



MIDLAND HOUSING INSIGHTS

Data from:

Bowen National Research
Housing Needs Assessment:
Region G (East Central)
Michigan. 2025



**HOUSING
FORWARD**



Housing Forward Message

At Housing Forward, we believe housing is a cornerstone of economic growth. Local employers need stable, attainable housing to attract and retain talent. Families need homes to build strong foundations. Communities thrive when housing options reflect the needs of people at every income level and life stage.

“When people who work here can live here, businesses thrive and communities become stronger. Housing is foundational to any region’s economic competitiveness,” Nicole Wilson, Vice President of Economic Development, Midland Business Alliance

Housing Forward is more than a collection of data points—it’s a shared commitment to practical, community-based solutions. Guided by research and built on collaboration, this initiative addresses Midland County’s housing challenges through both development and rehabilitation.

We thank the Midland Area Community Foundation and the Strosacker Foundation for their generous support. Their investment is helping turn vision into action.

Join us in building a stronger, more resilient Midland County—one home at a time.

Jenifer Acosta



40% of regional employers report hiring challenges due to housing



\$3.8 billion in regional projects creating over 2,200 jobs.

\$45,480

Wage needed for rent in the region is \$45,480. Only 34.3% of the top 35 occupations can afford market rent.

\$70,500

Wage needed for ownership in the region is \$70,500. Only 11.4% of workers can afford to buy a home on a single household income.



Housing Forward

A community-based initiative of the Midland Business Alliance to holistically approach and implement solutions to develop and rehabilitate **attainable** housing throughout Midland County.



Population

- Population 83,486 (stable through 2029)
- Households 35,062 projected by 2029 (+1.1%)

Trends

- Median Income \$80,852 (projected \$92,357 by 2029) 13% above state median
- 78.9% owners | 21.1% renters

Housing Costs



Home Prices are Outpacing Incomes

The median home price in Midland County is approximately \$235,000, while the typical household can afford closer to \$200,000.



Rental Options are Decreasing - and More Expensive

Rental costs are increasing, while the number of rental households is projected to decline by 7.2%. With over 31% of renters earning less than \$25,000, affordable housing options are increasingly out of reach.



Aging Housing Stock Increases Affordability Pressure

Nearly 40% of homes in Midland County were built before 1970. As these homes age, the need for repairs rises, pushing maintenance costs onto homeowners already struggling to afford housing.

“Housing is economic infrastructure—just like roads or broadband. Without a range of local housing options, our ability to grow and retain talent is limited, no matter how strong our job market is.”

-Tony Stamas, President & CEO, Midland Business Alliance



WORK FORCE

The top 5 employment sectors for Midland County are: Health Care & Social Assistance, Manufacturing, Retail Trade, Accommodation & Food Service, and Educational Services. Our employment base is over 37,500 individuals and these 5 sectors represent 66.1% of the County's employment base.

Can Midland Workers Afford to Live Here?

	PRODUCTION OCCUPATIONS	RETAIL SUPERVISORS	ELEMENTARY TEACHERS	NURSING ASSISTANTS	RESTAURANT COOKS
					
MEDIAN SALARY	\$48,720	\$44,390	\$62,450	\$36,590	\$32,040
MAX. RENT	~\$1,101	\$1,110	\$1,215	\$875	\$725
MAX. PURCHASE	~\$163,667	\$147,967	\$208,167	\$121,967	\$106,800

2025 Midland Housing Market



FAIR MARKET RENT \$1,137



MEDIAN HOME PRICE \$235,000





Work Here, Live Here

When jobs and housing are not aligned—geographically or financially, communities face growing challenges with workforce mobility and retention. In Midland County, over 60% of residents commute out of the county for work, while nearly half of the county’s workforce commutes in. This disconnect creates stress on transportation infrastructure, increases cost of living for workers, and weakens community ties.

For employers, this means a less stable workforce, higher turnover, and a growing difficulty attracting talent, especially in healthcare, education, manufacturing, and service industries. For employees, long commutes reduce quality of life, increase transportation costs, and limit access to local services like childcare or continuing education.

Available For-Sale Housing (As of March 19, 2025)								
Area	Total Available Units	Share of Region	Availability Rate	Months Supply of Inventory	Median List Price	Average Square Feet	Average Year Built	Average Days on Market
Midland County	53	6.0%	0.2%	1.4	\$235,000	1,973	1970	74
Region	876	100.0%	0.5%	2.0	\$199,700	1,590	1963	90

Source: Redfin.com & Bowen National Research

Market Analysis

Midland County has an availability rate of 0.2%. The for-sale inventory offers 1.4 Months of Supply Inventory (MSI). In a balanced housing market, approximately 2% to 3% of for-sale homes should be available for purchase and there should be between four and six months of available inventory to allow for mobility and growth in the market.

