

# LINCOLN

New Hampshire

**DRAFT**

## Existing Conditions Report

April 7, 2026



**LIVABLE LINCOLN**

sustaining what we value, a vision for the future



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# INTRODUCTION

***The purpose of this Existing Conditions Report is to establish a baseline understanding of the Town of Lincoln in 2026. Documenting and analyzing current conditions represents the first phase of the Master Plan process, and provides a foundation for future planning decisions.***

This report is intended to guide the planning team and support informed discussion with the Planning Board and the broader community. It serves as the primary reference document for understanding existing trends, conditions, and constraints and will inform the development of public engagement materials and community conversations about Lincoln's future.

***The information presented is designed to educate residents, business owners, workers, property owners, and other stakeholders so they can participate meaningfully in shaping a shared vision for Lincoln. Then these participants will work together to identify the actions needed over the next decade to achieve that vision.***

Each section of the Existing Conditions Report begins with a brief profile summarizing the topic's relevance and highlighting key findings that warrant further consideration during the planning process. These profiles are followed by detailed inventories that present supporting data, background information, and analysis. Together, these sections describe how Lincoln is changing and identify emerging issues, challenges, and opportunities that may be addressed through the Master Plan.

***The inventories also document data sources and provide additional context for the findings presented. In some cases, they introduce questions or potential areas of focus that will be explored more fully in later phases of the Master Plan process.***



# What We Have Learned So Far

**Population and Housing** - Lincoln's housing market is highly constrained by strong demand, limited year-round supply, and limited affordable housing options, along with a large share of units oriented toward seasonal use and short-term rentals. More than half of the town's housing units are seasonally vacant, and homeowner and rental vacancy has been extremely limited, reinforcing a persistently tight market. Home values and rents have also increased rapidly over the past decade, with median single-family sale prices nearly doubling since 2015 and two-bedroom rents exceeding levels affordable to most local workers. While population growth has been primarily concentrated among older adults and smaller households, school enrollment has declined, reflecting the shortage of housing suitable and affordable for families. Housing cost burdens are especially acute for renters, nearly half of whom spend more than 30 percent of income on housing, while very low-income households face the greatest affordability gaps. Currently and in the future, the town is projected to need additional housing units—both ownership and rental—across a range of income levels, underscoring the importance of expanding year-round, workforce-oriented housing to support community stability and the local economy.

**Transportation** - Lincoln's transportation system reflects its dual role as a small town and a major gateway to the White Mountains. This is evidenced by the traffic volumes and infrastructure demands in Lincoln that are far greater than those typically associated with a year-round population of this size. Interstate 93, U.S. Route 3, and NH Route 112 define local mobility and regional access, with traffic volumes that have rebounded to—and in some locations exceeded—pre-pandemic levels due to strong tourism activity. While the roadway network generally functions well, seasonal congestion, limited local control over state-maintained roads, and the high proportion of privately maintained roads create ongoing safety, maintenance, and emergency access challenges. Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure is strongest within the village core and along shared-use paths, but may serve recreation more than daily transportation needs. Overall, the findings point to the importance of continued coordination with state and regional partners, targeted capital investment, and incremental multimodal improvements to support safety, resilience, and mobility for residents and visitors alike.

**Natural Resources** - Lincoln's natural resources are both the community's defining asset and its greatest long-term responsibility. With approximately 95 percent of the town permanently protected within federal and state forests, Lincoln's forests, rivers, wetlands, and wildlife habitats are largely intact and of statewide and regional significance. These resources underpin the town's recreation-based economy, provide critical ecosystem services, and contribute to Lincoln's climate resilient forested landscape. At the same time, there is limited dedicated green space within the downtown and village areas, and concentrated development within the river valley, increasing visitation, transportation impacts, and invasive species place localized pressure on water quality, riparian systems, and groundwater resources—particularly where aquifers underlie developed land. This analysis demonstrates that while Lincoln is well protected from widespread land conversion, careful stewardship, integrated land use and water resource planning, and proactive management will be essential to sustaining the integrity of natural resources while accommodating continued use and growth.

**Economy** - Lincoln's economy is experiencing sustained growth driven primarily by tourism, recreation, and hospitality investment, while remaining structurally constrained by seasonality, workforce availability, and housing affordability. Between 2015 and 2025, total employment increased by 26 percent, with more than two-thirds of jobs concentrated in accommodation, food services, and recreation—sectors that offer lower wages and limited year-round stability. At the same time, Lincoln's population grew by roughly 500 residents between 2019 and 2024, median household income increased by 34 percent, and educational attainment rose sharply, particularly at the bachelor's and graduate degree levels.

Despite these gains, the town faces a tight labor market, with unemployment at 2.5 percent in 2024 and heavy reliance on in-commuting workers due to limited local housing options. High-wage manufacturing employment, led by Burndy Corporation, provides an important stabilizing counterbalance to the seasonal visitor economy, underscoring the need for continued economic diversification and coordinated strategies that link workforce housing, year-round employment, and long-term economic resilience.

**Parks and Open Space** - Lincoln's parks and open spaces are central to community life and are a cornerstone of the regional tourism economy. As a network they provide world-class access to outdoor recreation alongside important municipal facilities that serve residents year-round. While most of the accessible open space is managed by federal and state agencies, the Town plays a critical role in providing smaller-scale, community-focused recreation assets such as the Kancamagus Recreation Area, Community Center, and Lin-Wood Skate Park. Seasonal population fluctuations place significant demands on both regional and municipal recreation infrastructure, highlighting the importance of maintenance, capacity planning, and coordination with state and private partners. The proposed Riverfront Park represents the town's most transformative opportunity to expand public access, remediate a former industrial site, and strengthen connections between the village center and the Pemigewasset River. Collectively, these findings emphasize that strategic investment, long-term maintenance planning, and thoughtful partnerships will be key to sustaining recreation assets that support quality of life and economic vitality.

**Community Facilities and Services** - Lincoln municipal infrastructure is well-established and provides essential support services for residents, visitors, and a significant seasonal population, with nearly 100 percent of the town served by municipal infrastructure systems. However, these facilities and services are operating within a context of increasing demand, aging infrastructure, and evolving service expectations. Public safety, recreation, public works, utilities, and community facilities have all experienced sustained or growing activity levels, driven in part by tourism, traffic, and seasonal population fluctuations. Recent investments—such as the new police facility, expanded EMS staffing, and ongoing capital improvements to public works and utility systems—have strengthened service capacity and reliability, while also highlighting the need for continued coordination, maintenance, and long-term capital planning. The Town also shares several key facilities and services with North Woodstock, including solid waste management, schools, community facilities, recreation resources, and EMS, reinforcing the importance of intermunicipal coordination in service delivery. Across departments, the Town relies on an adequate workforce, shared facilities, and regional partnerships to deliver services efficiently. Collectively, these findings underscore the importance of proactive asset management, interdepartmental coordination, and strategic investment to ensure that Lincoln's facilities and services remain responsive, resilient, and aligned with future community needs.

**History and Heritage** - Lincoln's history is shaped by geography, natural resources, and access through the White Mountains. From Indigenous seasonal use and early tourism, through a prolonged industrial logging and railroad era, and ultimately to a recreation- and tourism-based economy, the town has repeatedly reoriented itself in response to environmental, economic, and policy shifts. While much of Lincoln's industrial infrastructure has been removed or redeveloped, tangible historic resources—including covered bridges, preserved locomotives, civic buildings, and the former paper mill office—continue to anchor the community's identity and visitor experiences. Local historical, civic, faith-based, and service organizations play a central role in preserving and interpreting this legacy, reinforcing Lincoln's strong sense of place. Together, these findings show that Lincoln's historic resources are not only reflective of the past but continue to influence land use, economic activity, and community character today.

**Natural Hazards** - Development in Lincoln faces a high level of exposure to natural hazards due to its mountainous terrain, extensive forest cover, river systems, and large seasonal population fluctuations. Wildfires, severe winter weather, slope failures, and inland flooding pose the greatest risks to life, property, and critical infrastructure, with potential losses amplified by limited evacuation routes and infrastructure capacity constraints. While the town has made progress through hazard mitigation planning, levee reconstruction, and coordinated emergency services, significant vulnerabilities remain—particularly related to fire flow limitations, aging water and wastewater infrastructure, and the growing influence of climate variability, including drought. Seasonal population surges further complicate emergency response and resource management. These findings underscore that long-term resilience in Lincoln will depend on integrating hazard mitigation into land use decisions, capital planning, and infrastructure investment to reduce risk while supporting the town’s role as a year-round and destination community.

**Land Use** - Lincoln’s existing land use pattern reflects the town’s dual identity as a year-round community and a major regional tourist destination operating within significant natural and geographic constraints. With nearly all land outside the valley floor permanently protected, development is concentrated within a limited 4,148-acre focus area along major transportation corridors and river systems. Residential and commercial uses are closely interwoven, with a similar amount of land occupied by single-family and multi-family housing that supports residents, seasonal workers, and visitors. Significant town-owned land holdings and areas of vacant land present opportunities for future development. However, environmental and hazard-related constraints could limit their development potential. Overall, the analysis highlights that Lincoln’s future planning challenge will be carefully managing limited developable land while balancing housing needs, tourism infrastructure, community character, and natural resource protection.



# POPULATION & HOUSING



Like many communities in New Hampshire’s White Mountains region, Lincoln is experiencing sustained housing pressure driven partially by its role as a four-season recreational destination. Proximity to Loon Mountain, the Pemigewasset River, and extensive public lands has long shaped a housing market oriented toward seasonal use, second homes, and short-term rentals. Demand intensified during and after the COVID-19 pandemic as households sought access to outdoor amenities and locations that support remote work. While Lincoln’s housing stock has grown incrementally, much of it consists of seasonal units and homes held by non-resident owners, limiting the supply available for year-round residents. At the same time, demand has increased among local workers and older households seeking to age in place, contributing to rising prices, limited turnover, and increased competition in both the ownership and rental markets.

Over time, the town’s transition from a paper mill community to a recreation-based economy has strengthened economic activity while placing new strain on the housing market, with a growing share of units unavailable for full-time occupancy. In response, the Town has taken steps to expand opportunities for year-round and workforce housing, including the 2024 voter-approved acquisition of the 322-acre Campers World property for a mixed-income residential development targeted to full-time residents and deed-restricted against short-term rental use. While the project’s ultimate scope remains uncertain, it represents one of the most significant opportunities to expand Lincoln’s year-round housing supply and provides important context for evaluating current conditions and future housing needs.

## FACTS AND FIGURES



School enrollment in the Lincoln–Woodstock School District **declined by roughly 13%** between 2018–2019 and 2024–2025, reflecting demographic shifts and limited availability of housing suitable for families.



As of April 2026, Lincoln has at least **476 active short-term rental properties**, representing a substantial share of the town’s housing stock and reducing the number of homes available for year-round residents and workers.



**74% of all housing units** are composed of single-family homes and small multi-family structures with four or fewer units.



**More than 75% of the occupied housing units** in Lincoln were built before 1990, reflecting an aging housing stock.



The **homeowner vacancy rate in Lincoln has been 0% since 2017**, with only a small number of rental units reported as vacant since 2021.



According to the 2022 North Country Regional Housing Needs Assessment, Lincoln is projected to need approximately **171 new housing units by 2040**, including 112 ownership units and 59 rental units.

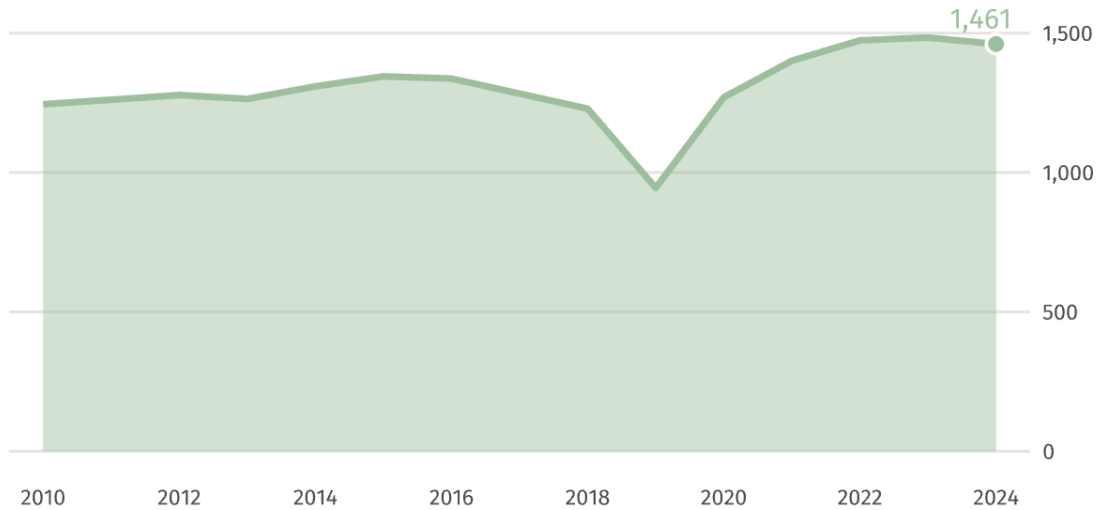
# DEMOGRAPHICS

**Lincoln’s population reached nearly 1,500 residents in 2024, with the strongest growth among adults aged 55 to 70. Younger age groups, particularly those under 20 and in their early 20s, have remained relatively stable but make up a smaller share of the population.**

## Population

Change in Total Population

Lincoln’s population has fluctuated over the past two decades, declining slightly between 2014 and 2019 before increasing again from 2020 onward, reaching nearly 1,500 residents in 2024. Looking ahead, long-term forecasts anticipate moderate growth, with the population expected to reach approximately 1,750 by 2050.



Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year

Lincoln is a small town in Grafton County, nestled in the White Mountains and known for its outdoor recreation and seasonal tourism. These characteristics contribute to strong housing demand, particularly for second homes and short-term rentals, and play an important role in shaping the local housing market. Over the past decade, Lincoln experienced the largest population growth among nearby communities, increasing by approximately 55 percent and adding about 500 residents. Other nearby towns, including Waterville Valley, Thornton, and Woodstock, also saw population growth during this period, while Bethlehem and Franconia experienced modest declines of about 1 percent. Benton experienced the largest decline, with its population decreasing to just under 400 residents.

Town	2019 <sup>1</sup>	2024 <sup>1</sup>	Absolute Change <sup>1</sup>	Percent Change
Hart's Location	42	49	7	16.7%
Benton	457	386	-71	-15.5%
Bethlehem	2,569	2,537	-32	-1.2%
Easton	288	356	68	23.6%
Franconia	1,075	1,060	-15	-1.4%
Lincoln	945	1,461	516	54.6%
Thornton	2,504	2,799	295	11.8%
Waterville Valley	186	290	104	55.9%
Woodstock	1,126	1,214	88	7.8%

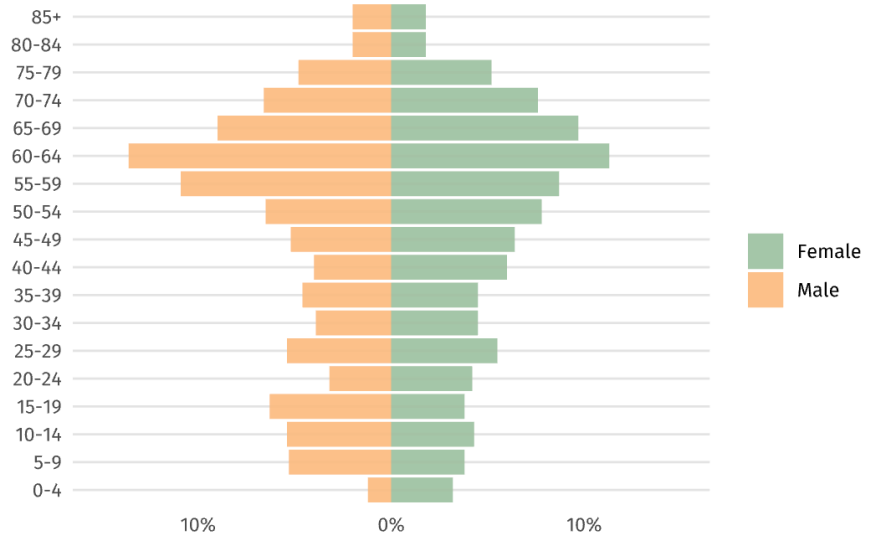
<sup>1</sup> ACS Total Population Estimate

# Age Distribution

With Lincoln’s population growing over the past decade, the town has seen the most growth among residents aged 55 and older, with a current median age of 46.8. At the same time, smaller increases among family-age households have not offset declines among young adults, contributing to an overall aging population. The largest growth has occurred among those aged 55 to 70, reflecting both the aging of long-term residents and the arrival of new households entering retirement.

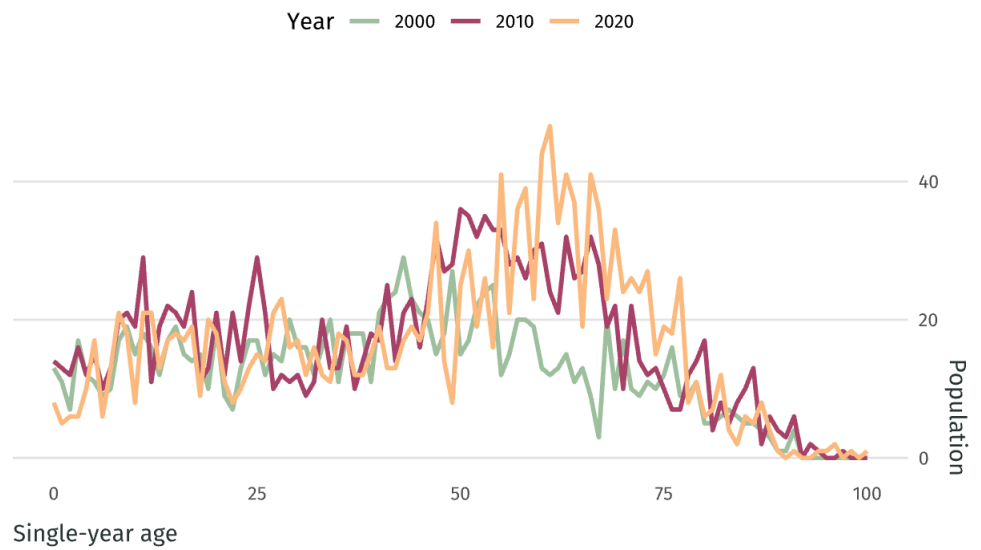
Overall population levels in Lincoln have remained relatively stable over the past two decades, with 1,271 residents in 2000, 1,245 in 2010, and 1,270 in 2020. Despite this stability, the town’s age distribution has shifted over time. These trends point to a community that is gradually aging and shifting away from a family-oriented population. Younger age groups, particularly those under 20 and in their early 20s, have remained relatively stable but represent a smaller share of the population. The concentration of older adults underscores the importance of a diverse housing supply that supports aging in place while also providing options for younger households entering the market.

