that benefits the local economy.

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U.S. Census Bureau. OnTheMap. <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>

Figure 8: Tipton County Commuting by Zip Code

Source: Lightcast Q1.2024





WAGES AND INCOME

As population, industry, and employment conditions change, both inside and outside the county, household earnings can be expected to change, as well. As a result, the market for housing will likely continue to shift. Definitions of affordability will continue to evolve, as well.

Figure 9 displays living wage estimates for Tipton County prepared by MIT Living Wage Calculations.³ In addition to these figures, this resource tracks typical expenses for families with one adult, two adults with one working, and two adult households, and from zero to three children. Living wage estimates are also compared to calculations for poverty wages for each scenario and the minimum wage in the area. According to this model, in a five-person household in Tipton County, two income earners would need to earn a combined household income of \$106,872 (\$96,221 after taxes) to comfortably support a family with three children. These figures are based on annual housing costs of an estimated \$13,510 (\$1,125/month) for a family of five.

Figure 9: 2024 Tipton County Living Wage Calculations

Source: MIT Living Wage Calculator, Feb. 2024

	0 Children	1 Child	2 Children	3 Children
LIVING WAGE: 1 ADULT HOUSEHOLD	\$19.64/hr. (\$40,851/yr.)	\$33.49 (\$69,659)	\$41.69 (\$86,715)	\$51.79 (\$107,723)
LIVING WAGE: 2 ADULTS (1 WORKING)	\$27.72 (\$57,658)	\$33.46 (\$69,597)	\$38.09 (\$79,227)	\$39.05 (\$81,224)
LIVING WAGE: 2 ADULTS (BOTH WORKING)	\$13.86 (\$28,829)	\$19.32 (\$40,185.60)	\$23.66 (\$49,212.80)	\$25.69 (\$53,435.20)

Figure 10 demonstrates the percent of Tipton County households by income bracket. It is worth noting that over 43% of all renter-occupied households are earning a household income of less than \$35,000 per year. This speaks to the significant need for affordable rental units in the county. Furthermore, even though nearly 40% of all owner-occupied households are earning over \$100,000 per year, some of the newest housing stock being built in Tipton City is still likely out of the affordability range for many of these families.

Figure 10: Household Income by Tenure

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2017-2022





WORKFORCE AFFORDABILITY

Although many Tipton County residents commute out of the county for their jobs, there are jobs in the county. A comparative analysis between earnings for these jobs and local housing costs can give further insight into the affordability for some of Tipton County’s most common occupations and the essential service workers that many residents depend on.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), a household that spend more than 30% of their household income on housing costs is considered “cost burdened.” This means that their housing costs are impacting their ability to comfortably pay for other essentials such as food, clothing, transportation, etc. It is important to note that housing costs include more than just rent or mortgage payments; other costs such as utilities, insurance, taxes, and HOA fees are included in this metric.

Figure 11: Percent of Monthly Income for Median Effective Rent in Tipton County

Source: ACS, Lightcast, Indiana Employment Relations Board, TPMA Calculations

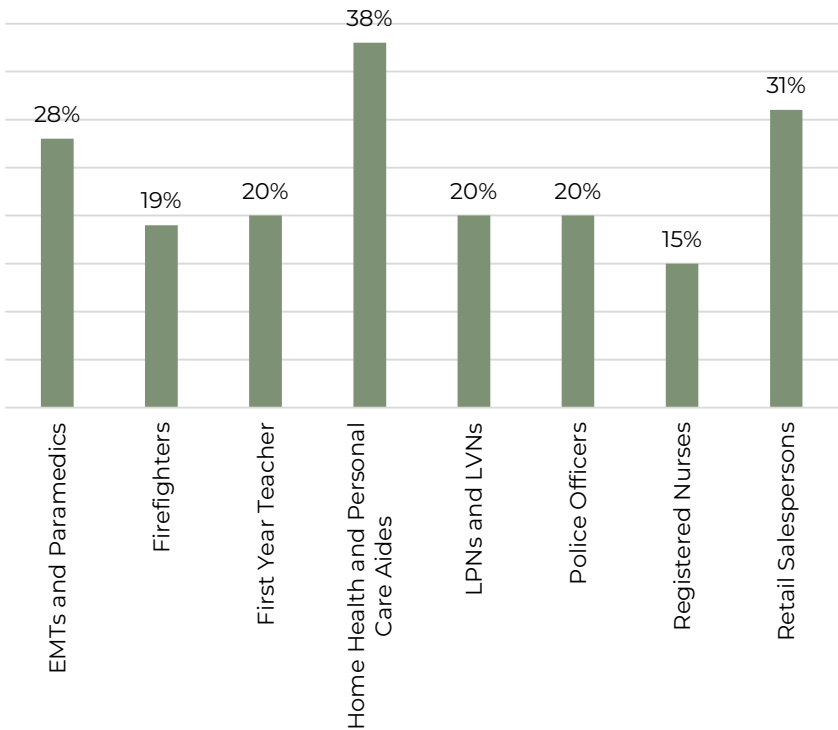


Figure 11 displays the percentage of earnings that would be required to pay median effective rent in Tipton County. The wages used to determine these figures are based on local estimates. While these figures do not display a complete picture of housing costs (as they are only the amount charged for rent) and only depict the income of a single earner (which does not necessarily equate to household income), these figures can help to determine the relative affordability concerns for workers in an area.

Figure 12: Median Monthly Earnings and Affordable Costs for Tipton County Occupations

Source: ACS, Lightcast

Occupation	Median Monthly Earnings	Affordable Monthly Housing Cost
EMTS AND PARAMEDICS	\$2,782.25	\$834.68
FIREFIGHTERS	\$4,130.66	\$1,239.20
FIRST YEAR TEACHER	\$3,804.58	\$1,141.38
HOME HEALTH AND PERSONAL CARE AIDES	\$2,037.62	\$611.28
LPNS AND LVNS	\$3,794.49	\$1,138.35
POLICE OFFICERS	\$3,932.77	\$1,179.83
REGISTERED NURSES	\$5,046.15	\$1,513.84
RETAIL SALESPERSONS	\$2,464.39	\$739.32

Figure 12 displays the median monthly earnings for the same occupations listed in Figure 11. Based on this number, the maximum monthly housing cost has been calculated to show the highest amount that each occupation could spend on mortgage/rent, utilities, and taxes.

Based on these calculations, while the cost of housing has been going up throughout Tipton County in recent years, housing has not necessarily become too expensive for the local workforce. To the extent that housing is an issue that is causing some workers to live outside of the county, that issue is more likely to be related to overall availability of housing (and in particular rental housing) than it is about the cost of what is available.

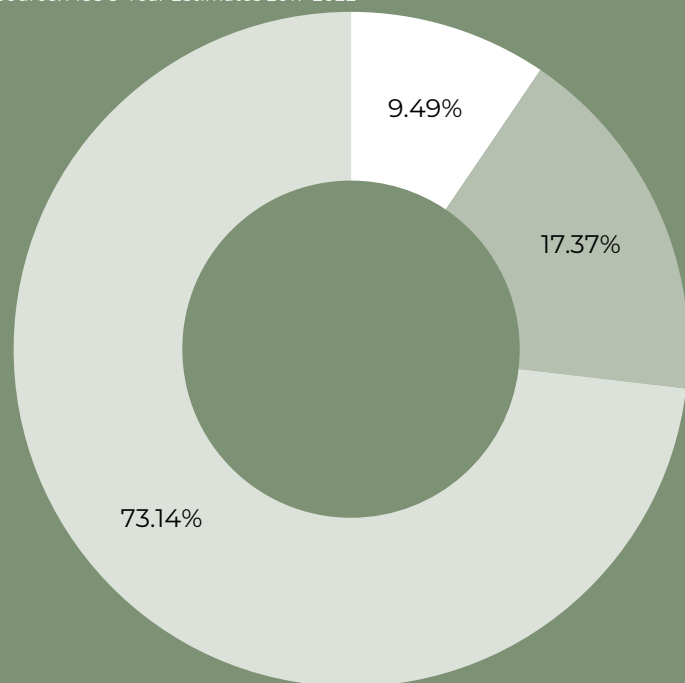


Existing Housing Stock

According to estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, there are roughly 6,800 housing units in Tipton County. Of those, 9.5% are vacant, leaving around 6,200 occupied units. Of the occupied housing, around 81% is owner-occupied and 19% is renter-occupied. While vacancy rates are relatively low throughout the county, an estimated 400 units are considered vacant for “other reasons” that may include condition of the structure.