Commuting Data

- 56.1% Commute from outside of Midland County
- 43.9% Live & Work within Midland County
- 49.8% In-Bound Commuters earn \$40k+ annually



With nearly 19,000 Commuters, a strong opportunity for growth exists.

\$80,852

2024 Median Income

\$92,357

2029 Median Income



Housing Needs

Midland County needs significant new housing by 2029 to meet demand—an estimated 826 additional rental units and 3,946 for-sale homes are required.



	≤60%	61% - 80%	81% - 120%	121%+
HOUSEHOLD INCOME	≤\$61,980	\$61,981 - \$82,640	\$82,641 - 123,960	\$123,961+
RENT RANGE	≤\$1,550	\$1,551 - \$2,066	\$2,067 - \$3,099	\$3,100+
PRICE RANGE	≤\$206,600	\$206,601 - \$275,467	\$275,468 - \$413,200	\$413,201+
RENTAL GAP	311	221	202	92
FOR SALE GAP	0	687	2,164	1,095

Source: Bowen National Research

*Based on HUD limits for Midland County (4-person limit)



For-Sale Homes

- Midland County needs **2,695 for-sale units**
- Region needs 23,577 for-sale units



Rental Homes

- Midland County needs **826 rental units**
- Region needs 7,554 rental units.



Largest Gap

- For-sale units between 81%-120% area median income (middle-income buyers)
- Rentals ≤ 60% area median income (low income rental housing)



Supply vs. Demand

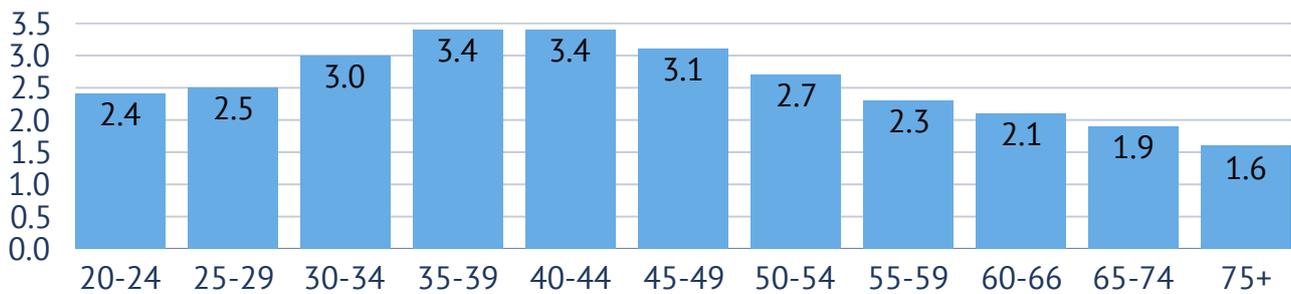
We Need Smaller Homes

The average household size in Midland County is 2.39 persons (2.3 persons for City of Midland). Senior households (65+) are the fastest growing segment

65% of Midland's housing stock is 3 and 4 bedroom homes.



Average Household Size by Age with Respect to Life Stage



Data Source: Arthur C. Nelson, *The Great Senior Short-Sale of Why Policy Inertia Will Short Change Millions of America's Seniors*

Household Types



Starter

<35 year olds

Apartments, townhouses, condominiums, and smaller home or small lot housing.



Peak

35-64 years old

Larger homes on larger lots.



Downsizing

> 64 year olds

Smaller homes on smaller lots and various attached forms.

Arthur C. Nelson, *The Great Senior Short-Sale of Why Policy Inertia Will Short Change Millions of America's Seniors*

Midland County Growth Trends



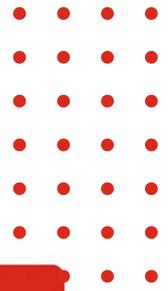
1.4% between the ages of 25 and 34

2.1% between the ages of 45 and 54

5.5% between the ages of 65 and 74

15.1% aged 75 and older

Opportunities & Actions



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong Educational Attainment High Median Income, Low Poverty <div style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;"> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanding Employment base Growth in \$100k renter & owner households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many renters are cost-burdened (30%+ income on housing) <div style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;"> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing less affordable than the region overall Limited rental and for-sale availability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need 826 new rentals (2024-2029) Need 3,946 new for-sale units (2024-2029) <div style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;"> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to attract 19,000 inbound commuters to live locally Stronger job market can help attract households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15% growth in seniors 75+ may strain senior housing <div style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;"> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk of losing 17,800 outbound commuters



Expand Workforce Housing Supply

To meet projected demand, Midland County must prioritize the development of attainable housing for middle-income workers. Leveraging its strong employment base and educational attainment, the community can support targeted rental and for-sale projects that serve households earning \$60,000–\$100,000.



