

# Housing needs assessment tool

## Use data to explore local housing needs and challenges

This tool illustrates ways to use generally available data to assess your local housing needs.

This tool shows how to use data to better understand and document your local housing needs. For each of the housing needs being explored, it identifies key data points that are relatively easy to gather from generally available data sources.

It also provides an example of how to display the data using a figure/chart/map/etc. and how to organize these “visualizations” into a narrative to address key aspects of your local housing needs. Instructions for how to create each of these visualizations using data on your local situation can be accessed directly by clicking on the visualizations themselves or in [Visualizations](#).

## Analyze these areas of potential housing need

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Adequacy of housing production

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### Key data points

[How much has employment and the adult population grown in recent years compared to the housing stock?](#)

[How tight is the rental market as measured by the rental vacancy rate?](#)

[How many households are severely crowded and how has this changed over time?](#)

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### Prototypical presentation: a New York City example

[Adequacy of housing production](#)

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Dedicated affordable housing

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### Key data points

[How many of your rental units were built under a government program that required rent and income restrictions in exchange for a government benefit?](#)

[How many of these dedicated affordable rental units will expire out of affordability requirements within the next few years?](#)

[Where are they located?](#)

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**Prototypical presentation: a New York City example**

[Dedicated affordable housing](#)

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Homeownership affordability

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**Key data points**

[How many households own their homes?](#)

[What share of homeowners are housing cost burdened and has the share increased over time?](#)

[How have home prices changed compared to changes in median household income?](#)

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**Prototypical presentation: a New York City example**

[Homeownership affordability](#)

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Housing stock characteristics

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**Key data points**

[How old is the housing stock?](#)

[What is the condition of the housing stock and how does it vary across neighborhoods?](#)

[How at-risk of flooding is the housing stock?](#)

[How well does the distribution of unit sizes match the distribution of household size?](#)

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**Prototypical presentation: a New York City example**

[Housing stock characteristics](#)

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Neighborhood variations

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**Key data points**

[How is poverty concentrated by neighborhood?](#)

[How are people of different races and ethnicities segregated by neighborhood?](#)

[How does median rent vary by neighborhood?](#)

[How have rent increases varied across neighborhoods?](#)

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**Prototypical presentation: a New York City example**

[Neighborhood variations](#)

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Rental affordability

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**Key data points**

[How important are renters as a share of households?](#)

[What share of renter households are moderately or severely rent burdened and have these shares increased over time?](#)

[How does the share of renters that are burdened vary across incomes and have these shares increased over time?](#)

[How significant is the shortage of rental units affordable to low- and moderate-income households?](#)

[Has the stock of affordable rental units been growing or falling?](#)

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### **Prototypical presentation: a New York City example**

[Rental affordability](#)

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Rental stock for seniors

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### **Key data points**

[How large is the senior population and how fast is it growing \(or projected to grow\)?](#)

[How much of the housing stock is appropriately sized and accessible for seniors living alone?](#)

[What is the poverty rate among the senior population?](#)

[To what extent are senior households rent burdened?](#)

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### **Prototypical presentation: a New York City example**

[Rental stock for seniors](#)

## **Related resources**

[Massachusetts Housing Partnership's \*Housing Toolbox\*](#)

This resource from the Center for Housing Data at the Massachusetts Housing Partnership contains Massachusetts-specific information about housing policy as well as more general state-level ideas and tools.

[Center for Community Progress' \*Neighborhoods by Numbers: An Introduction to Finding and Using Small Area Data\*](#)

This easy-to-use, color coded book walks you through how to find, understand, and use key local and national datasets.