Figure 13: 2022 Housing Units by Tenure

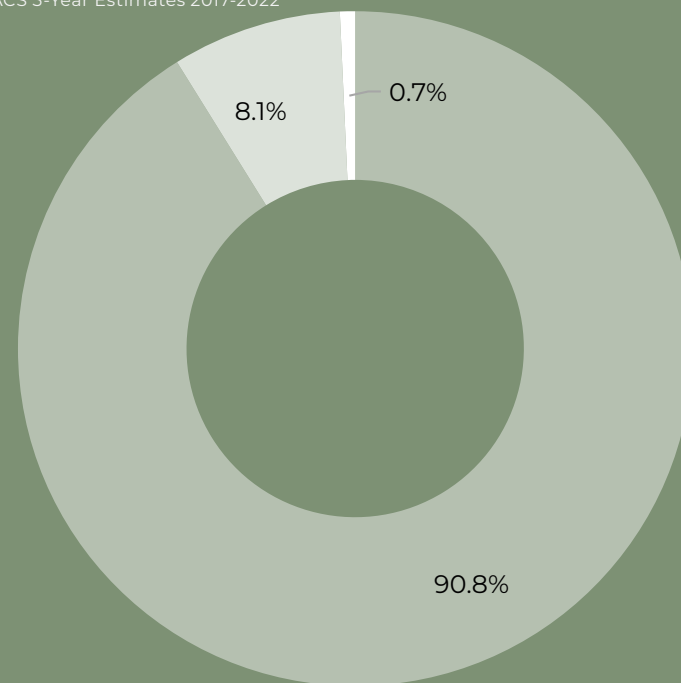
Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2017-2022



■ Vacant ■ Renter-Occupied ■ Owner-Occupied

Figure 14: Housing Mix by Density

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2017-2022



■ Single-Family ■ Medium-Density ■ High-Density



SINGLE FAMILY HOMES

The housing supply in Tipton County is overwhelmingly comprised of single-family, detached homes, of which there are an estimated 5,800. This ratio of single-family to higher-density housing types indicates that potential residents have a limited set of options if they are considering relocating into the county. Moreover, while many residents appreciate the “neighborhood feel” of communities filled primarily with low-density housing, communities with an imbalance of housing types have proven to be more susceptible to economic downturns. Overreliance on single-family housing can put communities throughout the county at greater risk.

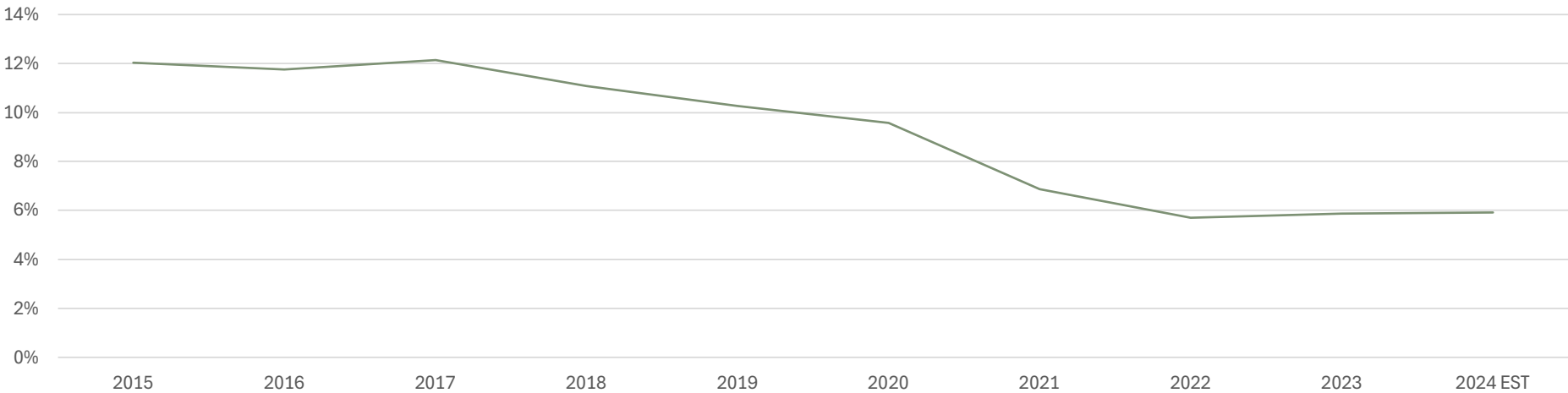
MULTIFAMILY

There are currently 8 multifamily developments in Tipton County, totaling 454 units. 259 (57%) units are apartments, and the remaining 195 (43%) units are mobile home park spaces. Multifamily vacancy rates have been decreasing over the past 10 years, suggesting an increase in demand that hasn’t been met with an increase in supply. There have been few multifamily developments built in the past 25 years, with 7 of the 8 existing developments built between 1960 and 1998⁴.



Figure 15: Multifamily Vacancy Trend

Source: CoStar Multifamily Data



4 Costar, 2024



AGE AND CONDITION OF HOUSING SUPPLY

A large share of the housing stock in Tipton County was built in 1939 or before. While older homes can add to the charming appeal of a community, it is often the case that older homes require a greater investment in general upkeep and repairs. That such a large portion of the local housing stock is more than 80 years old could mean that many homes in the area need significant revitalization.