2020 Decennial Age Pyramid



Source: US Census Bureau Decennial

Change in Age Distribution

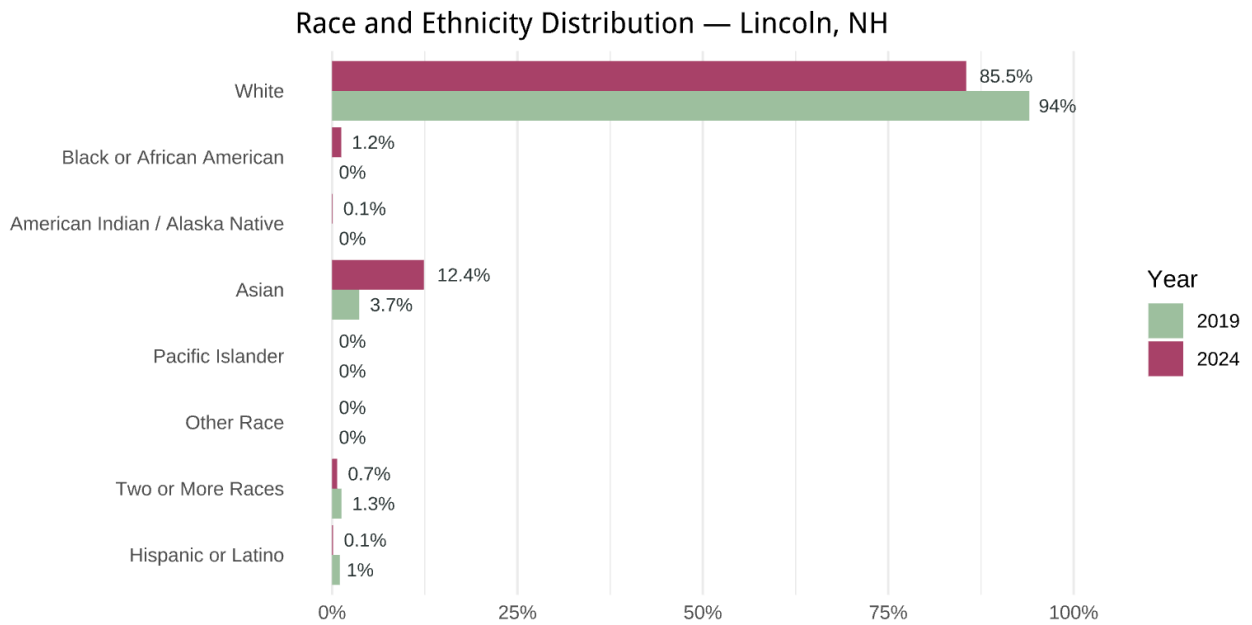


Source: US Census Bureau Decennial



# Race and Ethnicity

Lincoln's racial and ethnic composition generally reflects regional and state patterns, with the majority of residents identifying as White. Over the past decade, the share of White residents has declined from about 94 percent to 86 percent. This change is largely due to an increase in residents identifying as Asian, whose share of the population grew from 3.7 percent to 12.4

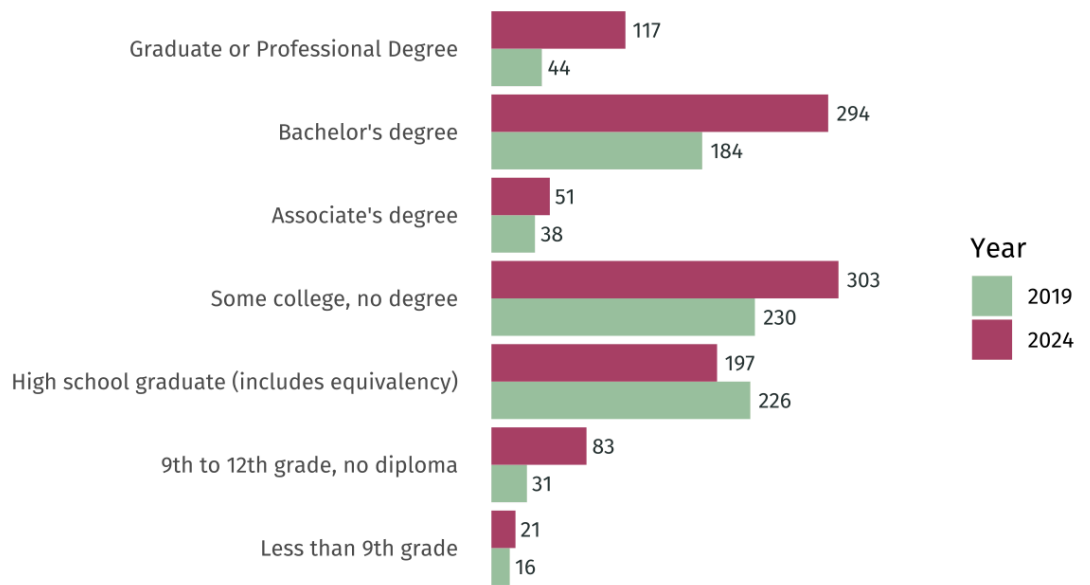


Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates

# Educational Attainment and School Enrollment

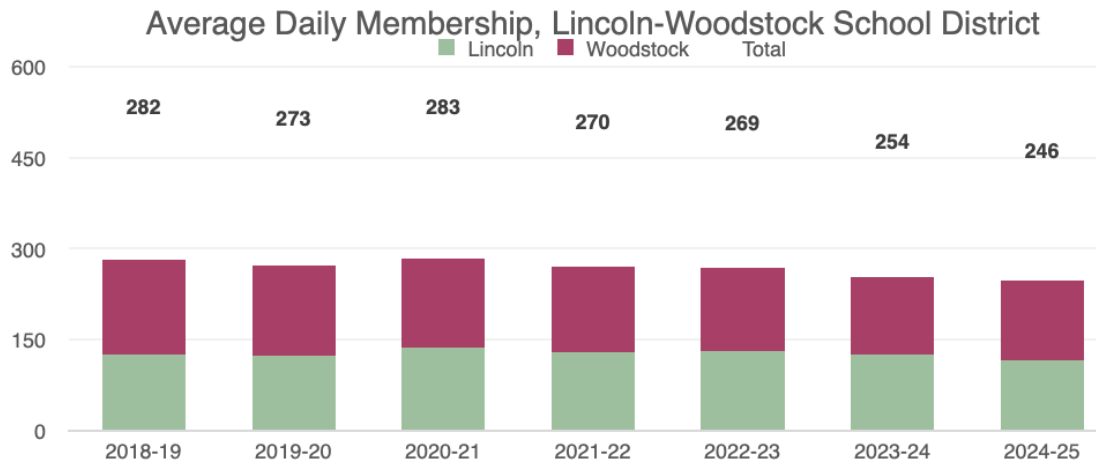
Educational attainment in Lincoln has increased over the past decade, with the number of residents holding an associate's, bachelor's, graduate, or professional degree rising by 74 percent. At the same time, the share of residents whose highest level of education is a high school diploma has declined by 13 percent, reflecting an overall shift toward higher levels of education in the community.

## Educational Attainment, 25+



Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates

Enrollment in the Lincoln-Woodstock School District has declined steadily in recent years, reflecting broader demographic shifts and housing constraints in the community. Average Daily Membership (ADM) across the district fell from approximately 282 students in the 2018–2019 school year to about 246 students in 2024–2025, a decrease of roughly 13%.



Source: Lin-Wood SAU #68 School District

Both Lincoln and Woodstock have experienced declining enrollment over this period. Lincoln’s ADM decreased from about 125 students in 2018–2019 to roughly 116 students in 2024–2025, while Woodstock’s enrollment fell from approximately 157 students to about 131 students. While enrollment fluctuated modestly around the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the overall trend has been downward, with more consistent declines since 2021.

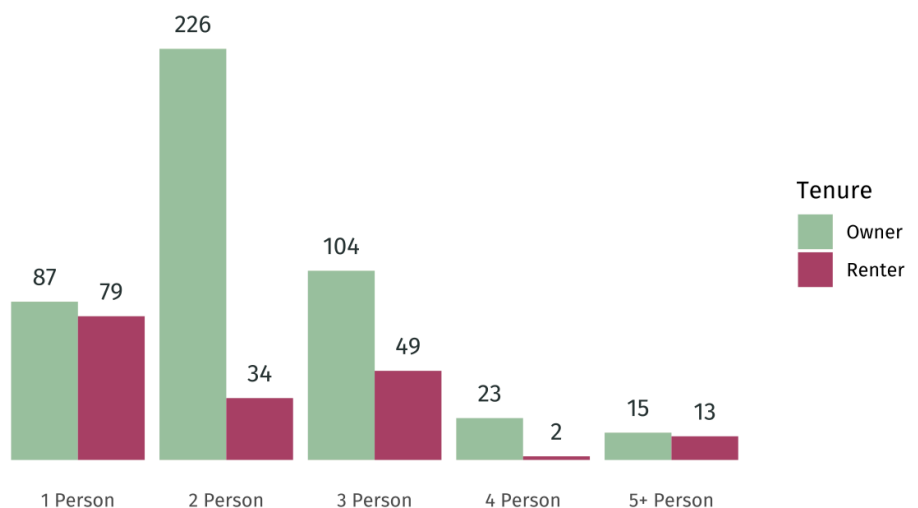
Limited housing availability, particularly for families with children, is likely contributing to these enrollment trends. A constrained housing market can make it difficult for younger households to move into or remain in the community, reinforcing long-term enrollment declines and highlighting the connection between housing supply and community stability.

## Household Size

**Lincoln’s household sizes are small, with one- and two-person households comprising about 70% of all households. Two-person households dominate home ownership, while single-person households are most common among renters. Three-person households have seen the largest recent growth across both tenure types.**

In Lincoln, smaller households dominate both ownership and rental tenure, with one- and two-person households making up roughly 70 percent of all households. Two-person owner-occupied households are the single largest group, representing 36 percent of all households, while single-person households are most common among renters, accounting for 45 percent of renter households.

Household Size by Tenure

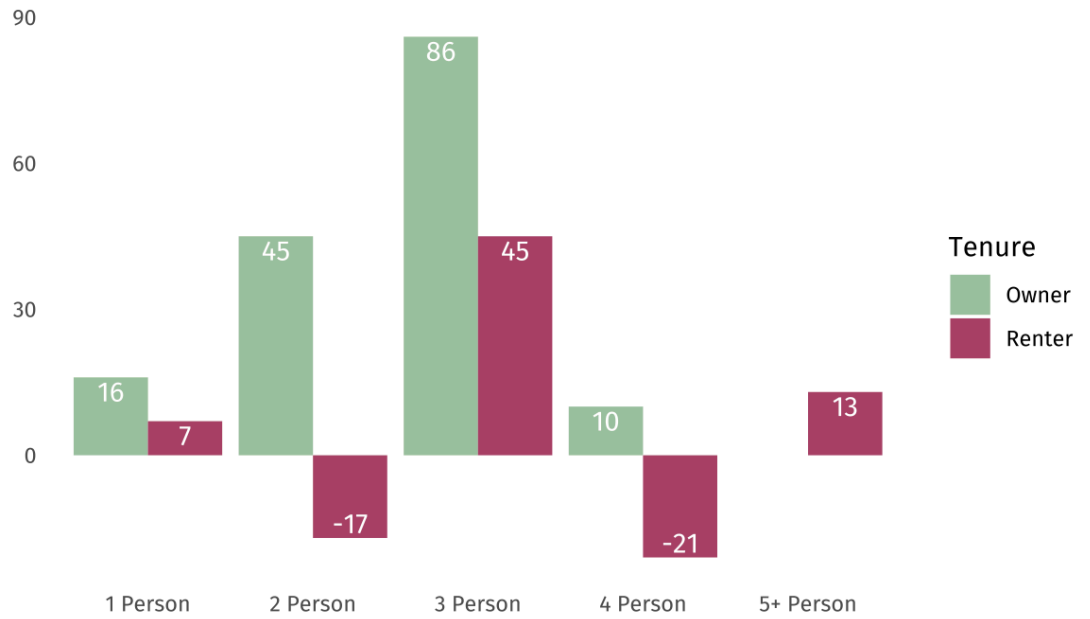


Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates

This distribution highlights the prominence of smaller households in Lincoln, with ownership largely concentrated among couples or two-person households and the rental market serving primarily individuals living alone.

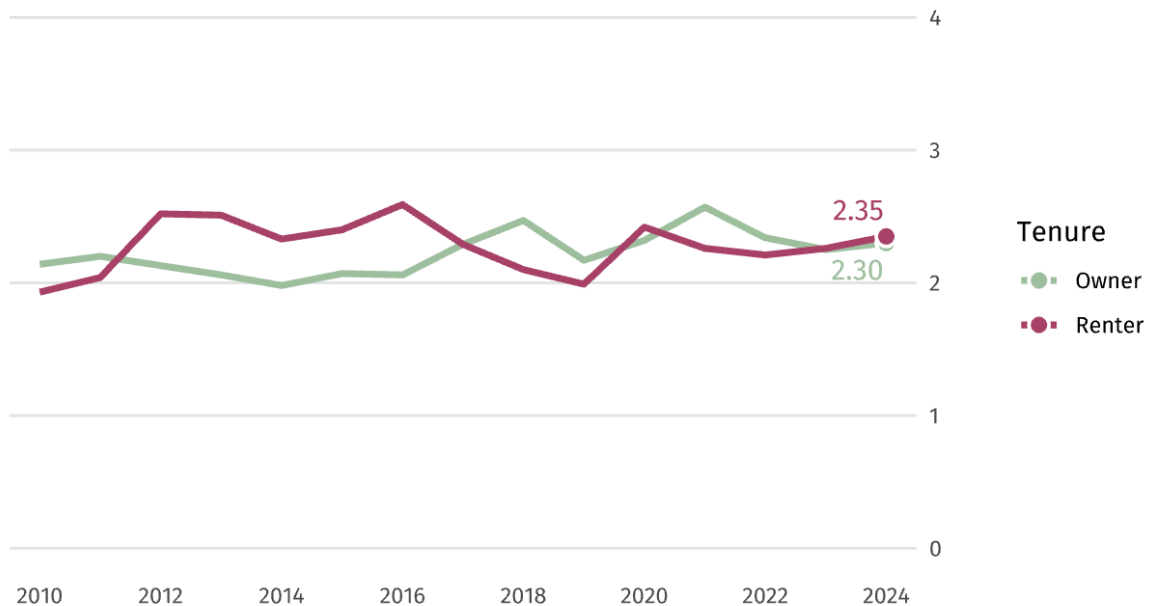
The largest growth in household size occurred among three-person households, which increased by about 130 households across both tenure types. Combined with the town's aging population, the prevalence of smaller households is shaping housing demand in Lincoln, pointing to the need for a range of housing types that accommodate both smaller households and older adults while also providing opportunities for younger families and individuals entering the market.

Change in Household Size by Tenure



Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year

Change in Average Household Size



Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year

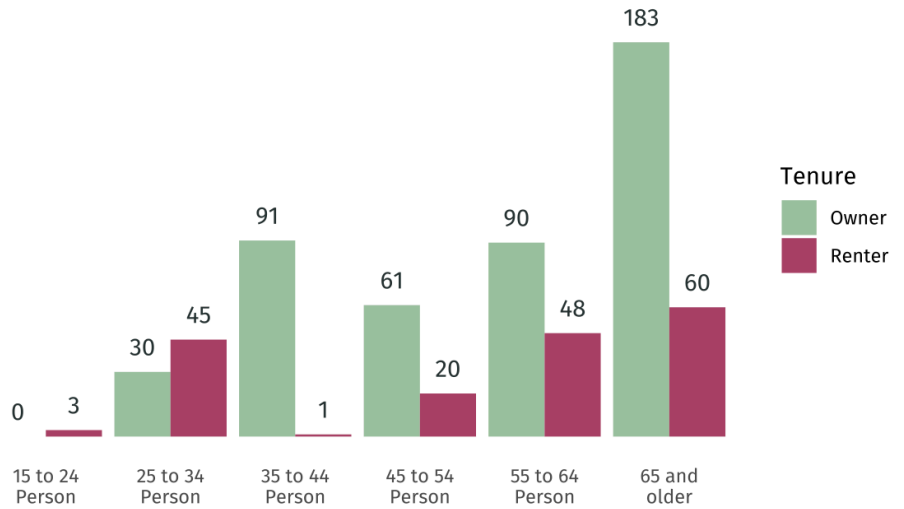


## Age By Tenure

Lincoln's housing market is heavily shaped by older adults and long-term homeowners, who make up roughly 60 percent of owner households in town. Over the past decade, ownership among residents aged 35 to 54 has also grown, adding about 130 households and now representing nearly one-third of all owner households. Renters account for approximately 28 percent of households and are similarly concentrated among older age groups, with the majority over age 55.

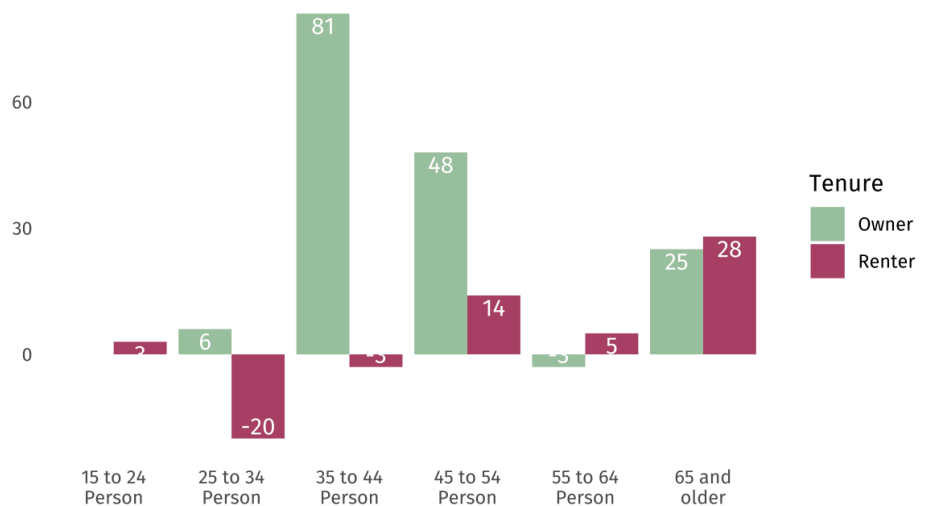
This age distribution highlights a community where older adults play a central role in housing demand, influencing the types of homes most in demand and limiting opportunities for turnover in the ownership market. It also underscores the need for housing that can support aging in place while creating space for younger households and new residents to enter the local market.

Household Age by Tenure



Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year

Change in Households by Age & Tenure



Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year



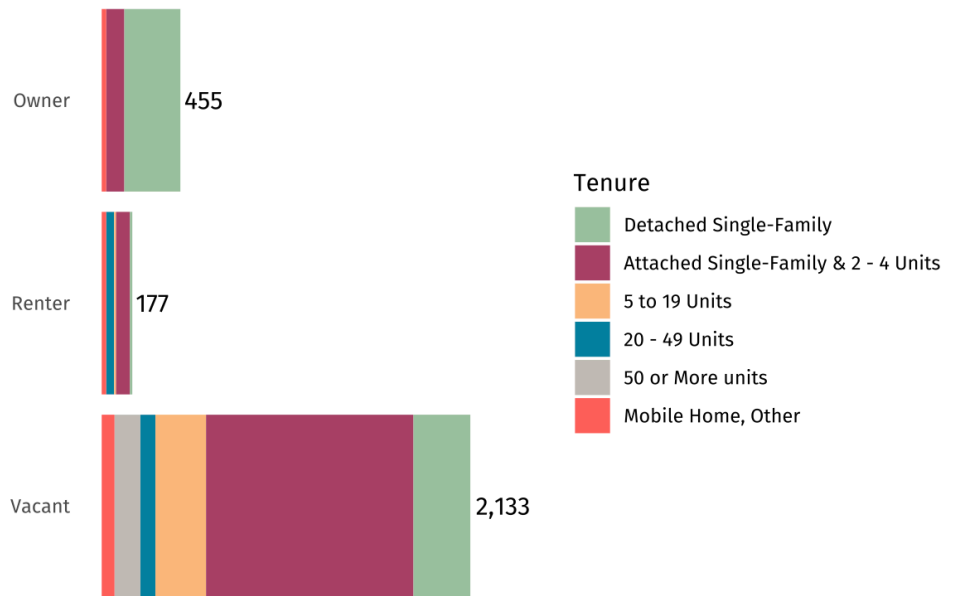
# HOUSING

## Housing Stock

**Lincoln’s housing stock is primarily composed of single-family homes and small multi-family structures with four or fewer units. Together this accounts for roughly 74 percent of all housing, and more than half of these units are vacant seasonally as part of the town’s second-home and vacation market. More than three-quarters of occupied homes were built before 1990, reflecting an aging housing stock that will require ongoing reinvestment and maintenance, particularly within the rental inventory.**

Lincoln’s housing stock is largely composed of smaller structures, including single-family homes and buildings with four units or fewer. In 2024, these smaller structures accounted for roughly 2,052 units, or about 74 percent of all housing in town. A significant portion of these units, approximately 55 percent, are classified as vacant, reflecting Lincoln’s strong seasonal and second-home market where many properties are occupied only part of the year.

