

# Areas of Focus

GREATER SEACOAST COMMUNITY HEALTH



The information on this page provides background information on the topics discussed today. As you listen to the information and stories our panel and speakers share, please keep these facts in mind.

## Housing

- A balanced and healthy rental market should have a vacancy rate of 5% to 6%
- In 2023, the average vacancy rate in Strafford County for a 2 bedroom unit was 0.06% and the median gross rent was \$1,764
- Nowhere in NH has a vacancy rate above 1% at this time
- New Hampshire has not seen a vacancy rate at or above 5% since 2009
- As of June 2023, costs for a single-family home in NH reached a median sales price of \$499,000, an increase of 50.9% from June 2020
- For housing to qualify as "affordable," expenses like rent and utilities for renters, and mortgage, property taxes, and insurance for homeowners shouldn't surpass 30% of a household's gross annual income - Anything beyond that is considered cost burdened
- 31% of homeowners and 44% of renters are considered cost burdened in Strafford County
- 27% of households are low-income in Strafford County
- The Consumer Price Index (CPI) in New England has increased by 7.4% from Sept 2021 to Sept 2022 with the highest increases in gas, shelter, and food (target inflation rate is 2% per year)

## Mental Health, Behavioral Health & Substance Use Disorder

- 221,000 adults in New Hampshire have a mental health condition
- In New Hampshire, 57,000 adults have a serious mental illness
- In February 2021, 37.7% of adults in New Hampshire reported symptoms of anxiety or depression. 17% were unable to get needed counseling or therapy
- Of the 70,000 adults in New Hampshire who did not receive needed mental health care, 41.7% did not because of cost
- 92,510 people in New Hampshire live in a community that does not have enough mental health professionals
- 15,000 Granite Staters age 12–17 have depression
- 56.6% of Granite Staters age 12–17 who have depression did not receive any care in the last year

## Transportation

- As of 2024, there are 8 local public transit systems in New Hampshire, serving just over 30 cities and towns. The estimated annual economic impact of their operations across the state is >\$95M
- The Strafford region has two public bus transportation systems, the Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation (COAST) system and UNH Wildcat Transit
- In Strafford County, the COAST system serves Farmington, Rochester, Somersworth, Dover, and Newmarket. The Wildcat system serves Durham, Dover, and Madbury. Both also serve neighboring communities in Rockingham County
- According to 2021 overall funding levels for public transportation, including state and federal funding, New Hampshire ranked 42nd in the nation (Source: AASHTO)
- Data collected in New Hampshire between 2016 and 2020 show people with lower incomes made greater use of public transit
- Just over \$2.28M was included in the SFY24/25 State Budget for public transit operations. Equating to an annual per capita investment of roughly \$1.60

## Public Transit Funding in New England States (2021)

State	2021 Total State Funding (Capital & Operations)	2021 Population	2021 Total State Funding Per Capita	2021 State Funding for Operations	State Funding for Operations Per Capita
Massachusetts	\$ 3,500,346,557	6,989,690	\$ 500.79	Not available	Not available
Connecticut	\$ 686,953,248	3,623,355	\$ 189.59	\$ 450,953,248	\$ 124.457
Rhode Island	\$ 52,453,123	1,096,985	\$ 47.82	\$ 51,014,132	\$ 46.504
Vermont	\$ 9,877,554	646,972	\$ 15.27	\$ 15,940,777	\$ 24.639
Maine	\$ 20,549,502	1,377,238	\$ 14.92	\$ 19,007,834	\$ 13.801
<b>New Hampshire **</b>	<b>\$ 459,401 *</b>	<b>1,387,505</b>	<b>\$ 0.33</b>	<b>\$ 5,671</b>	<b>\$ 0.004</b>
	<b>National Average</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>71.16</b>		
	<b>National Median (Iowa)</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>5.70</b>		

\* Includes \$5,671 of NH Turnpike Toll Revenues used for short-term Spaulding Turnpike construction mitigation project that ended.

\*\* For the first time in over a decade, the 2020-21 NH State Budget allocated \$200k/yr. to support public transit operations. State funding however was frozen and not distributed during SFY21 and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: AASHTO 2023 Survey of State Funding for Public Transportation