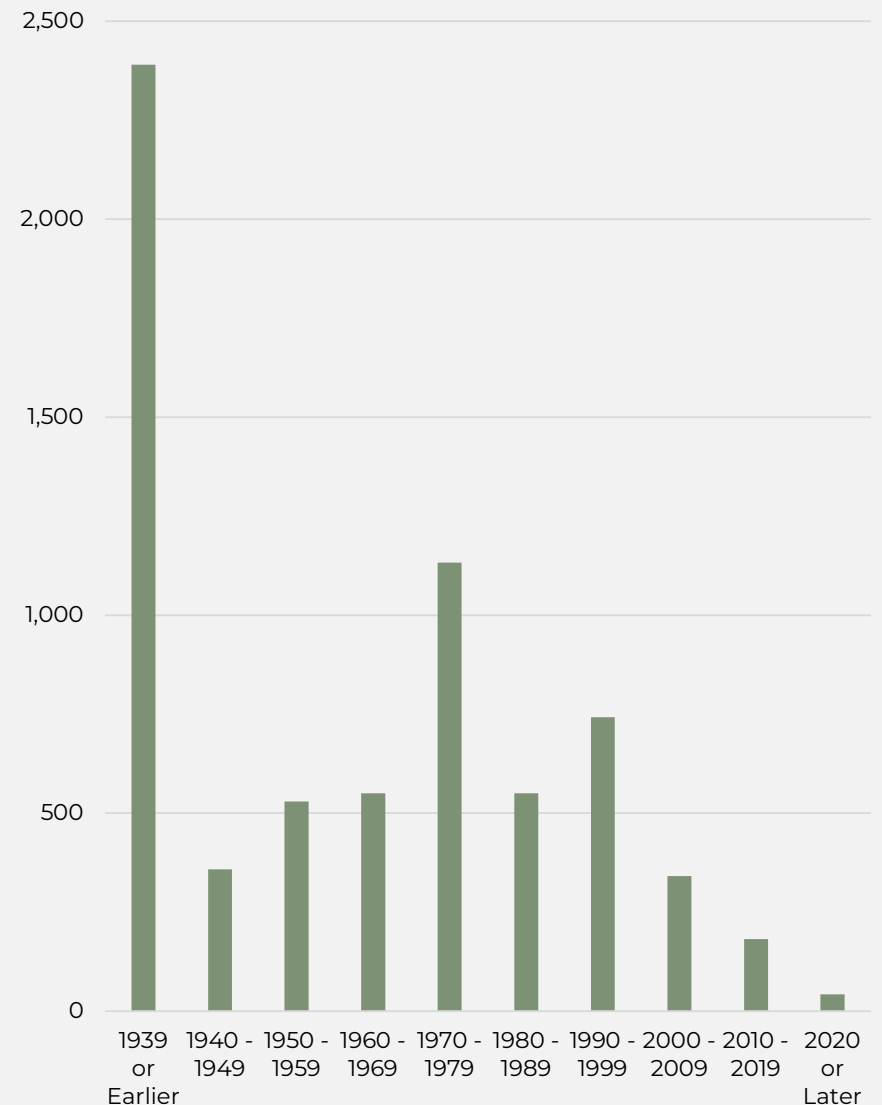
Few data and estimates exist relating to substandard housing structures. The U.S. Census Bureau only provides estimates for homes that lack complete plumbing or kitchen facilities, and does not provide any further evaluation of condition of the housing supply itself.

During a brief windshield tour of housing throughout the county, much of the housing stock appears to be well maintained. However, there are neighborhoods and areas throughout the county where housing conditions do appear in need of significant repair. In many instances, these structures are good candidates for infill redevelopment.



Figure 16: Tipton County Housing Units by Year Built

Source: ACS- 5-Year Estimates 2017-2022





Development Trends

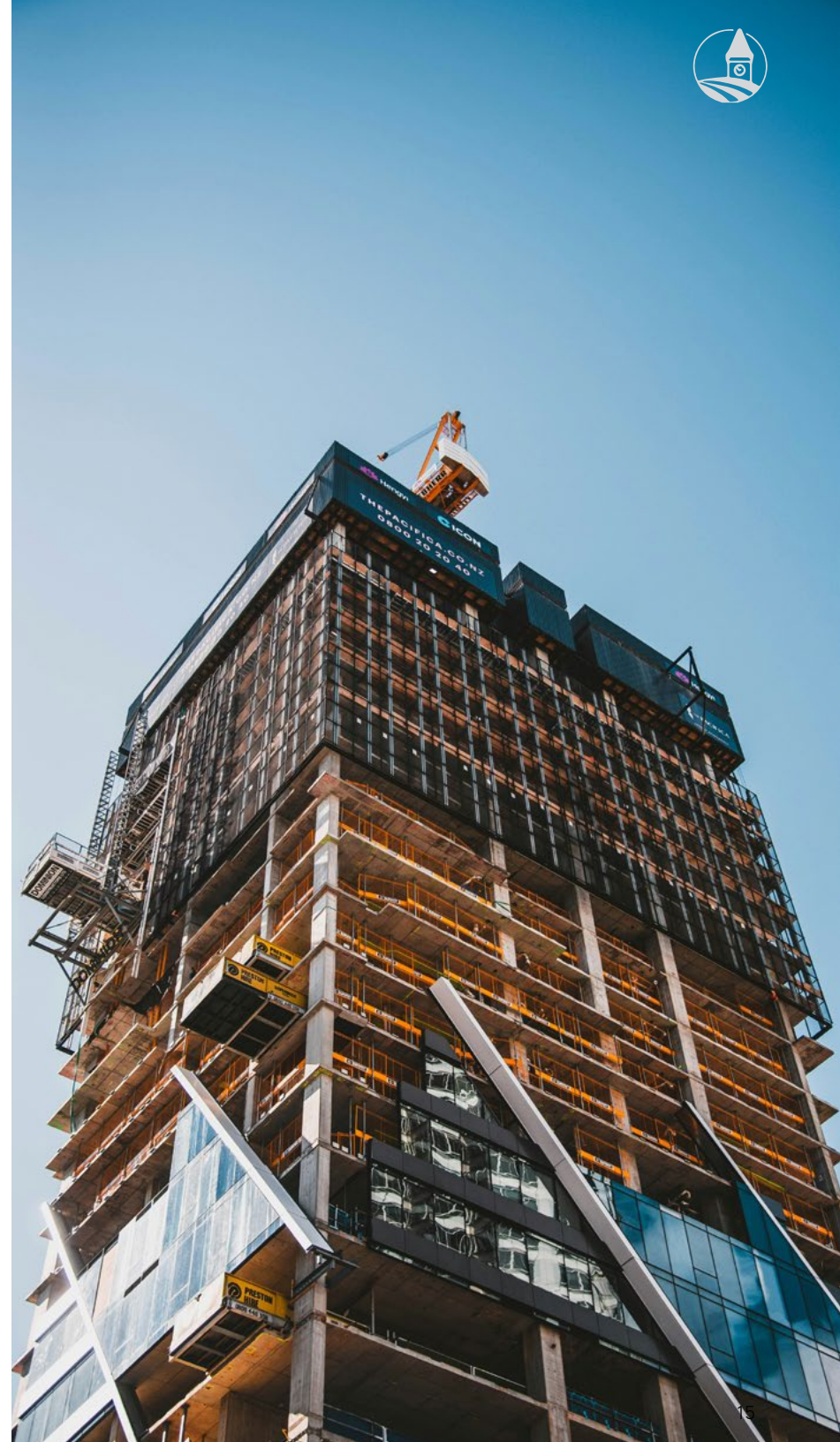
In recent years, there have been multiple instances of new residential development in Tipton County. Two large subdivisions of new single-family homes went through various planning stages, although neither of these plans were fully executed as initially intended. A third effort to develop affordable single-family homes for seniors was also never completed to its initial scope, but nonetheless appears to have been the most successful of the three planned single-family developments.

Despite the challenges faced by the two large subdivisions, there is still evidence of opportunity for specific types of residential development in the county. Smaller scale projects have proven successful, as have age-restricted rental opportunities. Using these successes as evidence of existing and markets, efforts to facilitate further development in multifamily and rental housing, in combination with continued emphasis on the needs for senior housing, are likely to continue to find success and increase the number of types of housing options in the county.

Figure 17: Tipton County Residential Building Permits by Unit Count

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Building Permit Survey

Year	Single-Family Permits	2+ Family Permits
2015	7	0
2016	7	0
2017	9	0
2018	25	0
2019	26	0
2020	28	0
2021	32	0
2022	30	0





RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

MARKET RATE HOUSING



BUTTONWOOD FIELD SUBDIVISION

Located on the southeast side of Tipton City, the Buttonwood Field Subdivision began construction of luxury single-family homes in the mid-to-late 2010s. Resting on one-third acre lots, many of the existing homes in the subdivision offer families three-to-four bedrooms and between 2,000 and 4,000 square feet of living space. Many also have estimated values between \$350,000 and \$400,000 according to realty websites such as Redfin.com and Realtor.com. However, many lots remain vacant and available for purchase years after developers began offering the land for sale, indicating a limited market for luxury homes in this price range. As such, plans for future expansion of this subdivision have been put on hold.