Existing Housing Stock  
Housing Units by Structure Type



Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year

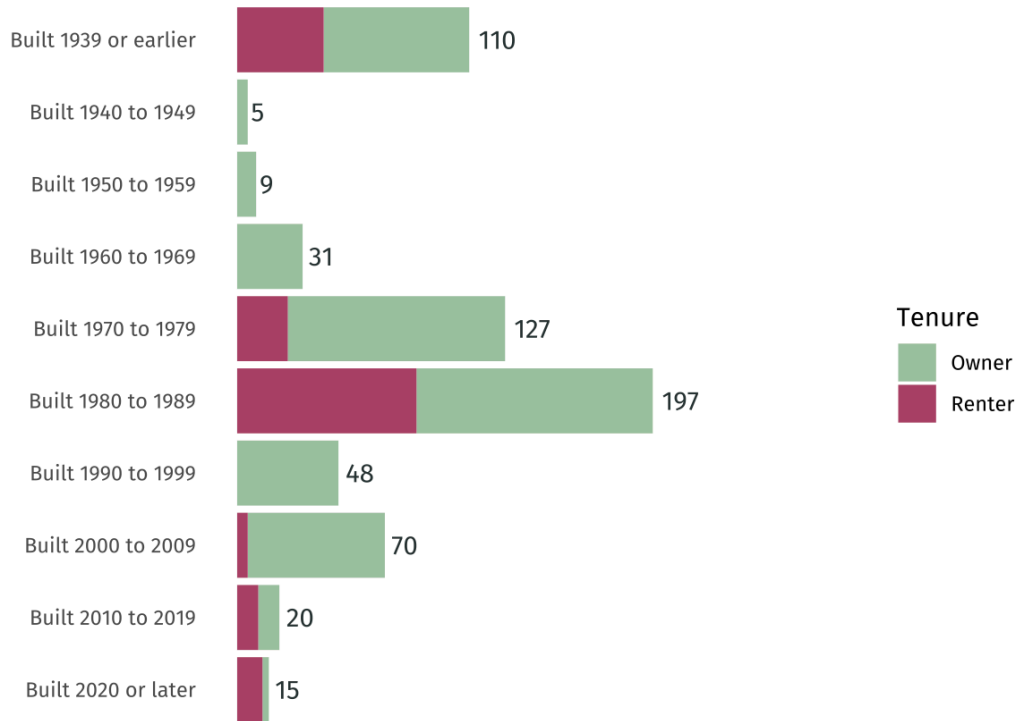
Among occupied single-family homes, about 49 percent are owner-occupied while just 2 percent are renter occupied. Renters in Lincoln are more likely to live in smaller multi-unit structures with four or fewer units, highlighting the limited rental options within the town’s predominantly small-scale housing market. These patterns emphasize Lincoln’s dual role as both a year-round residential community and a seasonal destination, shaping the availability and types of housing for residents.

While little new development has been added to Lincoln’s housing stock in recent years, smaller structures remain the predominant form of housing. This limited variety constrains the supply of homes available to year-round residents and local workers, making it more difficult for lower-income households to find housing that meets their needs and budgets.

More than three-quarters of all occupied homes in Lincoln were built before 1990, reflecting the town's older housing stock. However, most occupied rental units were constructed after 1980, meaning rental options tend to be slightly newer than owner-occupied units. The prevalence of older homes underscores the importance of ongoing reinvestment and maintenance, particularly in aging rental properties, to preserve housing quality and ensure the stock remains safe and suitable for residents.

### Year Built by Tenure

Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year

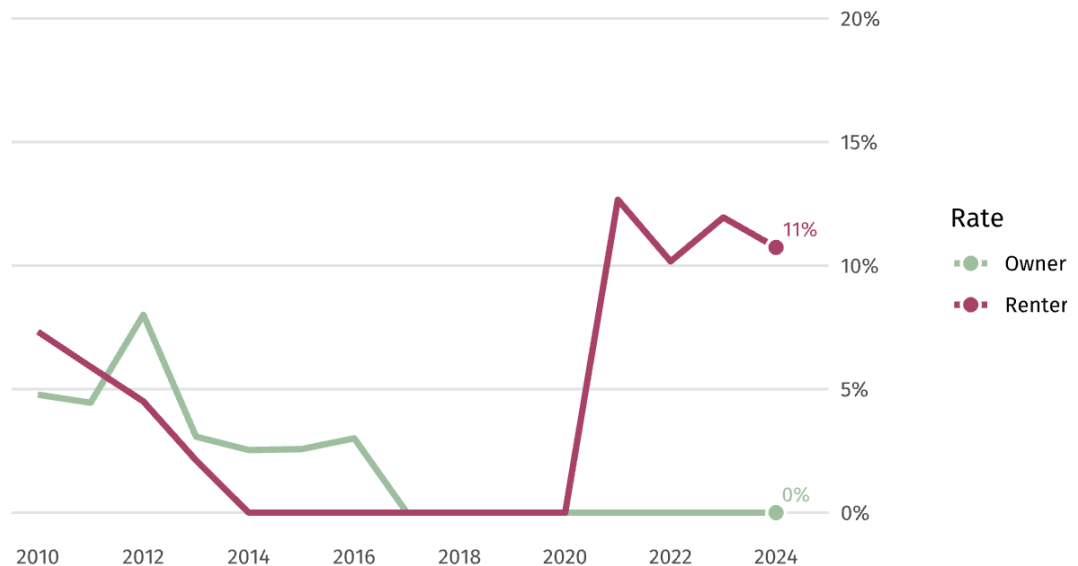


## Vacancy

**Vacancy rates in Lincoln are extremely low for owner-occupied housing, remaining at 0% since 2017, while rental vacancies remain low but have increased modestly after the COVID-19 pandemic. Seasonal vacancies continue to dominate, with roughly 2,000 units classified as seasonally vacant in 2024.**

Vacancy trends in Lincoln point to a persistently tight housing market, particularly for ownership units. The homeowner vacancy rate has steadily declined over time, falling from just under 5 percent in 2010 to effectively zero by 2017, where it has remained through 2024. This sustained lack of ownership vacancies reflects limited turnover and strong demand for owner-occupied housing.

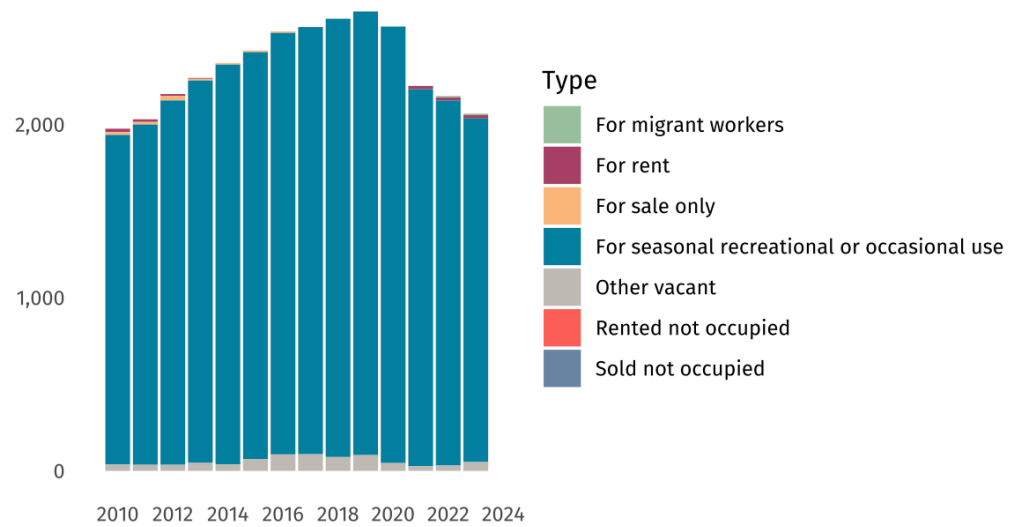
### Vacancy Rates by Tenure



Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year

The rental market has also historically been constrained, with low vacancy rates over much of the past decade. However, rental vacancies have increased modestly in the years following the COVID-19 pandemic, likely reflecting the addition of new rental units to the market rather than a softening of demand. Even with these recent increases, vacancy levels remain low, reinforcing the overall tightness of Lincoln’s housing market.

Vacant Units by Type



Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates

Seasonal units continue to make up the largest share of Lincoln’s vacant housing stock. In 2024, approximately 2,000 units were classified as seasonally vacant, representing a 21 percent decline from the peak observed in 2019. Despite this decline, the scale of seasonal vacancies reflects Lincoln’s ongoing role in the White Mountains’ second-home and vacation housing market.

At the same time, there has been little evidence of available year-round housing. No units were reported as vacant for sale in Lincoln’s housing stock between 2017 and 2024, and only a small number of units have been identified as vacant for rent since 2021; prior to that, rental availability was effectively absent. Taken together, these patterns point to a constrained year-round housing supply, limited turnover, and sustained demand from both permanent residents and seasonal homeowners.

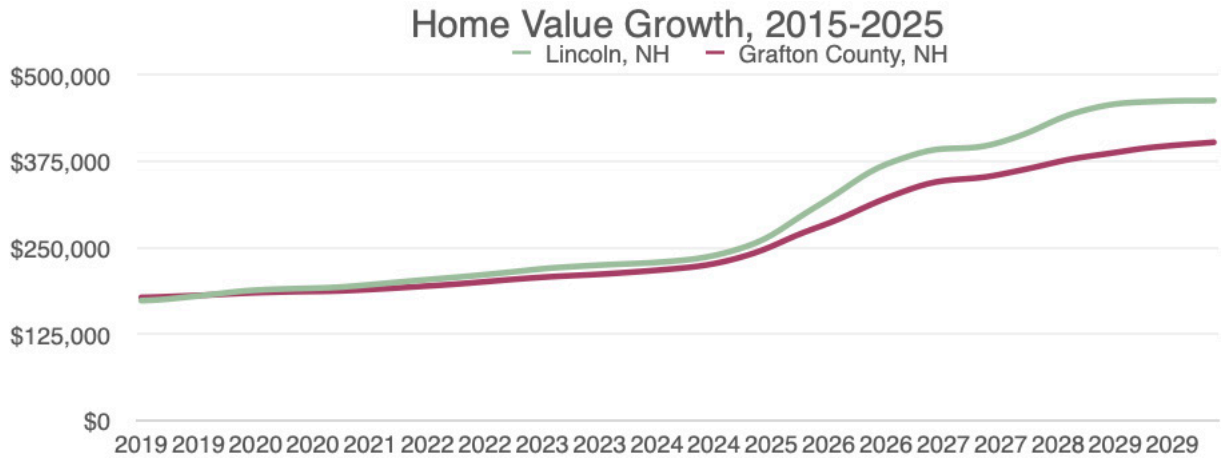
## Home Value

**Home values have increased sharply, with the typical home value exceeding \$460,000 by late 2025. Median single-family sales prices rose from about \$363,000 in 2015 to \$709,000 in 2025, reflecting strong demand and limited supply.**

The Zillow Home Value Index (ZHVI) measures the typical home value within a market, capturing the full distribution of housing prices while limiting the influence of unusually high or low sales. This makes it a useful indicator of how changes in home values are likely to affect the average household and provides insight into broader market conditions over time.

In the years following the COVID-19 pandemic, both Lincoln and Grafton County experienced home value growth above historical norms, reflecting strong regional demand for housing across northern New England. From 2015 through 2020, home values in Lincoln generally tracked closely with countywide trends, suggesting that local price changes were influenced largely by broader regional dynamics. Over the past years, however, Lincoln has experienced faster home value growth than the county overall, indicating a shift in local market conditions.

By December 2025, typical home values in Lincoln exceeded \$460,000, compared to countywide values above \$400,000. This divergence likely reflects a combination of factors, including increased demand for homes in



Source: Zillow Research Group; Zillow Home Value Index

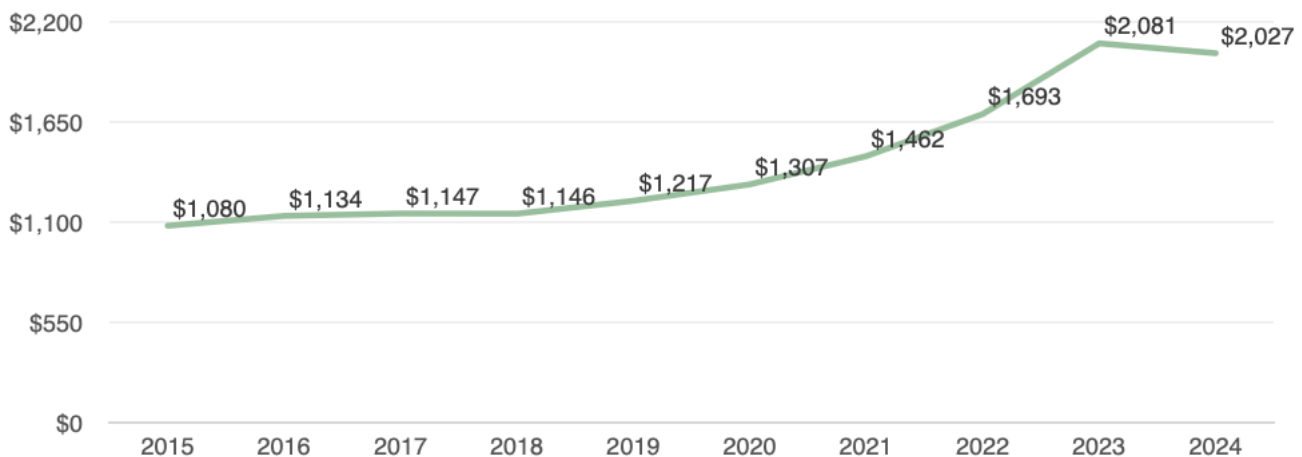
amenity-rich and recreation-oriented communities, changes in remote and hybrid work that expanded the pool of potential buyers, and a limited supply of year-round housing able to respond to rising demand.

These trends indicate increasing competition within the housing market. When home values rise faster than incomes, households with moderate or lower incomes may encounter additional barriers to homeownership, which can result in longer tenure in rental housing or a need to look beyond the community for ownership opportunities.

## Rental Units

Rental housing costs in Grafton County have increased steadily in recent years. Since 2015, the median gross rent for a two-bedroom unit has risen by approximately 88%, exceeding \$2,000 per month. At this level, many workers in and around Lincoln earn wages below what is needed to afford typical market rents. Without the development of additional rental units that are affordable to moderate- and lower-income households, rising rents may continue to limit housing access for the local workforce, creating challenges for employers in attracting and retaining employees.

Median Monthly Gross Rent, Grafton County



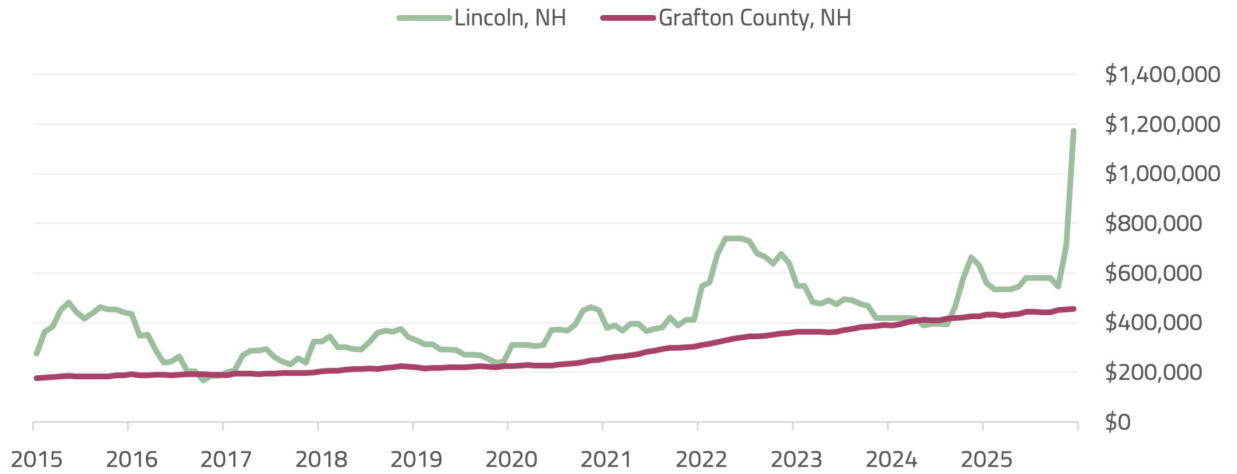
Source: New Hampshire Housing Finance Agency Rental Cost Survey Report

# OWNERSHIP ANALYSIS

## For Sale Housing Units

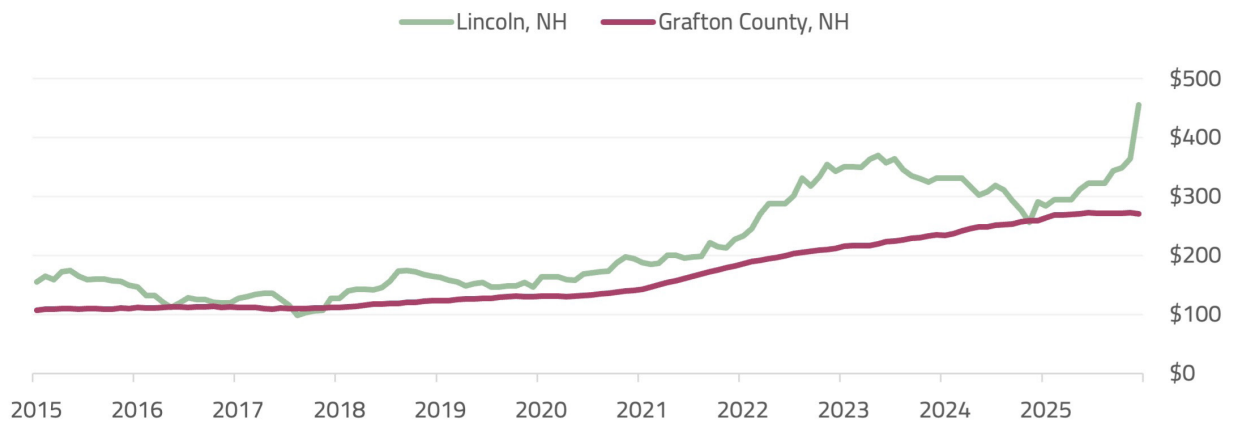
For-sale housing in Lincoln has become increasingly expensive over the past decade. Since 2015, the median sales price of a single-family home has risen from roughly \$363,000 to \$709,000 in November 2025, representing a 95% increase over ten years. Home prices in Lincoln have generally remained above the Grafton County average, reflecting both regional trends and local market dynamics. In December 2025, the median sales price approached \$1.2 million; however, Lincoln typically experiences a relatively small number of home sales each month, meaning that a few higher-priced transactions can temporarily raise the median price. The sharp increase in home prices has been driven by strong demand for both year-round and seasonal housing, as well as a growing market for luxury second homes. Overall, the long-term trend points to a persistently competitive and increasingly costly ownership market, creating growing challenges for first-time buyers and local workers seeking housing in Lincoln.

### Median Single Family Standalone Home Sale Prices 12-month moving average



Source: Redfin Market Data

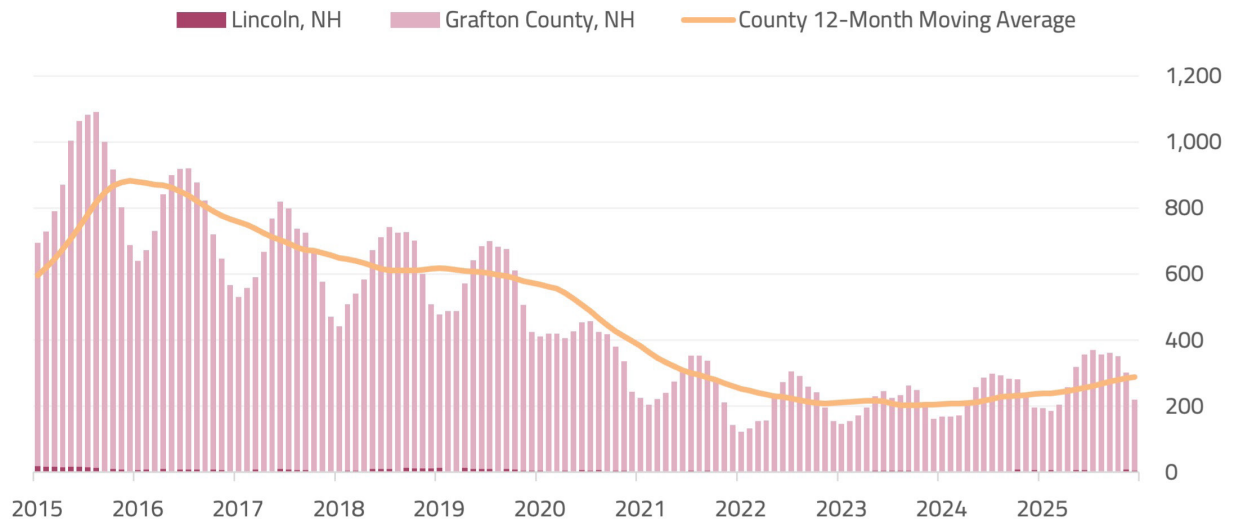
### Median Price per SQFT Single Family Standalone Homes 12-month moving average



Over the past decade, the supply of homes for sale in Lincoln and the surrounding county has declined steadily, with a sharper contraction after 2020 as housing demand increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. By December 2025, Lincoln's for-sale inventory had fallen to just five homes, reflecting the town's very limited and highly constrained market. During the same period, for-sale inventory across Grafton County declined to just under 290 homes, indicating similarly tight conditions at the regional level.