Increase Housing Access for Commuters

With nearly 19,000 inbound commuters, there's a clear opportunity to reduce regional traffic and boost local investment by creating housing options near major employment hubs. Strategic infill development and employer partnerships can help convert commuters into local residents.



Invest in Senior Housing and Rehabilitation

With a 15% projected growth in residents aged 75+, Midland must ensure senior-friendly, accessible housing is available. Investing in home rehabilitation and supporting aging in place can reduce strain.



Address Cost Burden Through Incentives and Partnerships

Over 30% of renters are cost-burdened, and housing is less affordable than the region overall. Expanding rental assistance, offering development incentives for lower-cost units, and employer matching programs can help reduce financial strain for lower-income households.





Barriers to Building

Project Viability

A common rule of thumb for builders and developers is that every \$1 in future monthly rent must support \$100 in project cost. While this varies with interest rates, it highlights the financial challenge of building market-rate rentals—let alone affordable or attainable units.



Building Costs

The cost to produce housing—often exceeding \$275 per square foot—far outpaces what many households can afford. At these prices, even modest homes can cost over \$300,000 before land. Meanwhile, to be financially viable, rental developments must generate \$2-\$4 per square foot in monthly rent, placing market-rate and attainable housing increasingly out of reach for working families.

Increasing density through multi-story or multifamily construction—whether for rent or ownership—requires more complex building systems, often raising costs to \$300-\$400 per square foot.



MODERATE COST TO BUILD - NOT INCLUDING LAND - \$275 PSF

\$330,000

\$687,500

\$440,000

Every housing investment requires both time and money. Even when the financial return is uncertain, projects still take an average of 2 to 4 years to complete. The long lead time and substantial upfront capital needed just to entitle land present major barriers for many builders, developers, and investors.



Regional Housing Partnership



In response to Michigan’s first Statewide Housing Plan, launched in 2022, fifteen Regional Housing Partnerships were formed to advance local implementation. Region G’s partnership brings together stakeholders to align strategies, set regional priorities, and support attainable housing.

Regional Collaboration for Lasting Change

Region G, our defined area for the housing partnership, includes Arenac, Bay, Clare, Gladwin, Gratiot, Isabella, Midland, and Saginaw Counties. The Administrative lead for this effort is now Housing Forward.

Priority Area: Housing Ecosystem

Region G’s Housing Ecosystem committee focuses on strengthening collaboration, talent, and data-sharing across the housing system—from local nonprofits to state agencies—to improve the region’s capacity to build, maintain, and support housing through a more connected and effective network.

Priority Area: Housing Stock

Region G’s Housing Stock committee focuses on increasing and improving the supply of housing through development, rehabilitation, and preservation. The work emphasizes housing diversity, location near essential services, environmental sustainability, and long-term stability across rural, urban, and suburban areas.

Priority Area: Communication & Education

Region G’s Communication & Education Committee works to increase public understanding of housing needs, rights, and resources. By promoting fair housing, addressing misconceptions, and expanding access to information, this group helps build support and empowers residents on the path to financial stability and homeownership.

Get Involved in Regional Housing Solutions

Want to stay informed, volunteer, or join a Regional Housing Partnership work group? Sign up to receive updates or express your interest in future projects that help in Region G.



Key Focus Areas

Housing is Economic Development

Housing Forward is an initiative of the Midland Business Alliance through their Economic Development Team. Privately funded through grants from the Midland Area Community Foundation and the Strosacker Foundation. Knowing our local economy relies on stable households and healthy neighborhoods, we provide assistance in the following areas.



Housing Development Support

Housing Forward offers hands-on project assistance—providing support with land, labor, laws, loans, and lumber—to help bring attainable housing developments to life.



Tools & Resources

Through the Resource Lab, Developer Collective, and Developer Guide, we equip partners with practical tools to accelerate housing solutions.



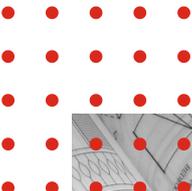
Advocacy & Communication

We lead stakeholder advocacy by sharing employer stories, promoting site readiness, supporting funding access, and raising awareness through strategic storytelling.



Data Information & Support

Housing Forward delivers local and regional housing data, including the Housing Needs Assessment and Midland Mosaic Study, to inform evidence-based decisions.



Contact Us



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