SMALL-SCALE DEVELOPMENT

Local developers are often more likely to be somewhat flexible in the types of housing they develop. For example, the small cluster of five units on two parcels at 222-232 East St. were developed in 2011 by a local developer. These units provide an alternative for individuals looking for something other than a single-family detached home. Duplexes and other middle-density options tend to serve a wider range of needs for those looking for housing. They are great opportunities for first-time homebuyers, renters, and seniors looking to downsize. Anecdotal accounts from local developers identify a significant demand for these types of developments.



ARBOR HOMES DEVELOPMENT (CANAL RUN)

Over the past few years, a number of efforts have been made to facilitate a subdivision development with the Arbor Homes Corporation to provide up to 340 more moderately priced single-family homes. A TIF district was created and City Council approved rezoning, but a financing gap continues to scuttle the initial plans for the development, perhaps related to the significant increase to construction costs over the past few years.

The completion Arbor Homes development could help lay the groundwork for other developers who are concerned about the Tipton market for new homes. However, large scale developments like the proposed Canal Run may not be the only answer for meeting the community's housing needs.



SENIOR AND AFFORDABLE DEVELOPMENT



HAND SENIOR RENTALS (331-340 SOUTHWOOD DR.)

The development, which was situated on Southwood Drive just east of the Tipton High School football field, utilized five vacant residential lots on a cul-de-sac. All prospective residents had to meet two criteria: they had to be 55 years of age or older and earn less than 60 percent of the area median income for Tipton County. Applications were being processed by South Bend-based Bradley Co., and residents were expected to be able to move in that month.

Funding totaling \$1.6 million for the project was secured from the Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority (IHCDA) and Lake City Bank. Originally conceived in 2019, IHCDA had granted HAND \$2 million to construct nine units on the site. However, the project's scope was later downsized after objections from neighbors. A judge's ruling dictated that the planned duplexes could not span plat lines, necessitating a rewrite of the project plan.



TIPTON SENIOR APARTMENTS

Tipton Senior Apartments, built in 2020, is located on the East side of Tipton on Jefferson Street. The property sits on 4.91 acres and includes 49 2-bedroom units. Units are 55+ age-restricted and dedicated affordable, with the asking rent set at \$645 as of March 2024. The development is near some local restaurants and retail, but transportation to these areas is still largely car reliant. As of March 2024, approximately 10% of units are vacant.



AVAILABLE HOMES

According to realty website Redfin.com, there are 34 residential listings available for sale in Tipton County as of the writing of this report. Of these, 11 are mobile homes in the Country Living mobile home park, 14 are land with no existing structures (seven are located in the Buttonwood Field subdivision), two are being offered for infill development, seven are single-family homes for sale (three of which are located in the City of Tipton). Another 16 homes are listed as "under contract" or "pending," a number of them are located in the north end of the county, near the Howard County line.

This is a remarkably small number of available homes, especially given the potential demand generated from Hamilton County to the south and Howard County to the north. For comparison, Elwood, Indiana is showing 19 homes currently for sale just beyond the county line in Madison County. There is evidence to suggest that demand exists for housing in Tipton County. This demand does not appear to be for homes listed at \$400,000 and above, however, there is reason to expect a significant market for other types of housing.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Efforts to evaluate and improve infrastructure access in targeted areas around Tipton County are already underway with the hopes of creating a more suitable environment for continued growth. While infill development in areas like the City of Tipton should continue to be an important feature of growth planning, the expansion of infrastructure will also help to encourage additional investments and developments throughout the county.

DRINKING WATER AND WASTEWATER

Some important infrastructure and capacity expansion projects are already underway. The City of Tipton, Tipton County, and Tipton Municipal Utilities are planning the update and expand capacity for drinking water and wastewater facilities to facilitate targeted development at the US-31 and SR-28 interchange. Impacts from drinking water projects will include increased storage capacity, water pressure improvement, and enhance fire-fighting capabilities.

A portion of region's READI funds are committed to extending wastewater infrastructure along the 5-mile corridor of SR-28 out to the interchange at US-31. This project will further improve this corridor as a target for industrial and residential development, creating opportunities for managed growth and improved connectivity between major roadways and the county seat.





HIGH-SPEED INTERNET ACCESS

One potential barrier to growth in Tipton County is access to reliable, high-speed internet. While broadband service in Tipton County is largely accessible, with 100% of county addresses offered reported speeds of 100/20mbps through a variety of technologies, as service tiers increase to 1000/100mbps, only 46% of residents are offered service, indicating that technologies used to provide broadband service may be out of date or not at close-range.

Fiber and fixed wireless are the most common broadband technologies being installed and offered to address gaps and are regarded the fastest and most effective infrastructure to achieve connectivity. Roughly 43% of the county is offered fiber, with the service concentrated in the City of Tipton, the middle-south border, and running along the US-31 corridor and up towards Kokomo.

Some areas of the county that are not connected through fiber still have access to the broadband internet speeds through fixed wireless. However, only 32% of the county is offered speeds of 100/20mbps through this technology. Most addresses that have access to fixed wireless broadband are offered the service at speeds of 25/3mbps. While this speed threshold can technically qualify as broadband, it is widely considered inadequate for the demands of digital life as streaming and work-from-home become commonplace.

Improvement of broadband infrastructure, especially along the northern areas of the county, could help position Tipton County to take advantage of job growth in areas around Kokomo.

Map Legend

Served Units Percentage

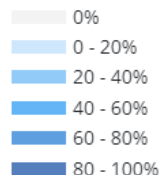


Figure 18: Map of $\geq 1000/100$ mbps internet speeds through fiber in Tipton County

Source: FCC National Broadband Map

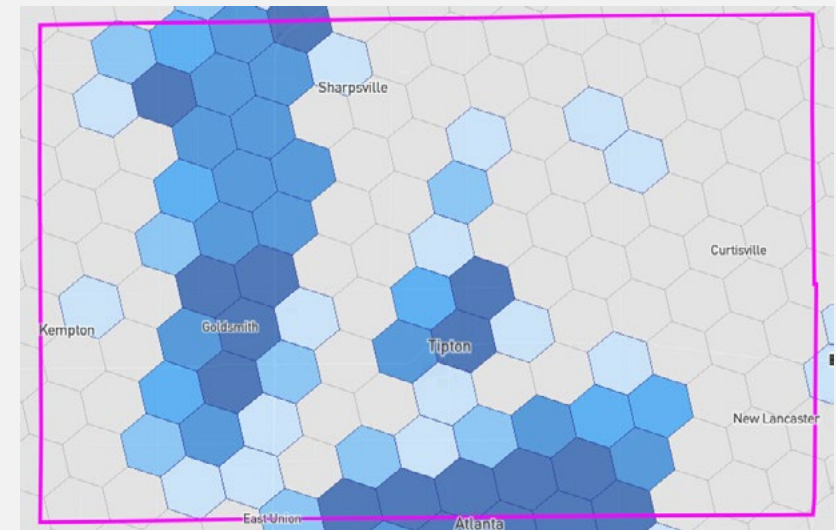
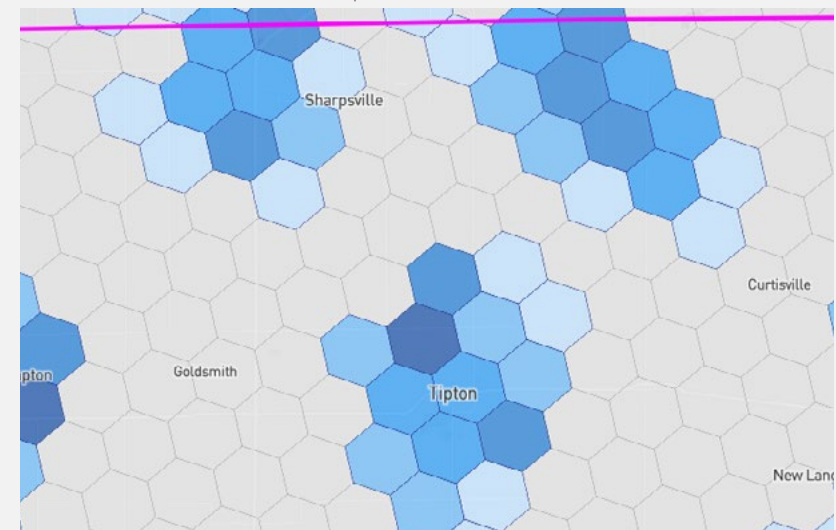