In Lincoln, months of supply has fluctuated over time, reflecting the town's limited housing inventory and relatively small number of active listings. Despite these fluctuations, the overall trend shows a decline in available supply. Months

### Inventory: All Homes for Sale



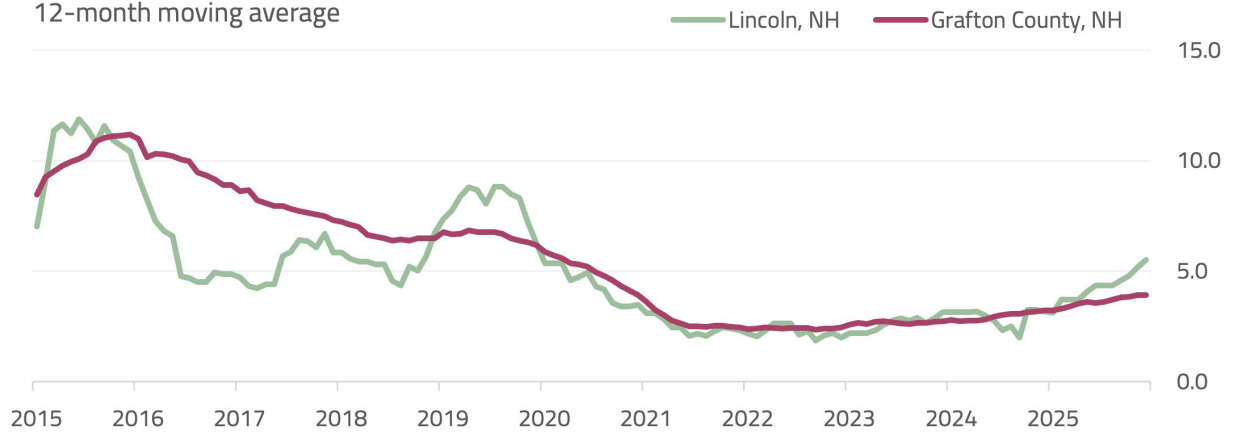
Source: Redfin Market Data

of supply fell from roughly nine months prior to 2020 to about five and a half months in late 2025. Across Grafton County, months of supply declined to fewer than four months, below the five to six months typically associated with balanced market conditions. Because Lincoln's housing market is relatively small, changes in the number of listings or sales can noticeably affect market indicators from year to year.

Within this context, the types of homes available also shape the local ownership market. The supply of moderately priced single-family homes available to year-round residents is limited, while higher-end homes and luxury

### Months of Supply

12-month moving average



Source: Redfin Market Data

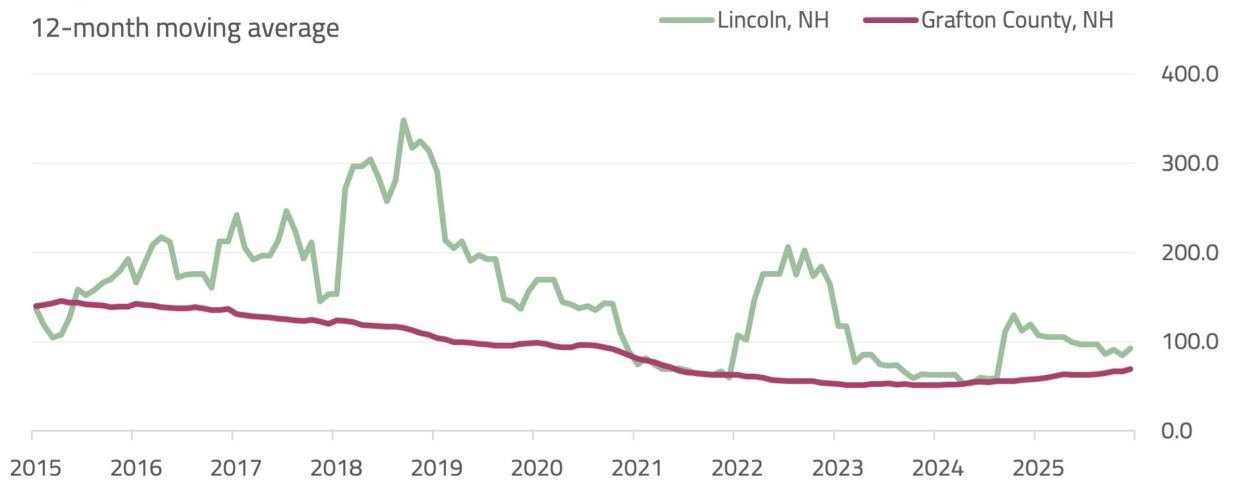
condominiums associated with seasonal or recreational demand represent a more active segment of the market. As a result, buyers seeking moderately priced homes may encounter fewer options, while higher-priced properties and resort-oriented housing types account for a larger share of recent activity.

By December 2025, homes in Lincoln spent just under 100 days on the market, down substantially from more than 315 days in December 2018. While there was a brief increase in 2022 as the housing market adjusted to pandemic-related disruptions, days on market in Lincoln have fluctuated widely over time. This variability reflects the town's very limited inventory, where a small number of listings can cause short-term shifts in market indicators. Overall, the long-term trend points to a tightening market shaped by sustained buyer demand and pandemic-era changes that accelerated sales activity.

Similar, though more stable, patterns are evident at the county level. In Grafton County, average days on market declined to just under 70 days in 2025, down from approximately 140 days in 2015, indicating increasingly competitive conditions across the broader region.

### Days on Market

12-month moving average



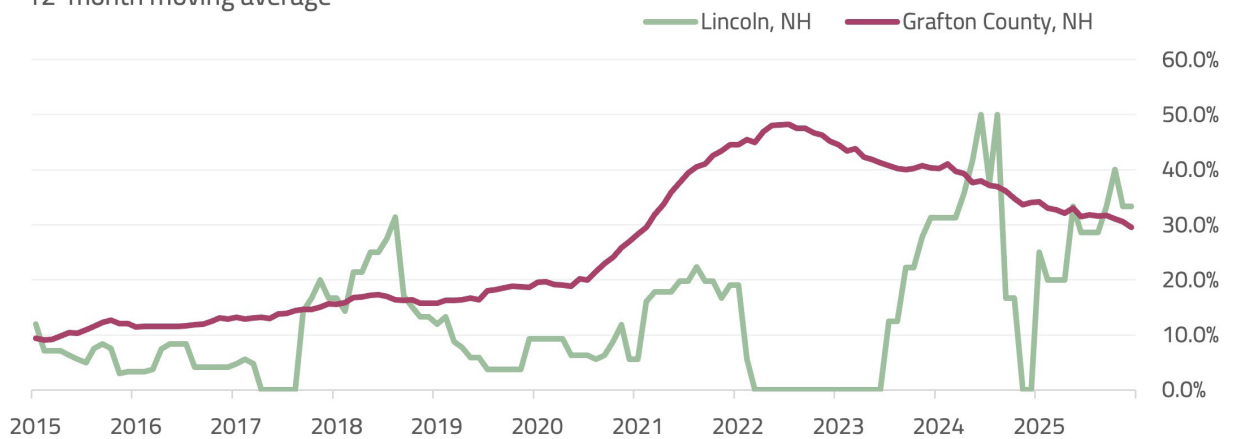
Source: Redfin Market Data

At the same time, the share of homes selling above asking price has varied considerably in Lincoln. Because relatively few homes sell in the town each year, this measure can fluctuate from month to month, with some periods when no homes sell above list price and others when a larger share do. Prior to the pandemic, between roughly 4 and 30 percent of homes in Lincoln sold above asking. Since 2020, that range has widened to between about 5 and 50 percent, reflecting heightened competition in a constrained market.

In Grafton County, these pressures are also evident at a larger scale: in 2025, approximately 30 percent of homes sold above list price, compared to about 9 percent in 2015.

### Percentage of Homes Sold Above Asking

12-month moving average



Source: Redfin Market Data

Taken together, these trends point to constrained housing supply and sustained pressure on prices, contributing to a challenging environment for prospective buyers in both Lincoln and the surrounding region.



# AFFORDABILITY GAP ANALYSIS

## Cost Burden

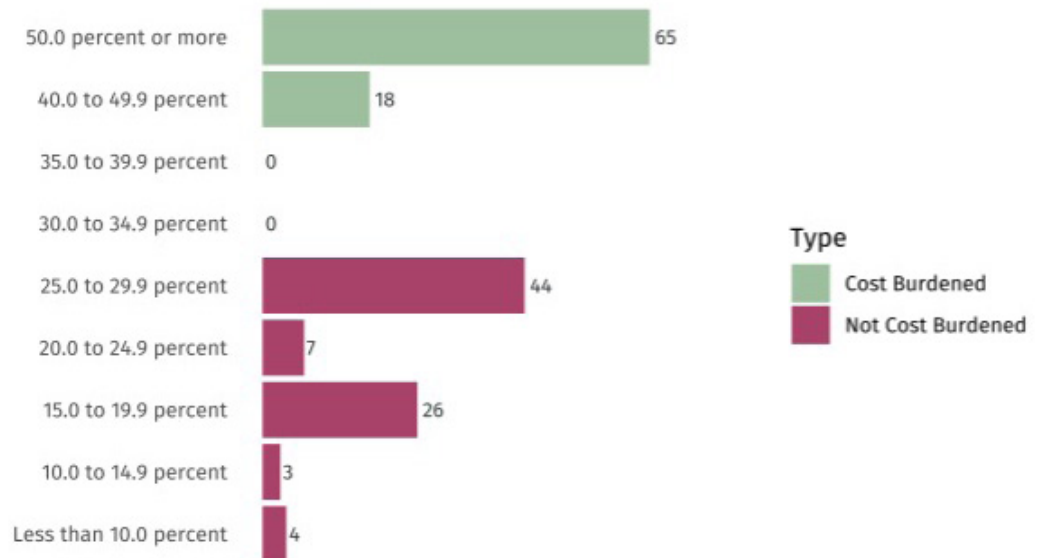
**Rental costs are high relative to local incomes, with median gross rents for a two-bedroom unit in Grafton County exceeding \$2,000 per month. Nearly half of Lincoln's renter households spend more than 30% of their income on housing, and roughly 39% are severely cost burdened. Homeowners face lower cost burdens, with about 12% of households spending over 30% of their income on housing.**

Housing affordability is often measured by the share of income households spend on housing. HUD considers a household cost burdened when housing costs exceed 30 percent of income, a threshold beyond which households have less flexibility to cover other essential expenses such as food, transportation, healthcare, childcare, and education. In Lincoln, housing cost burdens are especially common among renter households. Nearly half of all renters spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing, and about 39 percent spend at least half of their income on housing costs, placing them in the severely cost burdened category. These figures reflect the pressure renters face in a market with limited lower-cost options and constrained year-round supply.

Homeowners in Lincoln are generally less likely to experience housing cost burdens than renters, though some pressure

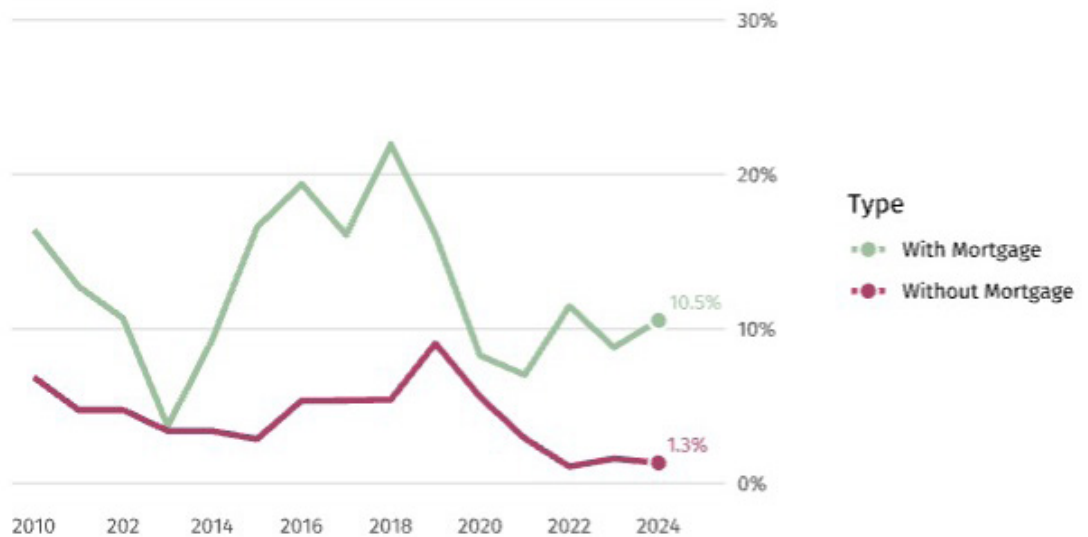
remains. Approximately 12 percent of owner households spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs. These cost burdens are largely concentrated among homeowners with mortgages, about 11 percent of whom are cost burdened, compared to roughly 1 percent of homeowners without a mortgage. For mortgage-free households, many of whom are older adults, housing costs may still be high relative to their income, but their financial situation can differ due to savings or other assets.

Rent as a Percent of Income



Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates

Households that spend 30% or more on housing costs  
By Mortgage Status



Source: US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates

# HOUSEHOLDS

Affordable housing is an essential part of a balanced housing market, helping ensure that households across a range of incomes can find safe and reasonably priced homes. Looking at household incomes for renters and owners provides useful context for understanding housing need and affordability in Lincoln. In Lincoln, renter incomes are generally low relative to the area median. Approximately 90 percent of renter households earn below the Area Median Income (AMI), and about 60 percent earn less than 50 percent of AMI. For a two-person household at 50 percent of AMI, this translates to an annual income of roughly \$44,200 and an affordable monthly rent of about \$1,105. By comparison, about 64 percent of rental units in Grafton County have gross rents above \$1,100 per month, suggesting that a large share of the regional rental market is priced beyond what many lower-income households in Lincoln can afford.

## Owner

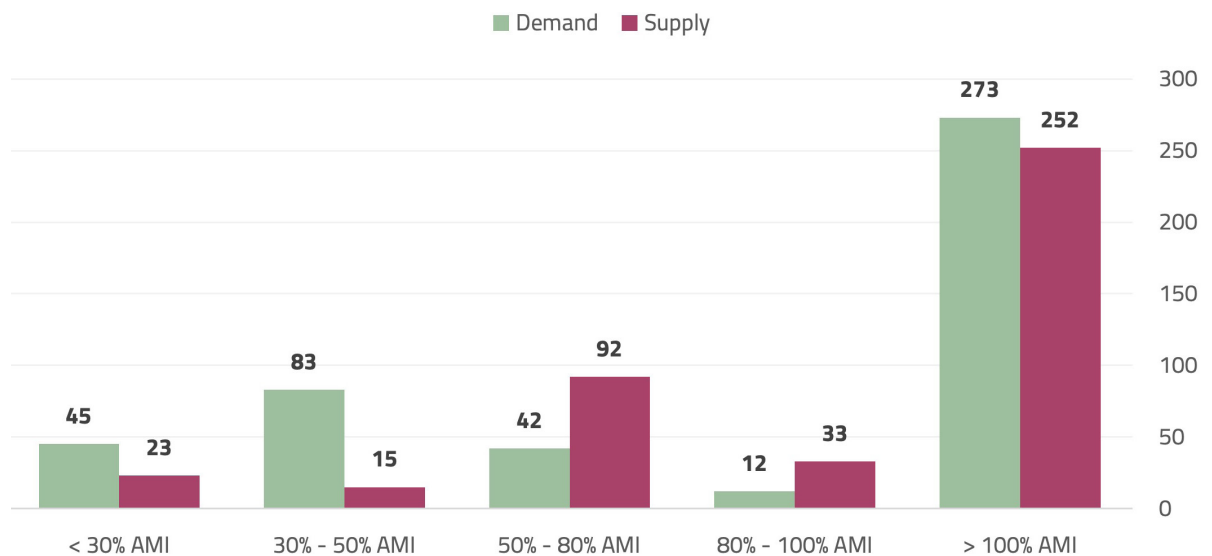
***The ownership housing market is skewed toward higher-income households, with 252 units affordable to households earning above 100% of AMI compared with 163 units below that threshold. Lower-income households earning less than 50% of AMI face a shortfall of about ninety units.***

The affordability gap analysis helps illustrate how well Lincoln’s housing supply matches the needs of its residents. It compares household incomes with the prices of homes available for sale to show where households are able to find housing and where gaps exist. When there are fewer homes available than households who can afford them, the result is a gap that points to unmet housing need.

In Lincoln, the ownership housing market is largely concentrated at higher price points. Approximately 252 ownership units are affordable to households earning more

than 100 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI), compared with about 163 units affordable to households earning below that level. This imbalance limits opportunities for lower-income buyers, particularly households earning less than 50 percent of AMI, who face an estimated shortfall of about nine affordable ownership units. At the same time, even households earning above 100 percent of AMI encounter a gap of roughly 20 units, reflecting strong demand and limited supply at the upper end of the market. Overall, these patterns show that Lincoln’s ownership market is skewed toward higher-priced homes, creating competition across much of the market and leaving fewer options for moderate- and lower-income households.

Ownership Supply and Demand, Lincoln, NH



Source: HUD FY25 Income Limits, ACS 5-Year Estimates

## Renter

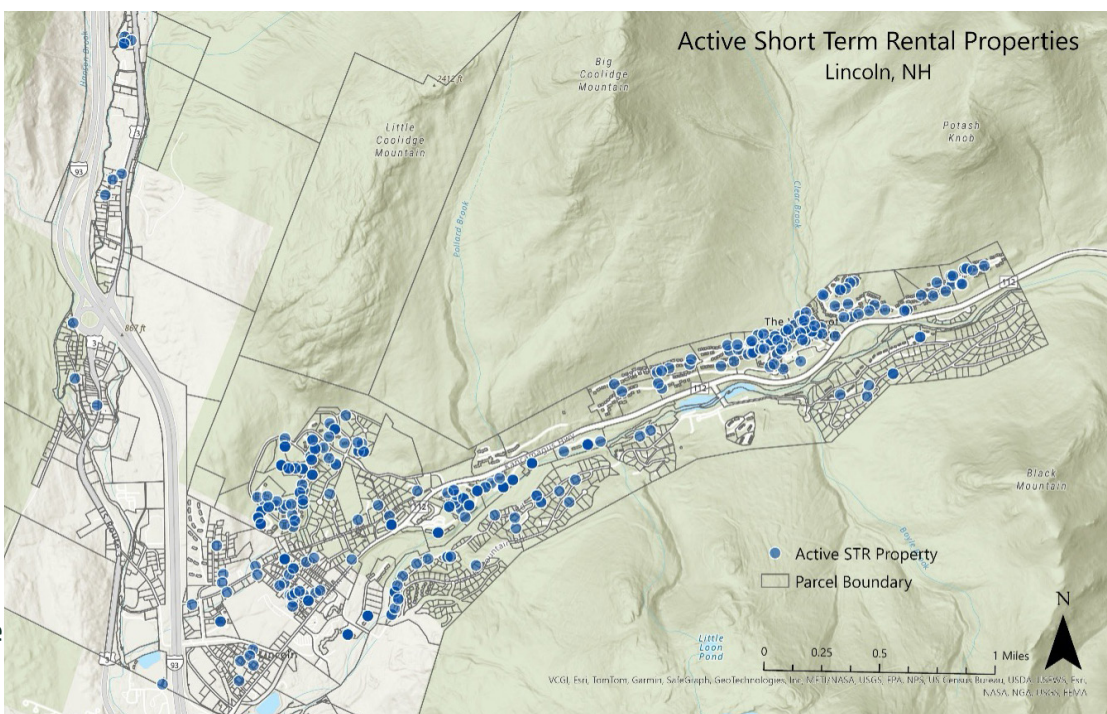
**Most rental units are priced for households earning below 80% of AMI. Very low-income households earning at or below 30% of AMI face an estimated deficit of 35 units, which includes many local and seasonal workers. Moderate-income households have some options, with a surplus of roughly 43 rental units.**

The rental affordability analysis suggests that rental housing in Lincoln is generally priced for households earning below 100 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). Even so, demand remains strong across these income levels, and many renters still face challenges finding housing that fits their budgets. The greatest pressure occurs among households with the lowest incomes. Households earning at or below 30 percent of AMI face an estimated shortage of roughly 35 rental units that would be considered affordable at their income level. As a result, many very low-income renters likely pay more for housing than they can comfortably afford or must seek housing outside of Lincoln.