Figure 19: Map of $\geq 100/20$ mbps internet speeds through fixed wireless in Tipton County

Source: FCC National Broadband Map





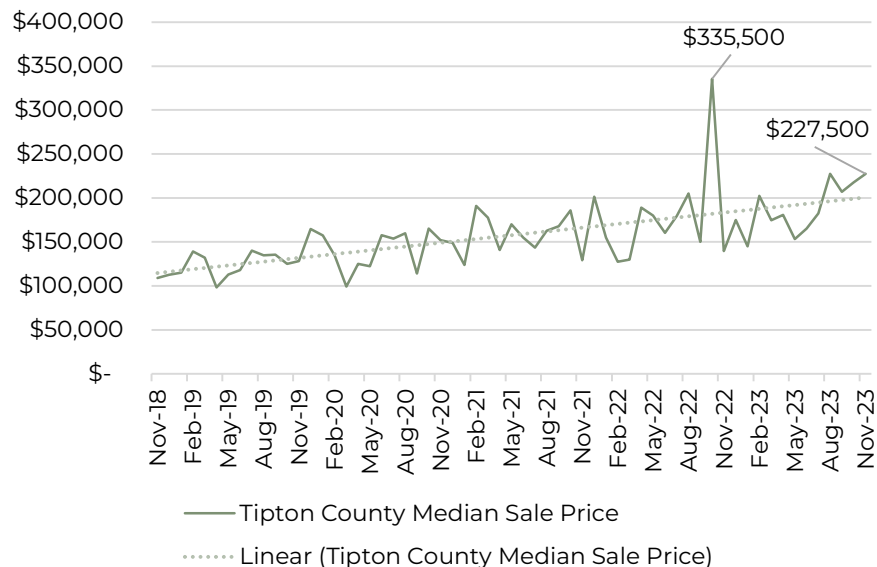
Housing Affordability

SALE PRICE

Home sale prices in Tipton County have been steadily increasing over the past five years and were already on the rise in the years leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic. In general, there are very few sales across the county in a given month. For example, the spike in the sale price during October 2022 was the result of only 13 homes sold. Low sales volume can lead to anomalies in the data. Nonetheless, the trendline shows a clear upward trajectory across the five years represented above, leading to a 108% increase in the median sales price over the period.

Figure 20: Median Home Sale Price Trends (11/2018-11/2023)

Source: Redfin.com

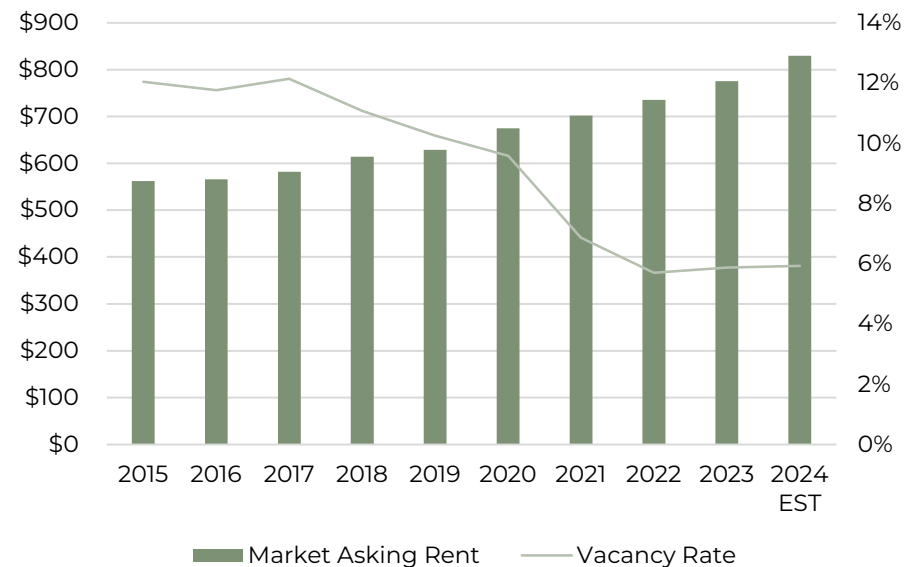


RENTAL COSTS

As Figure 17 shows, rental costs in Tipton County have increased steadily over the past decade, while vacancy rates have declined. This combination points to a mismatch of supply and demand in the multifamily market. Additionally, when paired with the fact that renters in the county are more than twice as likely as homeowners to be cost-burdened, the inelasticity of the market poses a threat – to renters in particular – of losing housing.

Figure 21: Multifamily Asking Rent and Vacancy Trends

Source: CoStar Multifamily Data





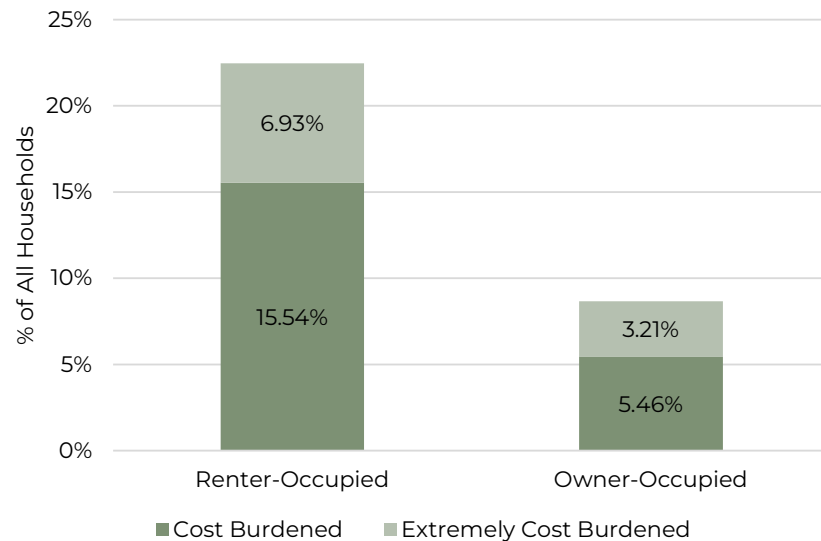
COST BURDEN

The Department of Housing and Urban Development defines a household as being “cost burdened” if it spends more than 30% of its income on housing costs. A household is designated as “extremely cost burdened” if more than 50% of its income is spent on housing costs.

In Tipton County, renters experience housing cost burden at higher rates than owners. As of 2022, approximately 22% of renter-occupied housing units were cost burdened; nearly 7% were extremely cost burdened, or spent more than 50% of their income on housing costs. This could indicate a lack of affordable rental housing in the county, relative to the local demand. Roughly 9% of owner-occupied housing units were cost burdened; 3.2% were extremely cost burdened.