While households earning between 30 and 100 percent of AMI have somewhat more options, availability is still limited relative to demand. Local feedback indicates that many people who work in or have ties to the community struggle to find housing in Lincoln. This challenge extends beyond seasonal or service-sector workers and affects a wide range of households who would otherwise prefer to live in town.

## SHORT TERM RENTALS

As of April 2026, there are approximately 476 active short-term rental (STR) properties in Lincoln. This reflects the town's strong appeal as a recreation- and tourism-oriented community. Given Lincoln's small year-round population and limited housing stock, the presence of a large number of STRs represents a meaningful share of the overall housing supply.



While short-term rentals support the local tourism economy and provide income for property owners, they also reduce the number of homes available for year-round occupancy, contributing to tighter housing conditions for residents and workers and a loss of community character.

It should be noted that this total may not capture all STR activity in Lincoln. The Town maintains an inventory of known STRs; however, some properties may be advertised through informal channels, such as social media platforms, rather than registered short-term rental sites, which can result in undercounting within the formal system.

## Projections

***Looking ahead, Lincoln is projected to need approximately 171 new housing units by 2040, including 112 ownership units and 59 rental units, to accommodate population and household growth. Additional housing across a range of affordability levels will be essential to meet the needs of local residents, support the workforce, and maintain a balanced housing market.***

According to the Fair Share Tables from the North Country Regional Housing Needs Assessment, Lincoln is projected to need approximately 171 new housing units by 2040 to accommodate anticipated population and household growth. Of this total, about 112 units are expected to serve ownership households, while roughly 59 units are needed for the rental market. Within the ownership category, there is a need for 53 units affordable to households earning less than 100% of the area median income (AMI) and 59 units for households above 100% AMI. Among renter households, 12 units are needed for those earning below 60% of AMI, with an additional 47 units needed for households above 60% AMI.

These projections highlight the importance of expanding both ownership and rental housing options, ensuring that Lincoln can meet the needs of residents across a range of incomes and life stages while supporting a balanced and inclusive housing market.

2040 New Units Total	Owner 2040	Renters 2040
171	112	59

Source: North Country Region Housing Needs Assessment, 2022

## Recent Local Actions

In response to ongoing housing constraints, the Town of Lincoln has taken steps to expand opportunities for year-round and workforce housing. In 2024, voters approved the acquisition of the approximately 322-acre Campers World property for a mixed-income residential development targeted to full-time residents and deed-restricted against short-term rental use. This site represents one of the most significant opportunities to increase Lincoln's year-round housing supply.

At the March 2026 Town Meeting, the Town also adopted a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district to support redevelopment of the Campers World property. The district includes three parcels: the Campers World site, an adjacent landlocked parcel with potential future connectivity, and a Town-owned parcel on Route 3 across the Pemigewasset River. The TIF is intended to fund public infrastructure and site improvements needed to advance development of the site into a range of housing options affordable to the local workforce and is viewed as a key tool to facilitate redevelopment.



# DATA SOURCES

- 2022 North Country Region Housing Needs Assessment
- HUD FY25 Income Limits, ACS 5-Year Estimates
- 2025 US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates
- 2015-2025 Redfin Market Data
- 2024 New Hampshire Housing Finance Agency Rental Cost Survey Report
- Town of Lincoln
- 2018-2025 Lin-Wood Schools SAU 68 School Enrollment Data
- 2025 US Census Bureau Decennial Census



Lincoln's transportation system reflects both its small-town scale and its regional importance within the western White Mountains. Situated along Interstate 93, U.S. Route 3, and NH Route 112 (Kancamagus Highway), the town serves as a major access point to the White Mountain National Forest, Franconia Notch State Park, Loon Mountain Resort, and nearby recreation destinations. This location brings heavy seasonal traffic and infrastructure demands, particularly along Main Street and other routes connecting to tourism destinations.

Nearly one-third of Lincoln's roads are privately maintained. The town continues to address aging infrastructure, stormwater management, and the need for safer pedestrian and bicycle connections between neighborhoods, the downtown, and recreation areas. With its compact downtown and well-established roadway network, Lincoln can improve local and regional mobility through continued coordination with state agencies and major landowners. This is primarily due to the significance of state-maintained roadways limits local control—reducing municipal maintenance costs but often delaying needed improvements.

## FACTS AND FIGURES



There are **74.4** total miles of federal, state, municipal, and private roads.



Traffic volumes in Lincoln grew by **8%–20%** from 2018 to 2024, with 2024 counts meeting or exceeding pre-2020 levels, particularly at the I-93 interchanges and along NH Route 112.



There are **38** miles of state routes in Lincoln, and only **9** miles of town-maintained roads. Nearly 1/3 or **27 miles** of roads in Lincoln are privately owned.



Lincoln's pedestrian and bicycle network includes paved shared-use paths that support recreation and in-town travel, including the **8.7-mile Franconia Notch Recreation Path** within Franconia Notch State Park and a **1.4-mile path** linking Loon Mountain to the village area near Route 112.

According to **2018–2025** data from the Lincoln Police Department, **annual crash totals range from 64 to 106 crashes per year**, with **78 crashes recorded in 2025**. A reporting software change at the end of 2022 introduced new crash categories so totals before and after 2022 may not be directly comparable.



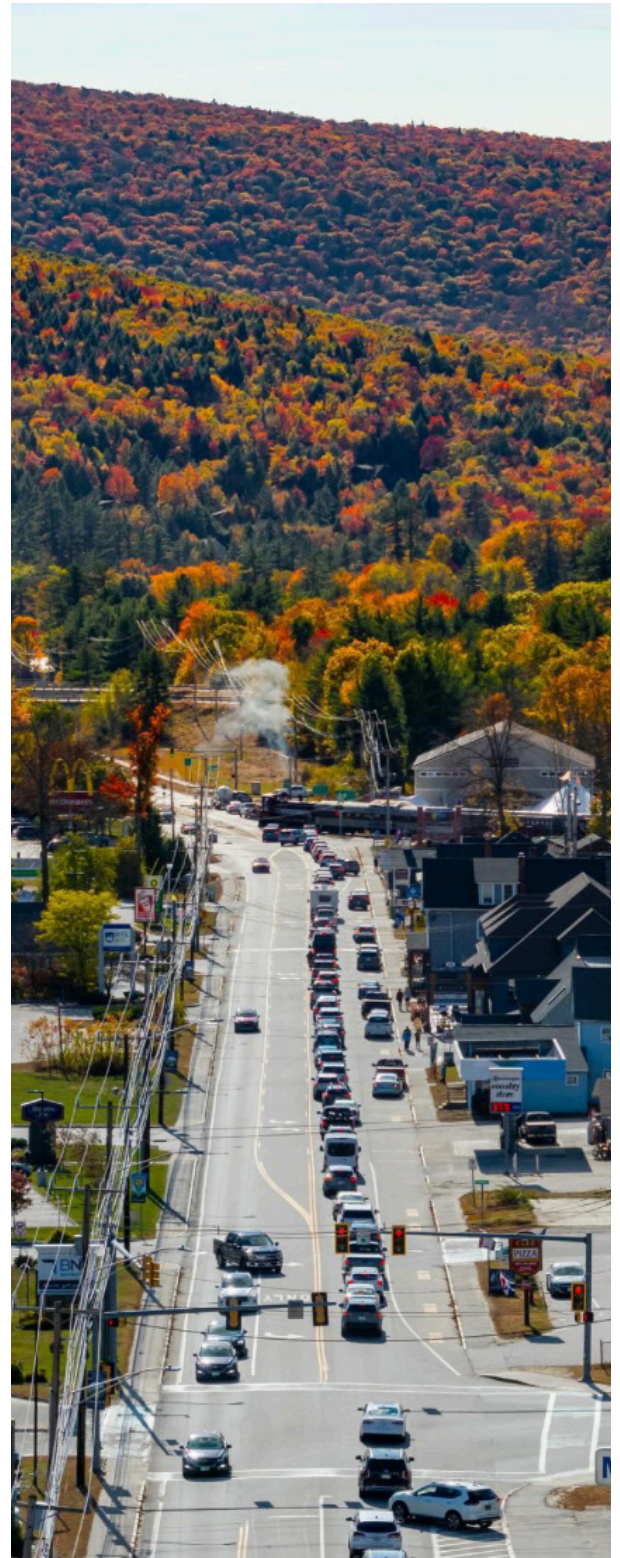
There are **34** bridges in Lincoln consisting of state, local, private, and non-vehicular. All of which are considered structurally sound as of 2024.

## EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

***Lincoln's transportation system serves both local residents and as a regional gateway to the White Mountains. Its position along Interstate 93, U.S. Route 3, and NH Route 112 (Kancamagus Highway) makes it a major access point to recreation destinations including Loon Mountain Resort, Franconia Notch State Park, and the White Mountain National Forest. These corridors experience significant seasonal traffic increases, creating recurring congestion and safety challenges during peak visitor months.***

The town's roadway network totals approximately 74.7 miles, consisting of 38 miles of state-maintained roads, 9 miles of locally maintained roads, 1 mile of federally owned roadway, and 27 miles of private roads. Three major highways define Lincoln's roadway system. I-93 serves as the community's primary north-south corridor, connecting Lincoln to the rest of New Hampshire and New England. The highway passes directly through town with three interchanges—Exits 32, 33, and 34A—that provide access to downtown, the Kancamagus Highway, and Loon Mountain Resort. The Kancamagus Highway, which parallels the interstate, functions as the town's Main Street and local connector, linking the village center with surrounding neighborhoods, lodging, and visitor destinations such as Clark's Trading Post, Whale's Tale Water Park, and Franconia Notch State Park. NH Route 112, known as the Kancamagus Highway, provides Lincoln's principal east-west connection through the White Mountain National Forest. Roughly 14 miles of the Kancamagus Highway traverse the town; designated as a scenic byway, it is one of New England's most traveled recreation corridors.

About one-third of the total roadway network is private roads which reduces the town's direct maintenance burden but presents ongoing public safety challenges. Many of these roads serve residential developments or seasonal properties, and ensuring they are constructed and maintained to standards that support safe and reliable emergency access remains an important local concern. According to the Lincoln Department of Public Works, all of Lincoln's roads are paved. As identified in the 2024 Annual Town Report, the Lincoln DPW partnered with a contractor to complete several major paving projects, including Louanne Lane, the finish course for the Kancamagus Recreation Area parking lot, the Pollard Road extension near the new Police Station, and a full reconstruction of Liberty and Eagle Cliff Roads. Once the paving was complete, DPW crews shouldered the surrounding areas to stabilize the roadway edges and improve long-term maintenance.



## Traffic Volumes & Seasonal Variation

Traffic volumes in Lincoln reflect its dual identity as a residential community and regional tourism hub, with the highest activity concentrated along Main Street (NH 112) and the I-93 interchanges. Seasonal peaks driven by visitor travel create recurring congestion near downtown and gateway corridors, highlighting the need for continued coordination and infrastructure management to maintain safe and efficient traffic flow. The Town's 2024 Hazard Mitigation Plan documents the scale of these seasonal fluctuations, noting that Lincoln's population can increase to as many as 25,000 people during winter vacation periods and busy winter weekends, while summer is even more active, with daily population increases of up to 600 percent due to hikers, travelers, and campers. Major seasonal events and attractions—including the Highland Games, fall foliage weekends, and peak recreation seasons—further intensify traffic volumes, particularly along primary access routes

According to NHDOT traffic count data (2018–2024), the highest volumes occur at the I-93 interchanges and along NH Route 112 (Main Street / Kancamagus Highway). Traffic near Exits 32 and 33 averages between 8,000 and 9,000 vehicles per day, serving visitors traveling to downtown, Loon Mountain, and the Kancamagus Highway. NH 112, which functions as Lincoln's Main Street, carries between 5,000 and 6,000 vehicles per day, with the heaviest volumes recorded near the Pemigewasset River crossing and the Pollard Brook area east of downtown. U.S. Route 3 (Daniel Webster Highway) carries approximately 2,300 to 3,400 vehicles per day, linking Lincoln with Woodstock to the south and Franconia Notch to the north. **Between 2018 and 2024, most traffic count stations in Lincoln recorded increases ranging from roughly 8% to nearly 20%, with the largest growth occurring near the I-93 interchanges.** These patterns reflect steady recovery from pandemic-related declines and the continued strength of Lincoln's recreation-based economy, with 2024 traffic volumes now meeting or exceeding pre-2020 levels, especially near the I-93 interchanges and along NH 112 through the village center.

The town's 2016 Master Plan, North Country Council's 2023 Regional Transportation Plan, and the 2025 North Country Transportation Safety Action Plan have noted these recurring conditions and the importance of maintaining roadway infrastructure, managing seasonal congestion, and ensuring safe access across both public and private roads. While traffic pressures peak during busy seasons, the overall system continues to function well for a community of Lincoln's size. Continued coordination with state and regional partners will help the town address future maintenance needs and preserve a transportation network that supports residents, visitors, and local businesses while maintaining Lincoln's character as a scenic and welcoming gateway to the White Mountains.

## Accident Data

According to 2018–2025 accident data from the Lincoln Police Department, annual crash totals vary from year to year, generally ranging between 64 and 106 crashes over the period. In 2025, 78 total crashes were recorded, including 76 reportable and 2 non-reportable crashes, as well as 1 fatality, with no pedestrian or bicycle crashes reported. The Police Department notes that a change in reporting software at the end of 2022 introduced new categories—reportable, non-reportable, fatal, pedestrian, and bicycle crashes—whereas earlier years include only total crashes without differentiation. Because totals from 2022 onward (94 crashes in 2022, 64 in 2023, 74 in 2024, and 78 in 2025) are compiled under this newer system, year-to-year comparisons may reflect differences in reporting practices, and discrepancies may exist between pre-2022 and post-2022 data.



# PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE INFRASTRUCTURE

*Lincoln's pedestrian and bicycle network reflects a compact village core pattern. While the downtown area and adjacent neighborhoods are relatively well connected by sidewalks or wide road shoulders, most other areas of town rely on automobile access. Sidewalks and trails primarily serve local circulation and recreation rather than daily transportation needs, consistent with Lincoln's tourism-driven land use pattern.*

## Local Inventory

Sidewalks are concentrated in and around the village center, including Main Street (NH 112) and portions of Pollard Road, Maple Street, and Church Street. The Town rebuilds sections annually through its capital program, including curb resets and ADA ramp upgrades. Recent road upgrades included Loon Mountain Road (2019) and Maple Street (2020). New sidewalk segments are planned along Pollard Road to extend the link between Forest Ridge Drive and the village center. The Department of Public Works also conducts annual maintenance activities that include crack sealing, pavement overlays, and targeted sidewalk reconstruction to extend infrastructure life and improve pedestrian safety.

Lincoln includes paved shared-use paths that accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists. The Franconia Notch Recreation Path is an 8.7-mile paved trail that begins at the Flume Gorge Visitor Center in Lincoln and runs north through Franconia Notch State Park, providing access to park facilities and natural features and accommodating walkers, runners, and cyclists (and, in winter, snowshoers and cross-country skiers). A second, shorter paved path—approximately 1.4 miles—connects Loon Mountain Resort to Lincoln's village center and terminates near the intersection of Forest Ridge Drive and Route 112 (Kancamagus Highway), where users can transition to the sidewalk network leading further into the village area.

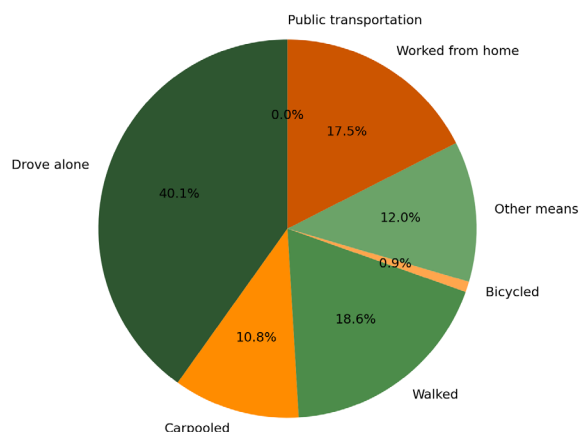
In addition to these paved facilities, the J.E. Henry Trail provides an off-road, multi-use route that expands Lincoln's pedestrian and bicycle network. The trail follows a former railroad corridor and offers a longer-distance connection through forested areas, supporting both recreation and alternative transportation opportunities while reinforcing Lincoln's broader trail system.

The town also adopted a Bicycle Ordinance in 1999, establishing basic safety and equipment standards consistent with state law. This demonstrates Lincoln's long-standing recognition of cycling as part of its local transportation network and could be reviewed against current safety and design standards.

According to 2023 American Community Survey data, **most Lincoln residents commute by car, with 40% driving alone and 11% carpooling.** Fewer than one in five walk or bike to work, indicating that **existing sidewalks and bicycle routes are used primarily for recreation rather than daily travel.**

## Lincoln, NH 2023 Primary Means of Transportation to Work

Primary Means of Transportation to Work — Lincoln, NH



Source: 2019-2023 American Community Survey Data

## State and Regional Context

The 2023 New Hampshire Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan highlights the growing importance of short-distance, active transportation trips statewide. The plan's three goals—safety, access, and culture—emphasize creating low-stress, context-sensitive bicycle and pedestrian networks that connect key destinations across communities of all sizes. It also notes the rise of e-bikes, which expand accessibility for older adults and riders of varying abilities, and calls for Complete Streets practices to integrate pedestrian and bicycle considerations into roadway design. For Lincoln, these statewide goals align with local priorities to connect neighborhoods, Main Street, and recreation areas such as Loon Mountain and the Franconia Notch Recreation Path through safe, accessible, and well-maintained routes.

The 2025 North Country Council Transportation Safety Action Plan reinforces local goals for slower speeds, safer crossings, and stronger pedestrian and bicycle connections in Lincoln and other regional centers. The plan promotes the Safe System Approach, emphasizing that roadway design should anticipate human error and protect vulnerable users through layered safety features. Recommended countermeasures include high-visibility crosswalk markings, enhanced lighting, curb extensions, raised medians, speed feedback signs, and roundabouts to improve safety and comfort for people walking and biking. These strategies align with Lincoln's emphasis on maintaining a walkable downtown, managing seasonal congestion, and ensuring safe travel near high-traffic tourist destinations. The town's Capital Improvement Plan and ongoing collaboration with the North Country Council and NHDOT will continue to prioritize mobility projects that close network gaps, expand multimodal access, and strengthen Lincoln's identity as a compact, walkable, and outdoor-oriented community within the White Mountains.



## PUBLIC, RAIL, AND ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

***While Lincoln lacks a fixed-route local transit system, several regional and on-demand services work to meet transportation needs for seniors, visitors, and residents without vehicles. The town also benefits from the Granite State Scenic Railway, a seasonal rail attraction that contributes to Lincoln's tourism economy.***

Lincoln is not served by a fixed-route local transit system; however, several regional, seasonal, and on-demand transportation options are available for residents and visitors. These services connect Lincoln with nearby communities, regional destinations, and statewide networks, helping to meet the needs of seniors, people with disabilities, and visitors accessing recreation areas. Together, they form part of a broader network of rural mobility options identified in the 2021 Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan, which recognizes Lincoln as a community with strong service coverage but limited in-town travel choices for non-drivers. Future opportunities highlighted in regional and local plans include exploring seasonal or event-based shuttles and remote parking programs to reduce congestion during peak tourism periods and enhance connectivity across the village area, recreation destinations, and White Mountain National Forest.

Transportation services offered in Lincoln, Grafton County, the Western White Mountain Region, or throughout New Hampshire (as identified in the 2021 Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan) are listed below.

<b>Concord Coach Lines</b>	Provides daily bus service between Lincoln, Boston South Station, and Logan Airport, offering two northbound and southbound trips each day.
<b>Appalachian Mountain Club Shuttle</b>	Operates seasonally from June through October, connecting trailheads, visitor centers, and destinations throughout the White Mountain National Forest, including stops near Lincoln.
<b>Grafton County Senior Citizens Council</b>	Offers weekday, door-to-door transportation for older adults and adults with disabilities for medical appointments, shopping, meals, and recreation.
<b>Transport Central</b>	Volunteer driver program providing free weekday rides for seniors, adults with disabilities, veterans, and Medicaid clients for medical and essential travel.
<b>The Shuttle Connection</b>	Local service offering 24-hour, fee-based transportation for airport trips, local rides, and charters; vehicles are ADA accessible.
<b>Best Choice Rides n' Taxi</b>	Provides local and long-distance taxi service in the Lincoln–Woodstock area, including airport shuttles, scenic rides, and delivery services.
<b>New England Disabled Sports</b>	Based at Loon Mountain, provides transportation for individuals with disabilities and caregivers to local events, programs, and regional competitions.
<b>NH Rideshare</b>	Statewide program matching commuters for carpools and vanpools and promoting shared transportation options to reduce costs and emissions.
<b>Granite State Independent Living</b>	Offers wheelchair-accessible transportation for individuals with disabilities when public options are unavailable.
<b>Care Plus New Hampshire</b>	Provides local and long-distance medical and non-emergency transportation, including wheelchair-accessible trips and veteran transport services.
<b>American Cancer Society – Road to Recovery</b>	Volunteer driver program offering rides for cancer patients to and from treatment appointments, subject to driver availability.
<b>Various Shuttle Services</b>	Various establishments provide shuttle services, including the Loon Shuttle Bus, connecting lodging, recreation areas, and key destinations.

## Rail

The main railroad attraction in Lincoln is the Granite State Scenic Railway, which offers round-trip scenic train rides along the Pemigewasset River from late May through October and again during the holiday season. Excursions, including the popular Granite State Railroad, operate on the state-owned Concord–Lincoln Line, a historic rail corridor dating back to the late 1800s. The line is owned by the State of New Hampshire and operated under lease by the Plymouth & Lincoln Railroad, which provides both tourist excursions and limited freight service. The scenic tourist railway remains the primary public rail operation in Lincoln and a key part of the town’s tourism economy.



# BRIDGES, CULVERTS, AND INFRASTRUCTURE CONDITION

*Lincoln's roadway infrastructure includes a mix of bridges, drainage systems, sidewalks, and levees that support the town's transportation network and public safety. Ongoing maintenance and capital planning are essential to sustain this infrastructure given Lincoln's mountain climate, seasonal weather extremes, and high visitor traffic.*

## Bridges

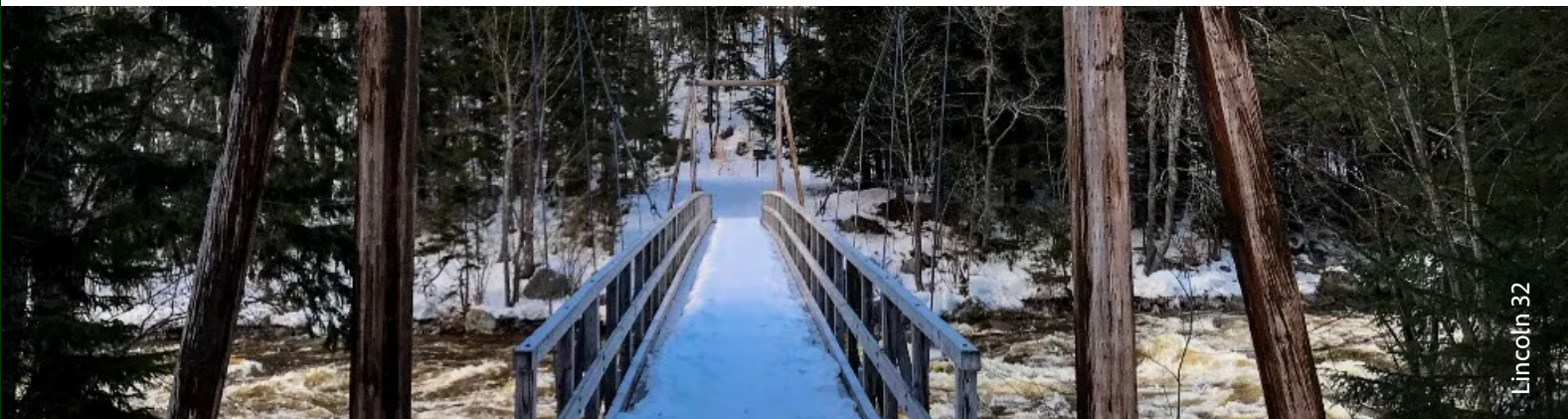
According to 2024 NHDOT bridge condition data, Lincoln has 34 bridges, including structures along I-93, U.S. Route 3, and NH Route 112 that span the Pemigewasset River and its tributaries such as Hanson Brook. None of Lincoln's bridges are currently Red-Listed, indicating they meet or exceed state condition standards. Notable crossings include the Loon Mountain Road bridge over the East Branch Pemigewasset River, the Georgiana Falls Road bridge over Hanson Brook, and multiple overpasses along I-93 providing local and regional access.

## Culverts and Drainage

Drainage and culvert improvements remain ongoing priorities for the Town. According to the 2024 Annual Town Report, the Department of Public Works completed or advanced drainage repairs along Rue de Gionet, Hanson Farm Road, and Edgewood and Coolidge Streets, addressing deterioration and stormwater issues that had developed over time. Looking ahead, the 2025–2030 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) identifies future culvert and drainage projects along Pleasant Street, Maple Street, Hemlock Lane, Pollard Road, and Main Street. These investments are intended to extend roadway longevity, improve stormwater management, and reduce localized flooding during major storm events. The CIP also identifies four river crossings where existing utility transmission lines cross the main stem of the Pemigewasset River, including infrastructure serving the Cold Spring Well. These crossings are located near the Loon Mountain Ski Area's Octagon Lodge, Building D of the Riverfront Condominiums, Jean's Playhouse, and near Country Bumpkins Campground and Cabins. Planned improvements to these crossings are intended to strengthen the resilience and reliability of critical utility infrastructure and reduce vulnerability to erosion and flood-related impacts.

## Levee and Dam Maintenance

The East Branch Pemigewasset River Levee remains under a long-term U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) maintenance agreement established in 1960 and in perpetuity. The Town continues to inspect and maintain the levee system to ensure compliance with federal safety standards and to protect downtown and residential areas from potential flood impacts. Consistent with this responsibility, the 2025–2030 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) identifies ongoing levee maintenance along the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River as a recurring capital need under the USACE maintenance agreement. The CIP also includes a proposed project related to the Loon Pond Dam, which was repaired in 2016. The dam has an estimated life expectancy of approximately 100 years; however, no replacement timeline has yet been established.



# UPCOMING AND PLANNED PROJECTS

## Town Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) (2025–2030)

The CIP identifies several upcoming projects related to transportation and roadway infrastructure, including:

- Ongoing drainage and culvert upgrades along Pleasant Street, Maple Street, Pollard Road, and Main Street to improve stormwater management and extend pavement life.
- Equipment purchases and facility maintenance for the Department of Public Works to support long-term infrastructure upkeep and emergency response.
- Sidewalk improvements along Pollard Road to expand ADA-accessible pedestrian connections between Forest Ridge Drive and the village area.
- Continued roadway maintenance through paving, crack sealing, and shoulder work on local streets.

## State and Regional Projects

The NHDOT Ten-Year Plan (2025–2035) currently lists no programmed projects within Lincoln. The North Country Council Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) 2025–2034 also identifies no active projects, though it notes the need for future corridor planning and safety studies to address local and regional travel needs. The 2025 North Country Council Transportation Safety Action Plan highlights several priority projects and study areas involving Lincoln and surrounding communities. In the Safety Action Plan, “known projects” are those that have been identified through prior programs such as the State Ten-Year Plan (TYP), Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), or Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ) but were not funded or formally programmed. “Proposed projects” are new needs identified through safety surveys or regional planning input that have not yet been scoped or advanced for funding.

Project / Corridor	Status	Description
I-93 to Kancamagus Highway Corridor Study	Known	Evaluates congestion and traffic management along the 2.5-mile stretch from Exit 32 to NH Route 112, where visitor traffic peaks during summer and fall.
NH Route 112, Lincoln to Conway	Proposed	Long-range improvement project to enhance roadway safety and preserve access along this key east–west scenic byway corridor through the White Mountains
I-93, Lincoln to Littleton	Known	Initiative exploring opportunities for public transit service to reduce congestion through Franconia Notch and increase mobility for non-drivers and workers.
NH 112 and US 3, Lincoln to Woodstock	Known	Focuses on pedestrian and cyclist safety, including pathway enhancements and improved crossing visibility along the Main Street corridor.
Lincoln to Franconia, Franconia Notch	Proposed	Coordination effort between state and regional partners to address multimodal access and visitor safety within Franconia Notch State Park.

# DATA SOURCES

- 2018-2025 NHDOT Traffic Count Data
- 2016 Master Plan Transportation Chapter
- 2025-2030 Town of Lincoln Capital Improvement Plan
- Lincoln Police Department
- Lincoln Public Works Department
- NHDOT 2025-2035 Ten Year Plan
- 2024 NHDOT Bridge Condition Data
- 1999 Lincoln Bicycle Ordinance
- 2023 North Country Council Regional Planning Commission – Regional Transportation Plan
- 2025-2034 Regional Transportation Improvement Program
- 2021 Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan
- 2025 North Country Council Transportation Safety Action Plan
- 2023 New Hampshire Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan
- 2025 NH GRANIT Data



Lincoln is positioned as a critical gateway to the White Mountain National Forest and Franconia Notch State Park, and encompasses diverse natural landscapes ranging from rugged mountain terrain to river valleys. Lincoln's natural resources are intrinsically linked to both its economic vitality and quality of life. They are essential to supporting a thriving tourism and outdoor recreation economy while providing essential ecosystem services like air and water purification, and wildlife habitat, to the community and region.

Lincoln is one of the largest towns geographically in the state at 83,844 acres. However, 89% (74,745 acres) of Lincoln is within the White Mountain National Forest. Another 6% (4,813 acres) falls within other state forests. In total, 95% of Lincoln's land area is within federal or state ownership as national and state forests.

The town's natural resources include protected alpine zones, extensive forest systems, critical wildlife habitats, and the headwaters and tributaries of the Pemigewasset River watershed. These resources not only define Lincoln's character but serve as the foundation for much of the local economy, particularly outdoor recreation and tourism. Understanding and managing these natural assets is essential for maintaining the community's resilience in the face of development pressures, climate change, and increasing visitor use.

## FACTS AND FIGURES



**45% of Lincoln's land area** is within federal or state ownership as national or state forests and parks.



There is a total of **2,556 subsurface aquifer acres** in Lincoln, of which only **54%** underlay permanently protected land.



In total, **94% of Lincoln's area** is classified as **important habitat** according to the Wildlife Action Plan.



According to The Nature Conservancy's definition of climate resilient lands, **almost the entirety of Lincoln is above average in its climate resilience.**



The **Pemigewasset River (also known as the Pemi)** flows south through Lincoln for about **8 miles.**



The town's position as a gateway to the White Mountains and part of the region's outdoor recreation economy creates both **economic opportunity and environmental stress.**



Originating in the Pemigewasset Wilderness, the **East Branch of the Pemigewasset River flows nearly 16 miles** west where it connects with the main stem of the Pemigewasset River.



**Invasive species represent another significant challenge** to Lincoln's natural resources. Variable milfoil, an aquatic invasive plant, and Japanese knotweed have become established along portions of the Pemigewasset River corridor.

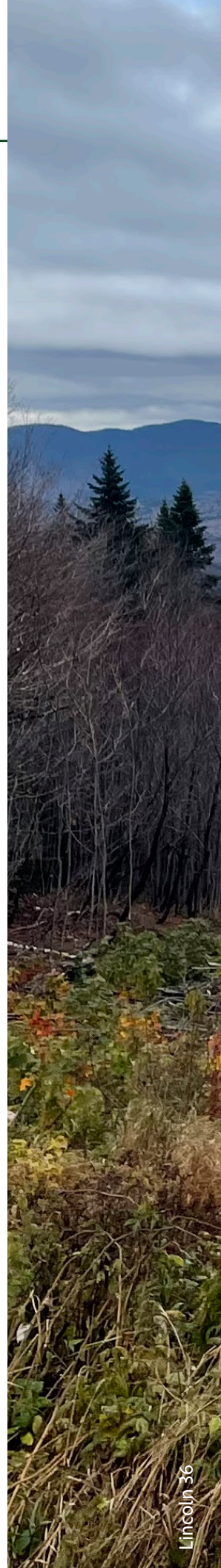
# NATURAL RESOURCE PRESSURES AND MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

***Lincoln's natural resources face mounting pressures from dramatically increased recreational visitation, intensified development creating impervious surfaces that degrade water quality, and the spread of invasive species along the Pemigewasset River corridor. Additional stressors include transportation impacts from I-93 and state highways, where traffic volumes have increased, threatening both surface and groundwater quality. However, the surrounding White Mountain National Forest, state parks, and state forests provide some protection against typical sprawl development and habitat fragmentation.***

Lincoln's natural resources face multiple pressures stemming from development, recreational use, and climate change. The town's position as a gateway to the White Mountains and an important part of the State's outdoor recreation economy creates both economic opportunity and environmental stress. In addition to the Pemigewasset River and East Branch, several ponds and lakes exist in Lincoln including Loon Pond, Lonesome Lake, Norcross Pond, and Gordon Pond and many others. According to a University of New Hampshire professor of recreation management and policy, which is cited in the 2022 North Country Rising Plan, the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically increased visitation to the White Mountain National Forest, with some areas experiencing usage increases of 60% or more, and wilderness areas seeing visitation increases of 400%. This increased visitation is also reflected along the Kancamagus Highway, where high traffic volumes and limited shoulder space create safety challenges for bicyclists and other non-motorized users.

Development pressures have also intensified, particularly in the housing sector. The pandemic accelerated existing trends of second-home purchases and short-term rental conversions, changing the character of some neighborhoods and putting pressure on remaining undeveloped lands. However, given the constraints the national forest, state park, and state forests place on sprawl development, Lincoln is fairly safe from the more typical concerns surrounding development pressure that often fragments natural resources. With that said, increased development typically brings increased impervious surfaces, which affect stormwater runoff patterns, reduce groundwater recharge, and can degrade water quality through increased pollutant loading. Lincoln has established strong stormwater management practices that help mitigate these impacts and protect water resources. As development intensifies in the remaining available parts of town and redevelopment projects are proposed, Lincoln needs to be aware of these ripple effects that have the potential to significantly impact both surface and subsurface water resources.

Invasive species represent another significant challenge to natural resource integrity. Japanese Knotweed have become established along portions of the Pemigewasset River corridor. This type of species proliferate rapidly, crowding out native plants and often dominating large areas. Early detection and rapid response to control small populations are critical to prevent this species from becoming fully established. With so much visitation in Lincoln, the town should pay special attention to the spread of invasive species that could have dramatic effects on the White Mountain National Forest and adjacent state parks and forests.



Transportation infrastructure, including Interstate 93 and state highways, creates environmental impacts through stormwater runoff, road salt application, and wildlife habitat fragmentation. Average daily traffic volumes have increased over the past decade, with Lincoln experiencing more than a 20% increase to approximately 9,800 vehicles per day. This increased traffic brings additional pollutant loading to nearby water bodies and may result in greater volumes of road salt, which can both affect both surface water and groundwater quality.

## LINCOLN'S NATURAL RESOURCES

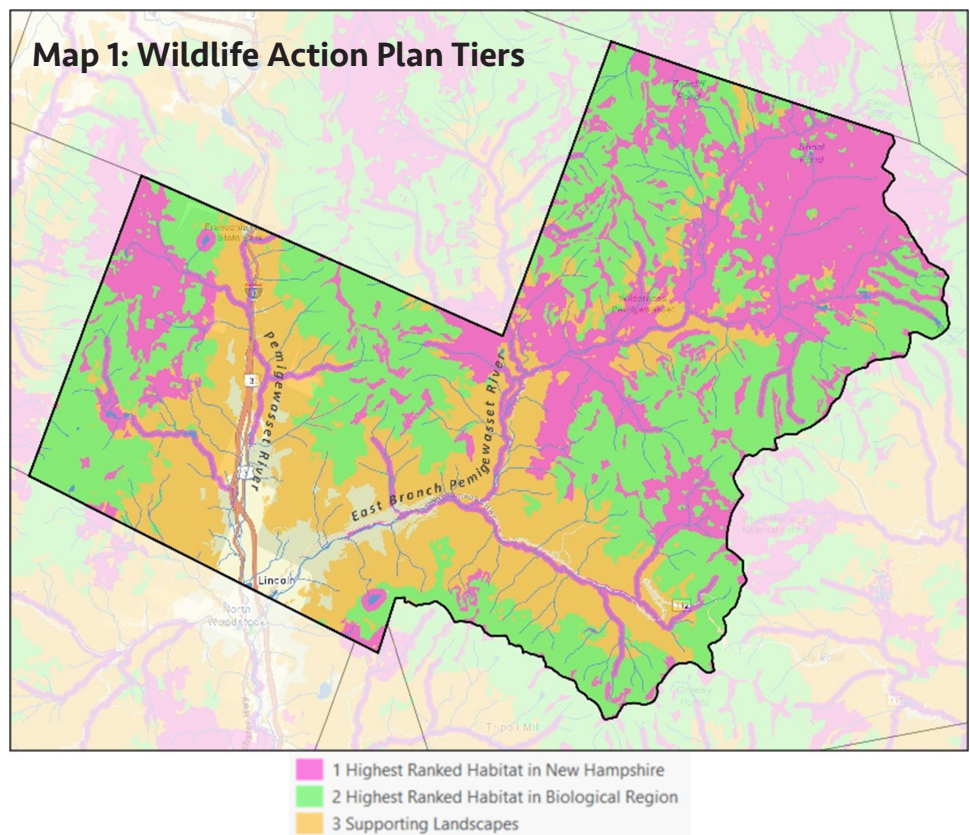
### Forests and Terrestrial Ecosystems

***Lincoln's forests are dominated by federal and state ownership through the White Mountain National Forest, Franconia Notch State Park, and the Second Presidential and Fay State Forests. These represent Lincoln's most extensive natural resources and feature northern hardwood-conifer ecosystems that provide critical services while supporting the local economy. Additionally, the New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan identifies 94% of Lincoln's total area as important habitat, reflecting the region's exceptional ecological significance and long cultural history of forest stewardship.***

Beyond providing ecosystem services like air and water purification, soil stabilization, and wildlife habitat, Lincoln's forests also support the local economy through sustainable timber harvesting, maple syrup production, and as the setting for outdoor recreation activities. The region has a long cultural history of forest stewardship, with forest management practices striving to balance ecological health with economic uses.