Figure 22: Housing Cost Burden by Tenure

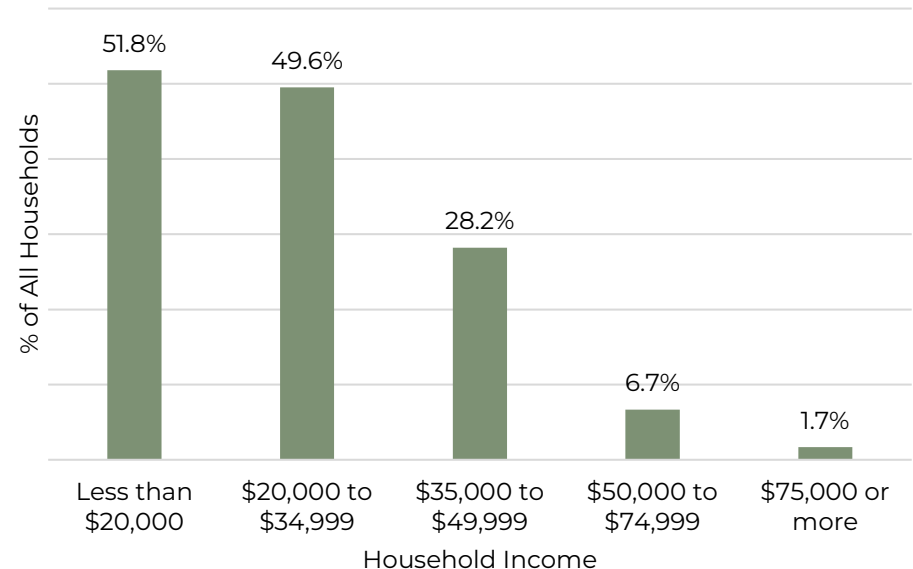
Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2017-2022



Lower-income households are more likely to experience cost burden than higher-earning households. In 2022, more than two thirds of households earning less than \$20,000 per year were cost burdened; nearly one half of households earning between \$20,000 and \$35,000 per year were cost burdened. As household income increases, the incidence of cost burden goes down. Less than 2% of households earning more than \$75,000 per year experience housing cost burden.

Figure 23: Housing Cost Burden by Household Income

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2017-2022



Residents of Tipton County spend a median of \$870 monthly on housing costs as of the 2022 American Community Survey; owner-occupied households spending a median \$897, and renter-occupied households spending a median of \$842. The median household income for owner-occupied households was \$80,397 in 2022, meaning the median household spent a little over 13% of their income on housing. The median household income for renter-occupied households was \$43,286 in 2022, meaning the median household spent about 23% of their income on housing costs.



Tapestry Segments

Esri's Tapestry Segmentation Profiles are a consumer analysis tool that identifies distinctive markets in the U.S. based on socioeconomic and demographic characteristics to provide a profile of area consumers. In essence, each tapestry provides consumer market profiles that categorize households based on their preferences for goods, leisure activities, and housing choice.

Using these household tapestry profiles, Tipton County can identify the broad categories of households already present in the area and gauge the types of development likely to attract target groups. The following are the tapestries that make up the households within Tipton County, as well as those located within a sixty-minute drive of Tipton County. This driving distance boundary was used to paint a picture of potential commuters into and out of the county. A detailed profile for each tapestry segment included in Figure 20 can be accessed by clicking the hyperlinks.



When reviewing these tapestry segments, a few things should be considered. First, only the population and household counts are updated each year. The entire Esri Tapestry Segmentation system is updated every three-to-five years, leading to potentially lagging estimates, such as median household income and median home values. This is particularly the case in rapidly shifting environments, such as the years since the pandemic during which income growth, home value, and housing preference and supply have undergone significant change. For context, the national median household income provided in the tapestry profiles below is listed at \$56,100, which is more in line with estimates from the mid-2010s. According to Census Bureau estimates, the 2022 national median household income was \$74,580.

Second, these tapestry segments should be viewed as one tool in a mosaic of estimates and tools used to evaluate the market in an area. They should not be considered, on their own, as depicting the full market or needs of a community; nor should they be considered any more accurate than other indicators. As was mentioned in the paragraph above, some of the financial estimates may not match the current, lived experience on the ground. Nonetheless, there are some aspects of these tapestry profiles that can provide some valuable insight into the market segments that make up the communities in and around Tipton County.⁵

⁵ It should also be noted that the titles given to the tapestry segments are created by Esri and not the producers of this report.



TAPESTRY PROFILES FOR GREATER TIPTON COUNTY REGION

To understand the markets in and around Tipton County, bands of tapestry segments are provided for the areas within the Tipton County boundary, and then 15-, 30-, and 60-minute drivetime radii. Figure 20 displays those radii as they appear on the map. The area that makes up a 60-minute drive time to Tipton County includes extends up from the outskirts of Lafayette to the west, up to Rochester to the north, just past Albany, IN to the east and includes most of the area inside the I-465 loop around Indianapolis to the south.

Figure 21 displays the percentage of the total market that is accounted for by each tapestry segment. As the total area increases, so does the diversity of the urban-suburban-smalltown-rural mix of the communities – as such, the concentration of each segment becomes diluted. Given Tipton County's location in reference to the large Indianapolis metropolitan area, and the relatively rural landscape of the rest of the state, the contrast at the 60-minute drivetime radius is quite stark and includes a wide range of communities and lifestyles.



Figure 24: Map Displaying 15-, 30-, and 60-Minute Drivetime Radii from Tipton County.

Source: Esri

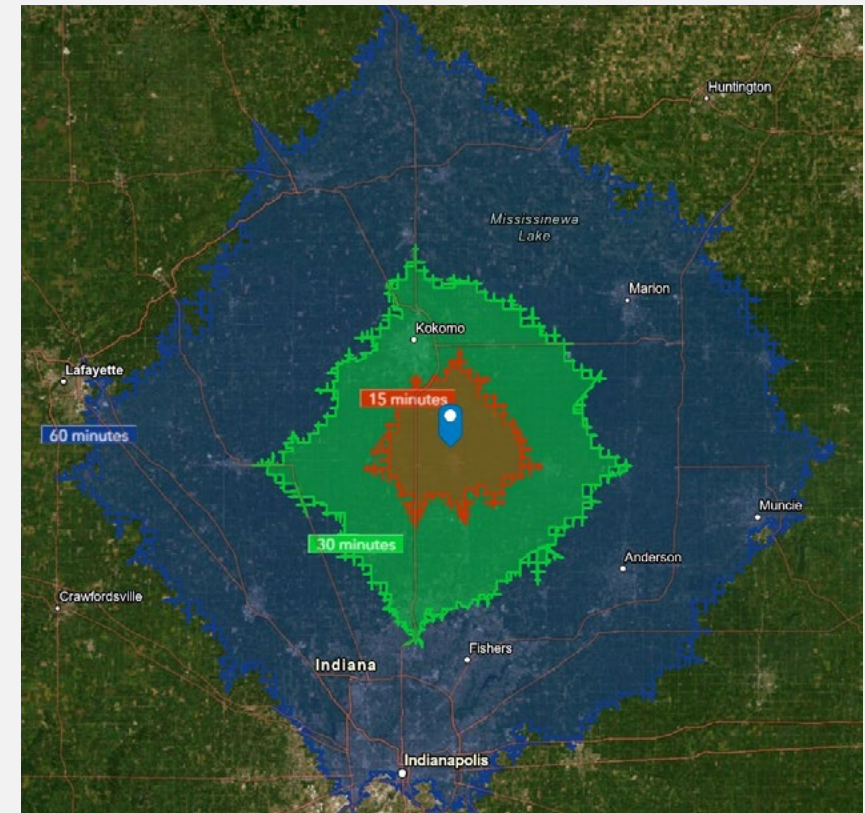




Figure 25: Tapestry Profile for Tipton County, 15-, 30-, and 60-minute drivetime radius

Source: ESRI Tapestry Profile Report

Tapestry Segment	Tipton County	Tipton County + 15-Min. Drive	Tipton County + 30-Min. Drive	Tipton County + 60-Min. Drive
<u>SALT OF THE EARTH</u>	43.1%	33.6%	10.9%	6.0%
<u>HEARTLAND COMMUNITIES</u>	33.2%	34.3%	9.6%	4.2%
<u>ROOTED RURAL</u>	7.9%	8.2%	<1%	<2.5%
<u>COMFORTABLE EMPTY NESTERS</u>	6.0%	6.1%	<1%	<2.5%
<u>SMALL TOWN SINCERITY</u>	4.9%	5.1%	4.3%	3.0%
<u>TRADITIONAL LIVING</u>	4.8%	5.8%	7.6%	7.4%
<u>RUSTBELT TRADITIONS</u>	-	5.3%	5.1%	3.1%
<u>GREEN ACRES</u>	-	1.1%	10.9%	3.5%
<u>MIDDLEBURG</u>	-	0.3%	6.3%	3.9%
<u>WORKDAY DRIVE</u>	-	-	12.0%	3.6%
<u>MIDLIFE CONSTANTS</u>	-	-	5.1%	4.1%
<u>HOMETOWN HERITAGE</u>	-	-	4.4%	6.8%
<u>BOOMBURBS</u>	-	-	1.8%	5.0%
<u>PROFESSIONAL PRIDE</u>	-	-	-	4.6%

The predominant tapestry segments in Tipton County are “Salt of the Earth” and “Heartland Communities.” These tapestry segments are characterized by median incomes at or below the national median and median age above the national median. The “Rooted Rural” segment is much smaller than the two largest segments, is slightly older, and has a higher propensity to own their housing, but is also more likely to reside in a mobile home. Finally, the “Comfortable Empty Nesters” make up about six percent of the county population, have higher incomes, and are most likely to own a single-family home.

Figure 26: Detail of Top Tapestries in Tipton County

Source: ESRI Tapestry Profiles

	Median Age	Median Household Income	% Own	% Rent	Typical Housing
<u>SALT OF THE EARTH</u>	44.1	\$56,300	83.1%	16.9%	Single Family
<u>HEARTLAND COMMUNITIES</u>	42.3	\$42,400	69.4%	30.6%	Single Family
<u>ROOTED RURAL</u>	45.2	\$42,300	79.8%	20.2%	Single Family Mobile Homes
<u>COMFORTABLE EMPTY NESTERS</u>	48.0	\$75,000	86.9%	13.1%	Single Family

6 The sum of the percentages provided may not equal 100% due to rounding errors with the data that is provided by Esri.



Moving slightly outside of Tipton County, the top four tapestry segments remain the same. However, some additional tapestry segments begin to emerge that are typically younger and with lower household incomes. Generally, the propensity to rent their home greatly increases with these segments. The “Traditional Living” segment remains the steadiest throughout the 60-minute drivetime radius, representing between 4.8 and 7.6 percent of all four geographic circles represented in the following tables.

Figure 27: Detail of Top Additional Tapestries within 15-Minute Drive of Tipton

County Source: ESRI Tapestry Profiles

	Median Age	Median Household Income	% Own	% Rent	Typical Housing
<u>SMALL TOWN SINCERITY</u>	40.8	\$31,500	49.7%	50.3%	Single Family
<u>TRADITIONAL LIVING</u>	35.5	\$39,300	58.9%	41.1%	Single Family
<u>RUSTBELT TRADITIONS</u>	39.0	\$51,800	71.2%	28.8%	Single Family

Seen in Figure 24, the tapestry composition begins to shift significantly when a 30-minute drive time is included. Younger, and more affluent tapestries begin to emerge, including those who choose to live in the suburban periphery of suburban areas. These are more characterized by families and those with longer trans-county commute times.

Figure 28: Detail of Top Additional Tapestries within 30-Minute Drive of Tipton County:

Source: ESRI Tapestry Profiles

	Median Age	Median Household Income	% Own	% Rent	Typical Housing
<u>Workday Drive</u>	37.0	\$90,500	84.9%	15.1%	Single Family
<u>Green Acres</u>	43.9	\$76,800	86.1%	13.9%	Single Family
<u>Middleburg</u>	36.1	\$59,800	73.4%	26.6%	Single Family

As such, there are a wide range of tapestry segments that make up the markets in this large area. Much of the new population in this area is younger than the pervious mix of tapestry segments. There is a split between high- and low-end wage earners in this radius, as is there a split between renters and homeowners.

Figure 29: Detail of Top Additional Tapestries within 60-Minute Drive of Tipton County

Source: ESRI Tapestry Profiles

	Median Age	Median Household Income	% Own	% Rent	Typical Housing
<u>Hometown Heritage</u>	32.4	\$28,200	40.0%	60.0%	Single Family
<u>Boomburbs</u>	34.0	\$113,400	84.0%	16.0%	Single Family
<u>Professional Pride</u>	40.8	\$138,100	91.6%	8.4%	Single Family



Analysis

Although Tipton County does not necessarily have a housing affordability issue similar to many other areas of the country, there are housing issues present. Limited supply, an aging housing stock, and the lack of new and varied residential developments are combining with market pressures from outside the county. These factors are resulting in rising housing costs, shrinking schools, an aging population, and a lack of economic sustainability.

PLANNING FOR FUTURE WORKFORCE AND HOUSING NEEDS

As the sections above demonstrate, Tipton County is home to many residents who find work outside of the county. As such, recent trends in surrounding areas are likely to continue to have a significant impact on the housing market. In order to position themselves to maximize the benefits from the growing areas to the north and the south, Tipton County and its municipalities should aim to develop the types of housing that will attract new residents and commuters.



KOKOMO EV PLANT

Announced in October of 2023, Stellantis and Samsung SDI are in the process of establishing a multi-billion-dollar electric vehicle battery plant in Kokomo, set to be a \$3.2 billion investment. This significant addition builds upon the facility announced in May 2022, reinforcing Kokomo's stature as a central hub for advanced battery production within the electric vehicle industry. The new facility is projected to bring 1,400 new jobs, with production set to begin in early 2027. The total investment is projected to be over \$6.3 billion and generate 2,800 new jobs in the region⁷.

As jobs are added to the Kokomo region, municipalities throughout Tipton County (and particularly those in the northern parts of the county) should make efforts to seize on the potential influx of residents and maximize the benefits to the local economy by developing both for-sale and for-rent housing options that are affordable and desirable for the new workforce in the area.

REGIONAL GROWTH

The Indianapolis metropolitan area has shown continued growth in recent years, extending its footprint further and further north into Hamilton County. The rising demand in the area has had a significant impact on the cost of housing. In April of 2022, the median sale price for a home in Hamilton County surpassed \$400,000 and has continued to rise since. By the peak of the summer season in July of 2023, the median sale price was nearly \$450,000. These sharp increases have already begun to push people into more affordable regions further away from Indianapolis, and have likely led to the small population gains in Tipton County in recent years.

While efforts to curb the rising cost of housing are taking place throughout the Indianapolis area, these trends are expected to continue in the coming years as more and more of the large generation of "millennials" continues to overwhelm the housing market. Tipton should aim to attract those households that are being priced out of the market in Hamilton County by increasing its housing supply and creating a variety of housing that is more affordable than expensive and nearby Carmel and Fishers.