The New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan identifies Lincoln and surrounding communities as home to some of the highest-ranked habitat in the state. There are 24,761 acres (30% of Lincoln) of **Tier 1 habitat** in Lincoln; 32,155 acres (38% of Lincoln) of **Tier 2 habitat**, and 22,226 acres (27% of Lincoln) of **Tier 3 habitat**. In total, 94% of Lincoln's area is classified as important habitat according to the Wildlife Action Plan.

The Map 1 illustrates these habitat rankings. This designation reflects the ecological significance of the area's forests, wetlands, and aquatic systems in supporting biodiversity at both state and regional scales. Nearly all prioritized habitats identified in the Wildlife Action Plan are within existing permanently protected lands. However, a stretch of highest ranked habitat in the state along the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River lies on private property, much of which is owned by Loon Landing Development LLC, Loon Mountain Recreation Corporation, and other private landowners.



## Steep Slopes

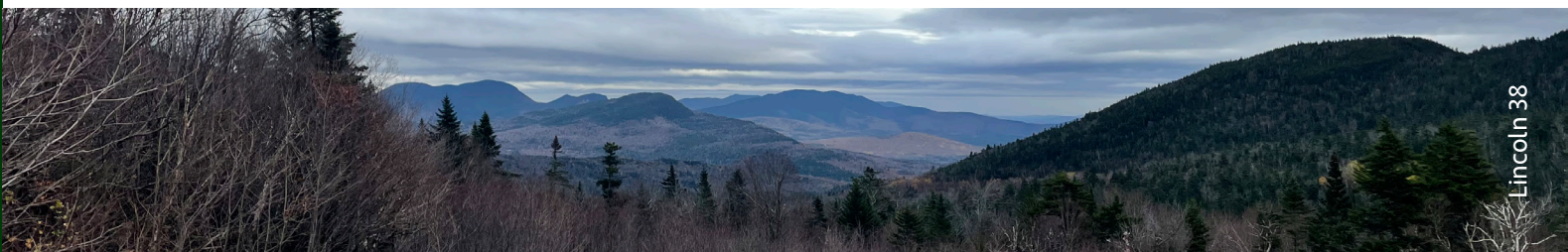
***Steep slopes cover about one-third of the part of the community being planned for. They serve as both an important natural resource providing ecosystem services and wildlife habitat and represent a significant constraint on future development. Approximately 80% of these steeper terrain areas appear to remain undeveloped due to site challenges.***

The steep slope analysis for Lincoln concentrated on the focus area of developable lands to offer a more detailed understanding of how these slopes could affect the Town's future. This focus area plays a larger role in other existing conditions summaries (including but not limited to the Land Use section) as a way of representing the developable core of Lincoln. This area is the result of the town's unique geography that helped create a concentrated development pattern within the valley floor along the Pemigewasset River, the East Branch, and major transportation routes. Map 2 shows the extent of this focus area and the percent of slopes present.



The focus area consists of 4,148 total acres. Of that, 2/3rds (66%) of the land has a slope less than 15 degrees, which are considered reasonably buildable slopes. Six percent (260 acres) of the focus area falls between 15–25-degree slopes, with the remaining 28% being slopes greater than 25 degrees, which are often considered slopes challenging and costly to develop.

Some of this land, however, has already been developed. Removing existing developed land in the analysis provides a better understanding of what steep slopes remain for potential future development. Of the 2,749 acres of land with a less-than-15-degree slope in the focus area, more than 60% is undeveloped. For land between 15-25-degree slopes, which totals 260 acres in the focus area, nearly 80% is undeveloped. Equally, 80% of slopes greater than 25-degrees within the focus area are undeveloped. While steep slopes do not preclude development, it becomes increasingly expensive to do so it would likely impact the effects of storm water runoff in town and potential safety downhill. This is all to say that a significant amount of steep slopes – anything greater than 15-degrees – are largely undeveloped in the focus area.



## Water Resources and the Pemigewasset River Watershed

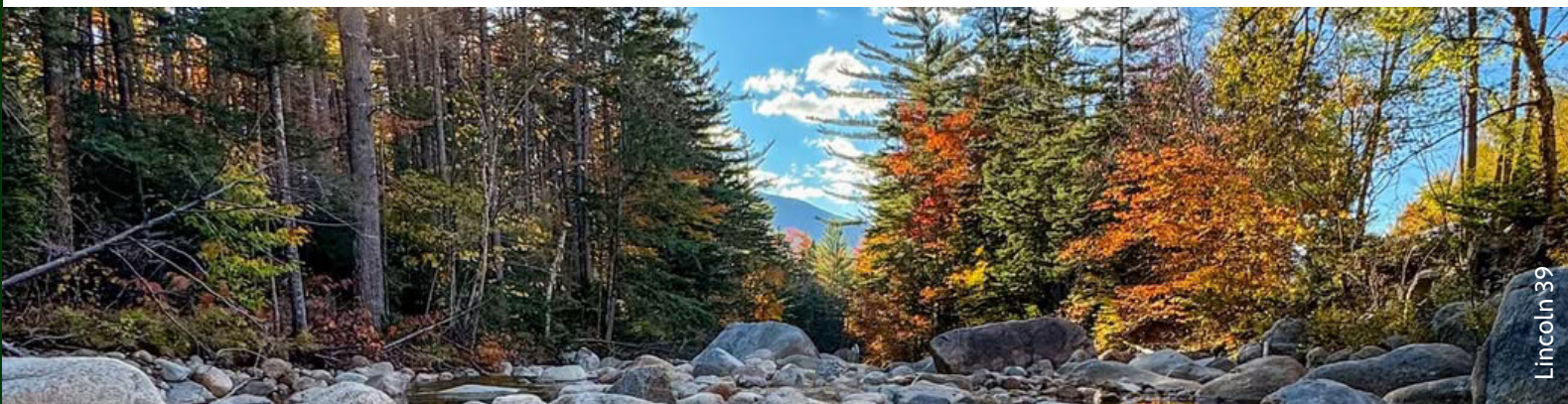
***Lincoln lies within the upper reaches of the Pemigewasset River watershed, where the East Branch originates in the Pemigewasset Wilderness and converges with the main stem near Woodstock. The river systems in Lincoln have high aesthetic and recreational values and are a defining characteristic of the community.***

Lincoln lies within the Pemigewasset River watershed, one of New Hampshire's most significant river systems. The Pemigewasset River originates at Profile Lake in Franconia Notch State Park and flows approximately 70 miles southward before joining with the Winnepesaukee River in Franklin to form the Merrimack River. The watershed drains approximately 1,000 square miles across three counties, with Lincoln situated in the upper reaches of this system.

The East Branch of the Pemigewasset River, a major tributary measuring 15.8 miles in length, originates in the Pemigewasset Wilderness area and flows through Lincoln before meeting the main stem just downstream from the Interstate 93 highway bridges near Woodstock. This confluence represents a critical juncture in the watershed. An additional 8 miles of the main stem of the Pemigewasset River flows south through Lincoln paralleling the Interstate 93 highway. These waterways represent important public resources for the community. However, there is growing concern that public access opportunities to the rivers and streams are diminishing as private property owners acquire land along these corridors and restrict traditional access points that residents and visitors have long relied upon for recreation and connection to these natural assets.

Water quality throughout the Pemigewasset River system is generally classified as Class B by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, indicating that waters have high aesthetic value and are acceptable for swimming and other recreational activities, fish habitat, and use as water supply after treatment. However, according to the 2024 Pemigewasset River Corridor Management Plan, like all surface waters in the state, the river does not meet standards for mercury. Although several sections of the Pemigewasset River system are listed as impaired for low dissolved oxygen or high acidity, which are common throughout New Hampshire, it is unclear as to whether any of those sections are within Lincoln.

The 2024 Pemigewasset River Corridor Management Plan notes that flow characteristics in the upper river sections, including through Lincoln, remain largely free-flowing and natural, influenced primarily by precipitation, snowmelt, and tributary contributions. Data from the USGS shows typical patterns of lowest monthly water flows occurring in August and highest discharges in April. Between 2013 and 2022, the river experienced not only low flows of less than 200 cubic feet per second, but more than ten minor flood stage events and one moderate flood stage event. This demonstrates the dynamic and sometimes extreme nature of the river's hydrology. More details about low- and high-water events can be found in the 2024 Hazard Mitigation Plan.



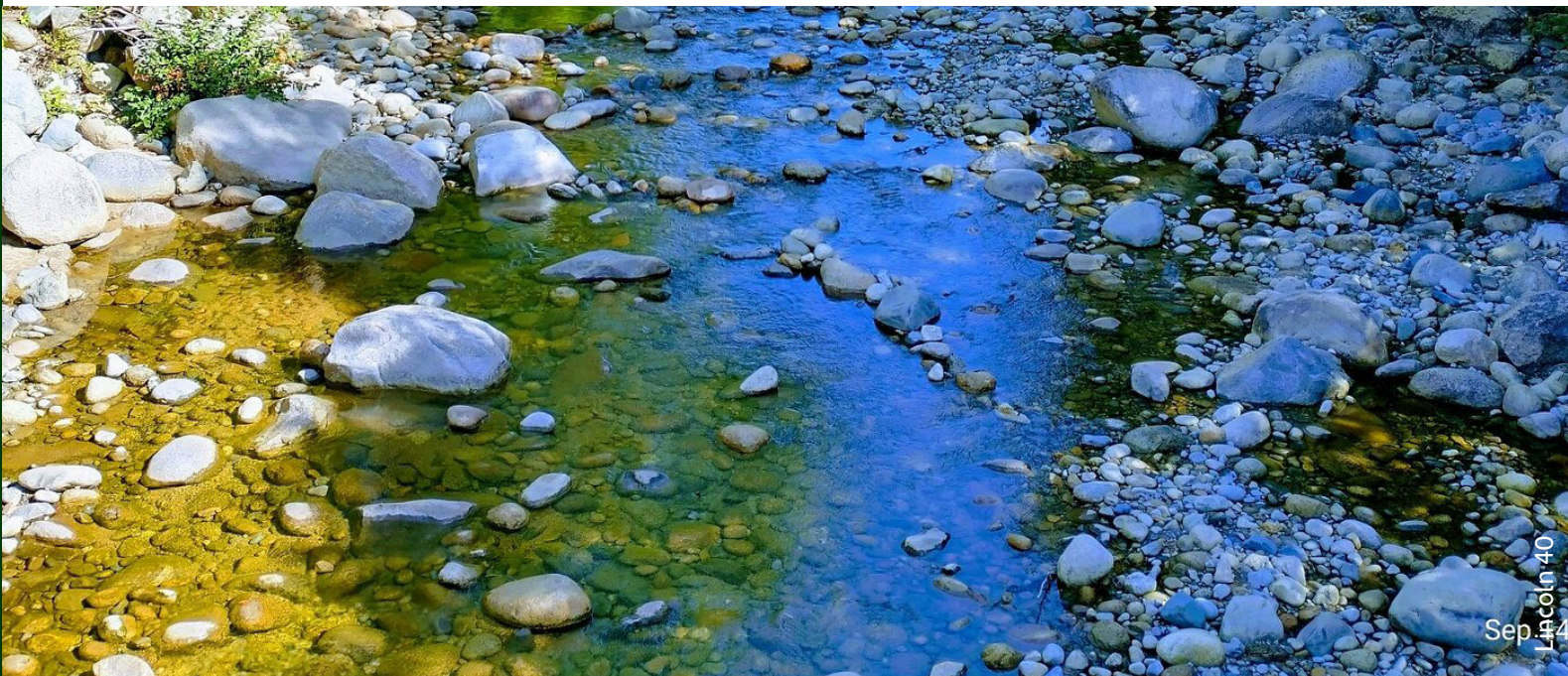
## Wetlands and Riparian Systems

***Lincoln's wetlands and riparian systems serve critical ecological functions by slowing water movement to reduce flooding and erosion, filtering pollutants and sediment from runoff, stabilizing stream banks, and providing essential wildlife habitat. Riparian corridors along the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River are particularly important for maintaining water quality in Lincoln's densest developed areas. They are also protected by New Hampshire's Shoreland Protection Act, as these natural systems are difficult and expensive to restore once degraded.***

Wetlands play crucial ecological roles in the Lincoln area, serving as connectors between waterbodies throughout the river and stream network in the watershed. These systems slow the movement of water, enabling the landscape to absorb precipitation and snowmelt while reducing the likelihood of erosion and downstream flooding. Wetlands also serve as nurseries and habitats for numerous fish, amphibian, and reptile species. Riparian systems are vegetated corridors along rivers, streams, and other water bodies. They are critical for natural resource protection because they filter pollutants and sediment from runoff, stabilize stream banks to prevent erosion, provide critical wildlife habitat, and help regulate water temperature and flow.

Several wetland types occur in Lincoln, including forested wetlands, shrub wetlands, and emergent marshes. Floodplain wetlands along the Pemigewasset River and its tributaries are particularly important, providing flood storage capacity, sediment filtration, and nutrient cycling. These areas help maintain water quality by filtering runoff before it enters streams and rivers. Nearly all wetlands in Lincoln exist on permanently protected lands with few exceptions in the more developed areas of town.

Because much of Lincoln's development is found along the Pemigewasset, riparian systems are much more important to maintaining safe dense neighborhoods. Riparian systems act as buffers that filter runoff, preventing pollutants from degrading water quality in streams and rivers that would otherwise be directly impacted by nearby human activities. New Hampshire's Shoreland Protection Act (RSA 483-B) requires a protected shoreland area extending at least 250 feet from significant water bodies, restricting activities like vegetation removal, impervious surfaces, and certain construction to maintain natural buffers. These protections should be stewarded because once degraded, riparian functions like filtration, erosion control, and habitat connectivity are difficult and expensive to restore, making prevention through careful stewardship far more effective.



# Groundwater Resources and Water Supply

*Lincoln’s public water supplies are a complex makeup of surface and groundwater resources. According to NH DES data on public water supplies, Lincoln has 10 active community wells. The source of 3 of these wells come from surface waters (lakes, ponds, and rivers), while the remaining 7 are groundwater wells, which can be seen in the table below. Aquifers supplying these groundwater wells were formed by glacial sand and gravel deposits along the Pemigewasset River. What’s important to note is that both well sources - surface or groundwater - are directly connected to one another. Pollution from transportation corridors, road salt, septic systems, stormwater runoff, and commercial activities have the potential to directly impact both surface and groundwater quality and drinking water supplies. This underscores the need for land use planning and integrated water resource management that protect both systems together.*

While surface water resources and protection has been discussed in a previous section, this section will focus on the groundwater resources. The stratified drift aquifers in Lincoln consist of sand and gravel deposits left by glacial meltwater, providing zones of high hydraulic conductivity that can yield substantial quantities of water to wells. Seven of these ten public supply wells in Lincoln draw from these buried valley aquifers, which are often hydraulically connected to nearby streams and rivers. The

**Table 1: Wells in the Town of Lincoln**  
**Source: NHDES One Stop**

NAME	SYSTEM_ ACT	SYSTEM_ TYPE	SOURCE_ TYPE
LINCOLN WATER WORKS	ACTIVE	C	S
LINCOLN WATER WORKS	ACTIVE	C	G
LINCOLN WATER WORKS	ACTIVE	C	G
LINCOLN WATER WORKS	ACTIVE	C	G
LINCOLN WATER WORKS	ACTIVE	C	G
LINCOLN WATER WORKS	ACTIVE	C	G
LINCOLN WATER WORKS	ACTIVE	C	S
LINCOLN WATER WORKS	ACTIVE	C	G
LINCOLN WATER WORKS	ACTIVE	C	S

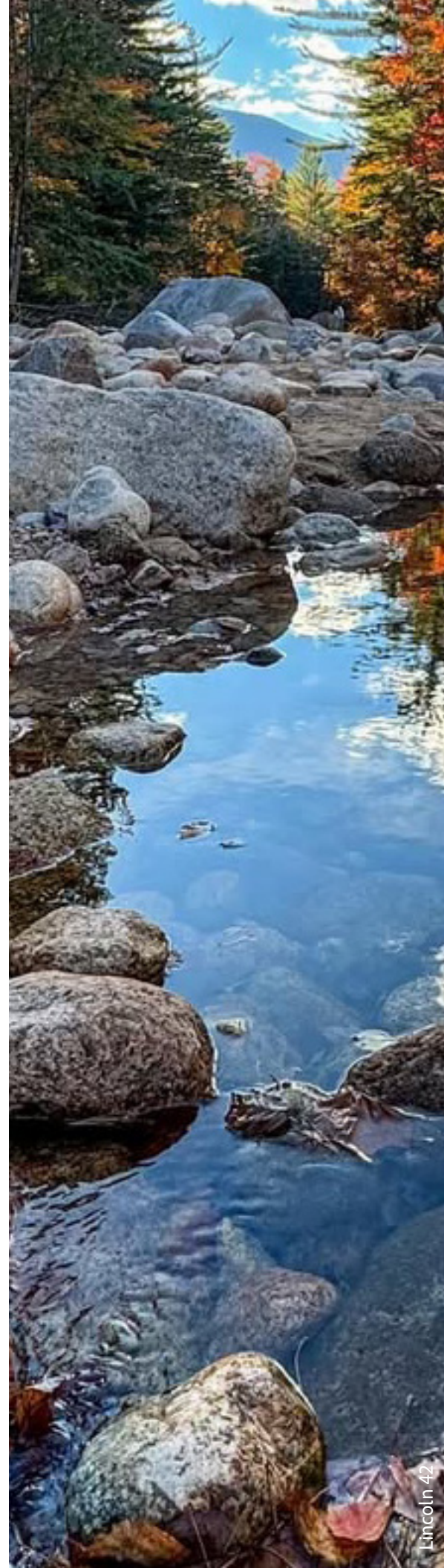
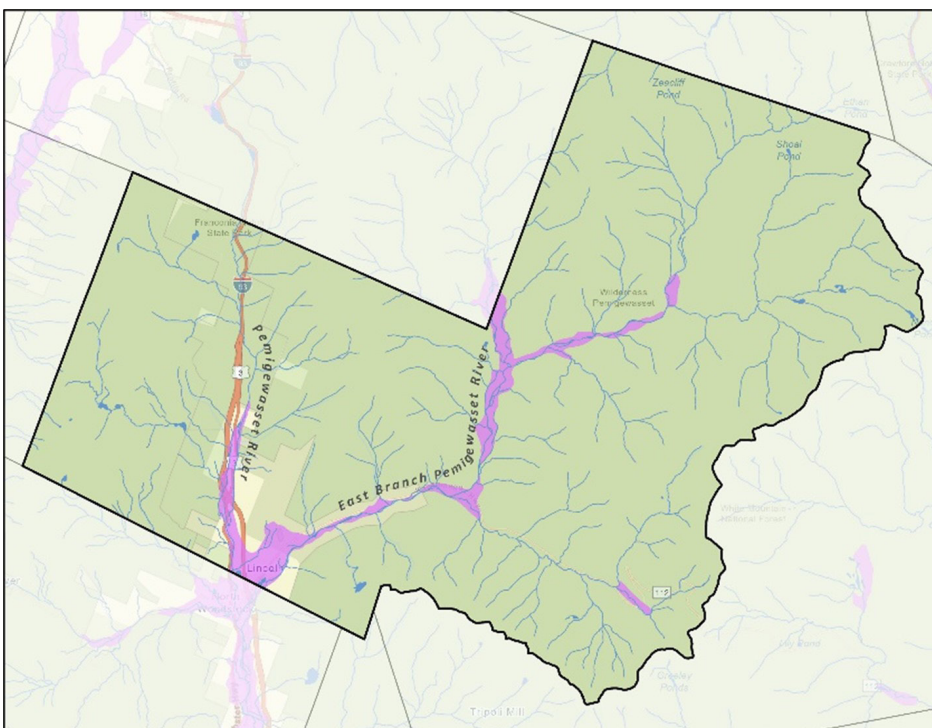
relationship between surface and subsurface waters is critical – this connection means that surface water quality directly affects groundwater quality, making protection of both resources essential.



The aquifers associated with the Pemigewasset River follow the path of the river valley and in some areas extend beyond the designated river corridor. There is a total of 2,556 subsurface aquifer acres in Lincoln, of which only 54% underlay permanently protected land. Much of the land above the remaining 46% of aquifers is the most developed areas of town and is susceptible to surface water contamination that could permeate into the subsurface resources. The map below shows the distribution of aquifers in Lincoln. This groundwater-surface water connection underscores the need for integrated water resource management that considers both systems together rather than separately. Activities affecting surface water quality or quantity can have direct impacts on groundwater resources and vice versa.