⁷ Stellantis Press Release, October 2023 <https://www.stellantis.com/en/news/press-releases/2023/october/stellantis-samsung-sdi-announce-kokomo-indiana-as-site-for-second-us-starplus-energy-gigafactory>



PLANNING FOR AN AGING POPULATION AND HOUSING STOCK

The county's residents are aging. Relatively low vacancy in the Tipton Senior Apartments points to a high demand for senior-friendly options. As individuals age, they are often faced with a difficult choice to either stay in their homes that were appropriately sized for raising a family or to seek out a type of housing that meets their desires to "age in place."

A lack of options for comfortable aging in place is a significant issue for communities like those in Tipton County. First, a variety of options are needed for seniors who can present a wide range of housing needs. While some seniors are interested in moving into age-restricted multifamily housing like those in Tipton Senior Apartments, that is not the ideal choice for many. However, a lack of "downsizing options" might leave people feeling that their only option is to stay in their current homes. Second, as residents age, they are often unable to perform the same household and property maintenance that they were able to handle in earlier life stages. This can lead to dilapidated and poorly maintained housing stock. Third, retirement often means a lack of financial flexibility for many senior households. The rising cost to purchase or rent a home can eliminate options for those who already own their home outright but are on a fixed income. Income- and age-restricted housing like those developed by HAND can fill a number of important gaps in a community's housing supply. Plans to create more of these homes were reversed due to public opposition.



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF TIPTON COUNTY

The demand for housing that meets the needs of seniors who wish to "age in place" further contributes to the strain on the existing supply of homes. The creation of smaller single-family and medium-density homes can accomplish a number of housing-related goals including providing starter homes and downsizing options for those seniors who may not wish to have a lot of maintenance but have limited options for finding more manageable housing. When seniors have options to downsize, the selling of their homes creates more opportunities for incoming families to buy and renovate the existing homes in a community. This churn in the housing market typically maintains a higher quality of existing housing and provides options for new families to relocate into an area,

Until recent years, the lack of incoming families has led to the decrease in population of school-age children. The development of smaller homes will not only provide downsizing options for seniors, but also options for younger families and first-time homebuyers. Anecdotes of area schools shutting down portions of their buildings due to lack of students and teachers do not portend economic sustainability for the coming years.



Strategic Framework

Tipton County can embrace the possibilities of a growing market by working to meet the housing needs of the area workforce and leveraging the allure of a relative low cost of living. To do so, county and local leadership should encourage the expansion of the regional housing stock by increasing the overall supply and creating a wider variety of housing options, including smaller homes, mixed-use development, and additional rental opportunities. This can all be accomplished without significantly altering the sense of history and community that residents throughout the county have come to love.

Goal 1:

Encourage residential development of a wider variety to meet the needs of an aging community and unlock the market for incoming homebuyers and renters.

Tipton County and the municipalities therein should facilitate the expansion of the housing supply through the development of mixed-income housing options, incorporating a blend of starter homes and multi-family residences. This could be accomplished through collaboration with local stakeholders and housing developers who possess a deep understanding of the local market and its unique needs and are more likely to develop a wider variety of housing types than are larger developers. Incentives such as zoning modifications or tax abatement can further encourage a more diverse and equitable housing stock.

Exploring opportunities to create additional rental housing options is also crucial to meet the evolving needs of the community. By engaging with local stakeholders, including developers, investors, and housing agencies, it is possible to identify underutilized land or properties suitable for rental development.

Furthermore, Tipton County should prioritize the preservation and rehabilitation of existing affordable housing stock, ensuring that these properties remain accessible to its workforce. This could involve initiatives to improve energy efficiency, address maintenance issues, and provide financial assistance for renovations. Leveraging resources from organizations like the USDA or state housing authorities can provide funding support for such initiatives.

Overall, by adopting a comprehensive approach that integrates workforce affordability considerations into housing policies and initiatives, Tipton County can effectively meet the diverse housing needs of its residents while promoting economic stability and community well-being.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| STRATEGY 1.1 | Convene network of local developers to identify opportunities to facilitate small-scale development |
| STRATEGY 1.2 | Leverage lessons learned to encourage development of smaller single-family or middle-density housing units |
| STRATEGY 1.3 | Conduct review of existing housing stock and parcels to identify vacancies and/or blighted parcels in single family neighborhoods |
| STRATEGY 1.4 | Encourage infill redevelopment through incentive packages |
| STRATEGY 1.5 | Review existing land use and zoning policies to identify and alleviate barriers to mid- to high-density multifamily development, including apartments and townhomes |
| STRATEGY 1.6 | Continue to partner with non-profit organizations and community foundations to develop dedicated affordable housing for moderate- and low-income seniors and non-seniors |
| STRATEGY 1.7: | Continue to seek out funding opportunities to enhance housing and community development efforts |

Goal 2:

Update existing assets to improve “sense of place” and create attractive destinations

Throughout the county, there exist many underutilized assets and opportunities to create attractive destinations to attract new residents and visitors alike. Improved signage and gateways to cities and downtown areas could go a long way to improving the attractiveness of the area.

Tipton County and city governments should partner to pursue a Main Street Proposal through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This grant could be used to enhance mixed-use development, particularly focusing on revitalizing downtown areas by converting obsolete commercial spaces into affordable housing options. Additionally, HUD's Facade Program could serve as a complementary initiative to further enhance the revitalization efforts. By leveraging both the Main Street Proposal and the Facade Program, Tipton County can undertake a comprehensive approach to revitalizing its downtown, fostering economic growth, and creating a more inviting environment for residents and visitors alike.

Continuing to leverage the rich history and beauty of many of the region's buildings should also be a major focus as municipalities throughout the county continue to adapt and change. It is critical that the history of the area be preserved and celebrated. Partnering with organizations such as Indiana Landmarks could help in the restoration and protected uses of some of the historic structures that are central to the area's “sense of place.”

While it is unlikely that the former County Jail and Sheriff's Home are to be redeveloped for residential uses, there are potential uses for this property to enhance the City of Tipton's status as a destination for visitors. Throughout the state of Indiana, former sheriff's houses have been repurposed as mini-tourist attractions and museums. Even if the county should choose to utilize portions of the building for other public uses, portions of the building could be developed for similar purposes.

STRATEGY 2.1

Encourage and expand mixed-use development in historic downtown Tipton by encouraging the addition of residential units above existing downtown commercial buildings

STRATEGY 2.2

Encourage the creation of improved signage and “gateways” to the City of Tipton along State Routes 28 and 19

STRATEGY 2.3

Seek out funding opportunities and partnerships for historic preservation and revitalization efforts



Goal 3:

Work to foster pro-growth environment with local municipalities and county residents

Throughout the process of research and discovery for this report, the project team encountered numerous anecdotes of local resistance to change from residents and local leadership. Although this resistance is clearly not shared by everyone, those who continue to voice it seem to have achieved the intended effect of hampering efforts to adapt to the changing needs of the communities in and around the county. Ultimately, however, change is coming to Tipton County.

As was discussed in previous sections of this report, the world around the county continues to evolve – and with this evolution will come market forces that will inevitably alter the local landscape whether they are welcomed by residents or not. As such, the best thing that can happen for the county and its municipalities is to plan accordingly – establish a vision for the future and adopt strategies to realize it.

The communities that have best handled the pressures that come with regional growth have done so by reaching out to their residents, collaborating across municipalities and community organizations, and working together to identify approaches that preserve the unique character of their communities while anticipating and preparing for growth. Outright resistance to market forces will do less to ensure that Tipton County remains the same than will appropriate steps to prepare for them.

STRATEGY 3.1

Work with local municipalities, especially those in the northern areas of the county, to plan for balanced growth that maintains the unique character of these communities while expanding housing and infrastructure

STRATEGY 3.2

Develop public education campaign to communicate importance of adapting to changing environment, debunk myths about affordable housing, and promote support for new trails projects





TIPTON COUNTY

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