Aquifer protection is particularly important given the potential contamination sources present in developed areas of the community, including transportation corridors, salt storage and use areas, septic systems, stormwater, and various commercial activities. The 2024 Pemigewasset River Corridor Management Plan identified 20 different potential contamination sources that require management to protect drinking water supplies throughout the Pemigewasset River system. Categories of business included in the list of potential contamination sources include transportation corridors, salt storage areas, septic systems, stormwater, vehicle repair shops, and cleaning services.

### Map 3: Lincoln's Aquifers



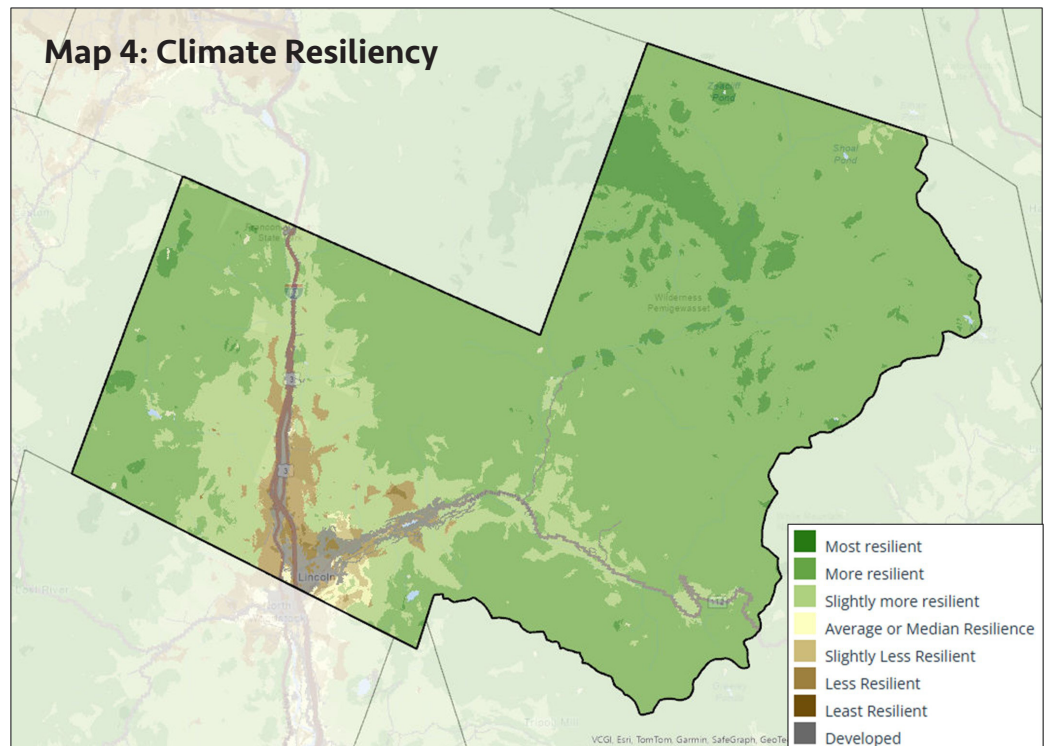
## Climate and Weather Patterns

*Lincoln's climate reflects its northern New England location. However, regional data from Mount Washington Observatory and Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest show clear warming trends and other effects of a changing climate. Despite these climate pressures, nearly the entire town demonstrates above-average terrestrial resilience to climate changes, with only the most developed areas along Routes 112 and I-93 showing lower resilience scores.*

Lincoln has historically experienced cold, snowy winters and mild summers, with significant precipitation throughout the year. However, climate data from regional monitoring stations including Mount Washington Observatory and Pinkham Notch demonstrate clear warming trends over recent decades.

The Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest, located in the southwestern part of the White Mountain National Forest, has documented confronting changes to winter conditions. Data show warming trends, increased weather whiplash events (rapid temperature fluctuations), and generally warmer winters that significantly impact the region's ecology and economy. These changes affect snowpack accumulation and melt timing, which in turn influence spring runoff patterns, summer low-flow conditions, and the thermal regimes of streams and rivers.

The Nature Conservancy defines terrestrial resilience as: the land's capacity to maintain species diversity and ecological function as the climate changes. Applying this to Lincoln, almost the entire town is above average in its climate resilience. Areas considered less resilient are proximate to the confluence of Route 112 and Interstate 93 which are the most developed portion of the community, and extend north & east along those routes until they reach the permanently conserved land. The Map 4 shows this climate resilience data.



**Lincoln's natural resources represent both the community's greatest assets and its most significant management challenge.** The forests, rivers, wetlands, wildlife, and scenic landscapes that define Lincoln's character and support its economy require active stewardship to maintain their ecological integrity and continue providing ecosystem services. Balancing natural resource protection with sustainable land use and appropriate growth requires coordinated responses across multiple sectors and jurisdictions. Understanding these existing conditions provides the foundation for developing strategies that can sustain Lincoln's natural resources for future generations while supporting community vitality and resilience.

# DATA SOURCES

- 2014 North Country Council: A Plan for New Hampshire's North Country
- 2016 Town of Lincoln Master Plan
- 2022 Lincoln Land Use Plan Ordinance
- 2022 North Country Council: North Country Rising
- 2022 North Country Council: Lincoln Data
- 2024 Pemigewasset River Corridor Management Plan
- 2025-2030 Town of Lincoln Capital Improvement Program
- Western White Mountains JH Henry Trail Website: <https://westernwhitemtns.com/project/je-henry-trail/>

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Lincoln’s economic conditions are shaped by its role as a small mountain community operating within a regional visitor economy, where employment patterns, business activity, and fiscal conditions are closely tied to seasonal demand and external markets. While the town’s location within the White Mountains influences travel behavior and visitation levels, economic performance is more directly reflected in workforce characteristics, income trends, commuting patterns, and the composition of local industries. These factors determine the town’s capacity to support year-round employment, retain workers, and maintain a stable tax base.

On-going investment in real estate, such as South Peak, and the tourism and recreation industries is driving long-term economic growth in Lincoln. Major investment at Loon Mountain Ski Resort, new hotels, and other recreation related development, is driving long-term changes in Lincoln’s economy. At the same time, Burndy Corporation’s higher-wage, year-round employment helps balance some of the town’s seasonal tourism economy, highlighting the importance of policies that support economic diversification, workforce stability, and housing affordability.

## FACTS AND FIGURES



Lincoln’s **median household income increased** by **34%** between 2019 and 2024, rising from \$52,857 to \$70,625 over the five-year period.



Lincoln’s **population increased** from approximately 960 residents in 2019 to 1,461 residents in 2024, reflecting a net gain of about 500 residents over five years.



Lincoln’s **unemployment rate** increased to 9.8% in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic and declined to **2.5% by 2024**, returning to pre-pandemic labor market conditions.



The number of Lincoln residents age 25 and older with a bachelor’s degree or higher **increased by approximately 80% between 2019 and 2024**. The Town also experienced growth in residents with graduate and professional degrees between 2019 and 2024, reflecting increasing levels of advanced educational attainment.



**Total employment in Lincoln increased** from 1,682 jobs in 2015 to 2,123 jobs in 2025, a 26% increase driven largely by tourism- and recreation-related industries.



**By 2025, more than two-thirds of jobs** in Lincoln were concentrated in accommodation, food services, and recreation industries



**Average annual earnings** in Lincoln **ranged** from approximately \$34,000–\$41,000 in tourism-related industries to nearly \$99,000 in manufacturing in 2025.

# POPULATION TRENDS

**Lincoln's population growth over the past five years is notable and reflects shifts toward younger families and aging residents. Lincoln's population growth saw the largest increases among residents under 18, 35 to 44, and those aged 65 and older. This supports long-term labor participation but increases demand for healthcare, services, and workforce planning.**

## Age Distribution

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2024 ACS 5-year estimates, Lincoln has 1,461 residents. After a population decline around 2019, the town has rebounded and added about 500 residents over the past five years.

Between 2019 and 2024, Lincoln saw an increase

in residents aged 35 to 44 and those under 18, indicating an influx of younger families. From a workforce perspective, these age groups represent early-and-mid-career professionals who support long-term labor participation, school enrollment, and economic growth.

Lincoln also saw an increase in residents aged 65 and older. About 28% of the population now falls into this category, aligning with regional aging trends. This shift indicates an increase in demand for healthcare services, age-friendly infrastructure, and supportive housing options.

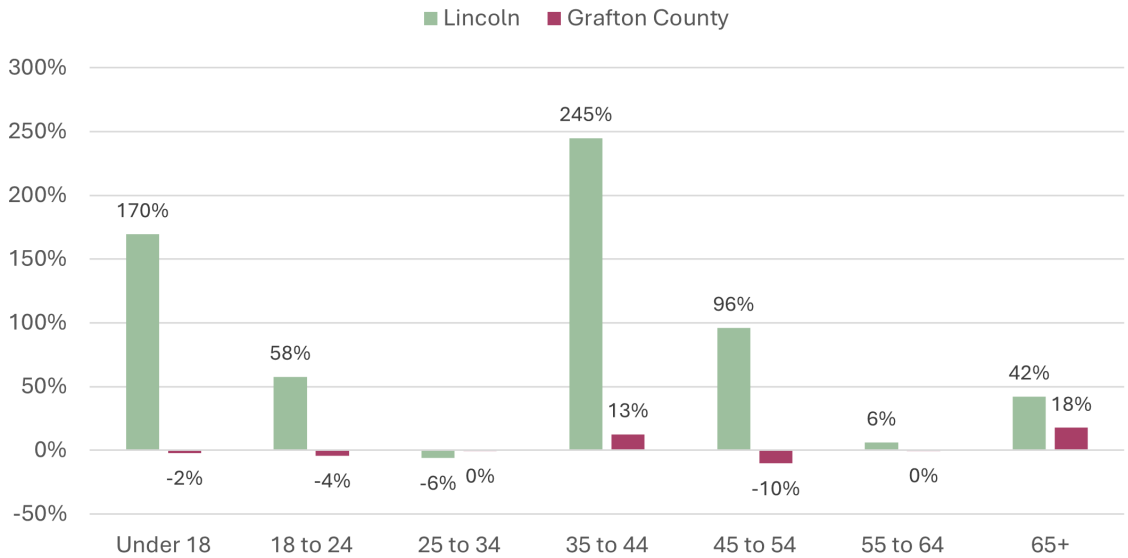
In contrast, Lincoln experienced sharper declines in residents ages 24 to 34 than the county overall, highlighting that early-career adults are leaving the community to pursue higher education, new job opportunities, or more affordable housing in other locations.

## Educational Attainment

**Educational attainment levels are rising and changing the local workforce. This increase in educational attainment includes bachelor's and graduate degrees. The result is a greater potential to attract higher-skilled and higher-paying jobs, but also highlights increasing housing and affordability challenges.**

Educational attainment is a critical factor that many businesses consider when choosing where to locate. For employment-based industries, it indicates the presence of a qualified labor pool, while for consumer-facing businesses it also shapes local spending patterns through its relationship to income, purchasing power, and household stability.

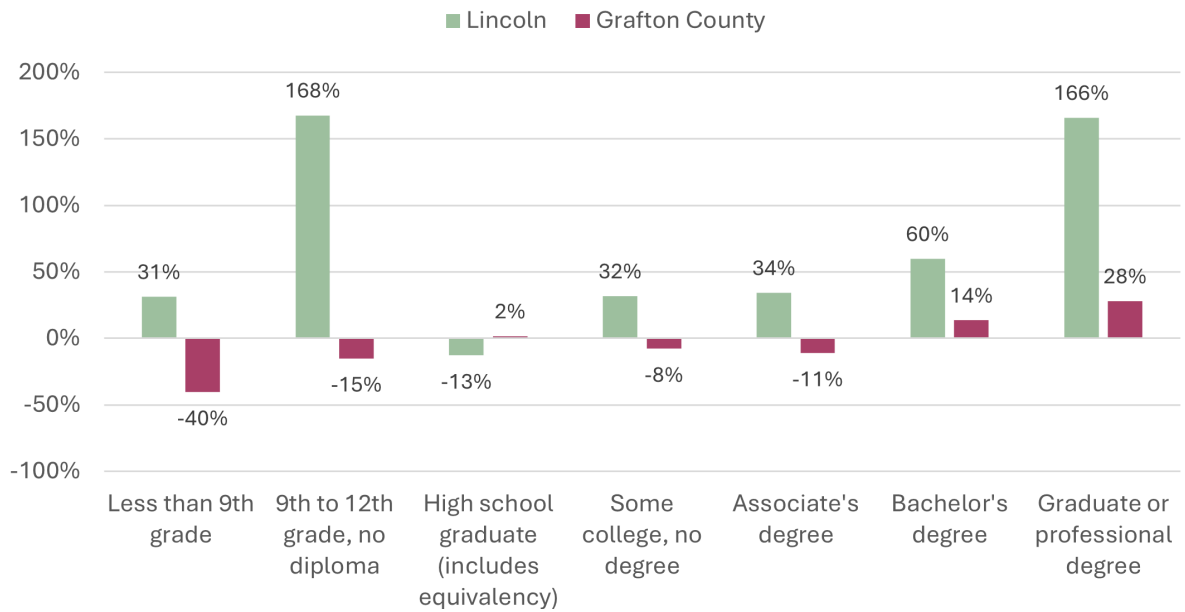
Change in Population by Age Groups



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2019-2024)

About 39% of Lincoln residents aged 25 or older have a bachelor's degree or higher, which is a lower compared to Grafton County (47%). However, Lincoln has experienced a much faster shift toward higher

Change in Educational Attainment Level (2019-2024)



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2019-2024)

educational attainment. Between 2019 and 2024, the number of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher increased by 80%, outpacing countywide growth. The most significant change has occurred at the graduate and professional degree level, where Lincoln saw a 166% increase in residents with advanced degrees, compared to a 28% increase in Grafton County.

As education levels rise, the local economy benefits from higher-paying jobs, more business creation, and increased consumer spending. While Lincoln's smaller population results in lower absolute change than the county, the scale of growth still reflects a significant shift in the town's economic profile.

## Household Income

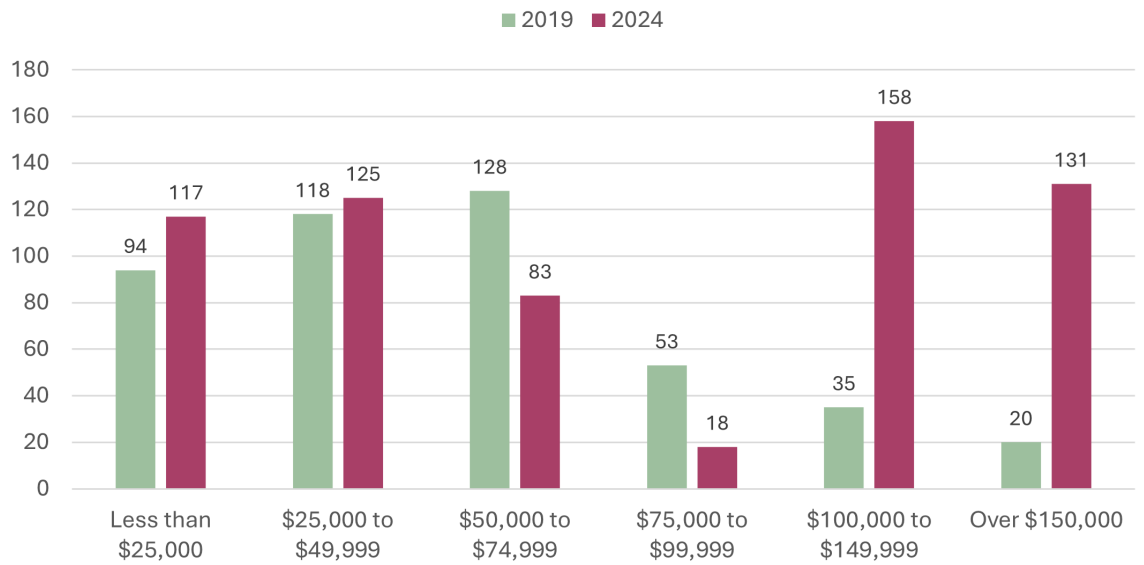
**Both lower-income and higher-income households are increasing in Lincoln, and this is widening the income gap. Middle-income households are decreasing in number. These trends are reflected in increased housing costs, which make it harder for many workers to live locally. This creates challenges for businesses that are hiring and for Lincoln's long-term economic stability.**

Consumer-facing businesses such as retail, restaurants, and recreation amenities often place strong emphasis on local and visitor income levels when making location decisions, particularly regional and national chains with defined site selection criteria.

Between 2019 and 2024, Lincoln's median household income increased from \$52,857 to \$70,625, representing a 34% gain. This growth is supported by the rising educational attainment, which is increasing the share of higher-income households in the town. However, the town's income levels remain substantially below both the county and state averages of \$88,261 and \$99,031, respectively.

Household income distribution data shows a widening income gap, marked by growth at both the lower and higher ends of the income spectrum and a declining middle-income population. These shifts are driving up housing costs, making it increasingly difficult for low- and middle-income households to remain in the town.

Income Distribution



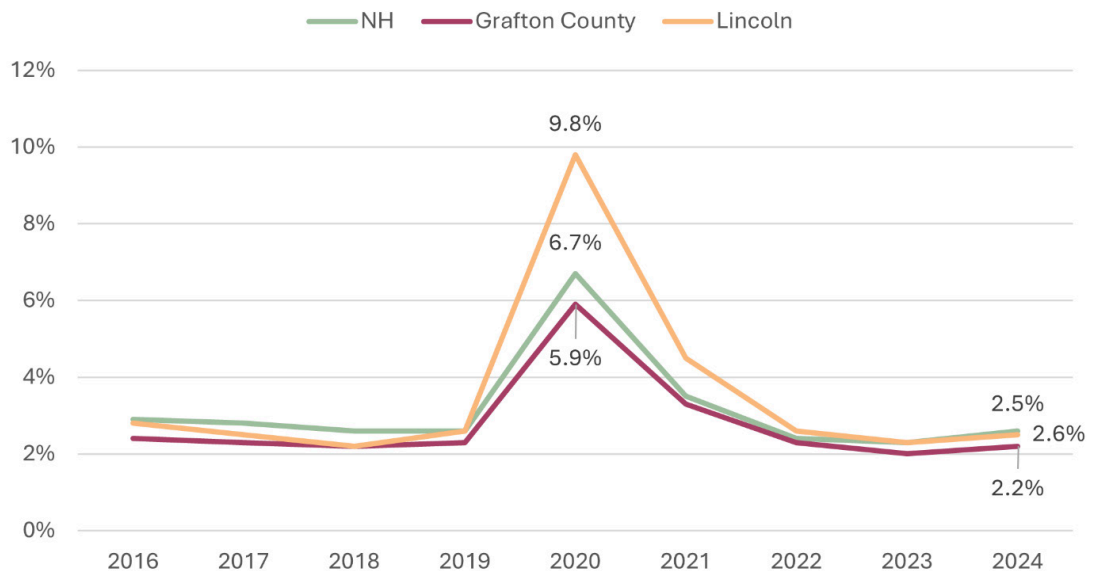
As a result, local businesses face increasing challenges in hiring and retaining workers. Many workers are forced to live farther from their jobs, increasing travel times, and reducing local consumer spending.

## LABOR FORCE

**Lincoln has a tight labor market, and this creates hiring pressures. With an unemployment rate of 2.5% in 2024 and limited workforce availability the labor market offers little flexibility for expansion. This imbalance creates hiring pressures for employers, especially in seasonal and lower-wage industries. As a result, businesses must compete for a limited pool of workers, rely more heavily on commuters, and face challenges in building a stable year-round workforce. There are also less applicants for open positions due to housing shortages and the expense of purchasing a home in or near Lincoln. This barrier limits the applicant pool.**

Two commonly used measures to assess economic conditions are labor force participation and unemployment rate. The labor force participation rate measures the percentage of the population aged 16 and over who are either employed or actively looking for employment. If participation is low, there may be unused labor capacity; when it is high, the labor

Unemployment Rates



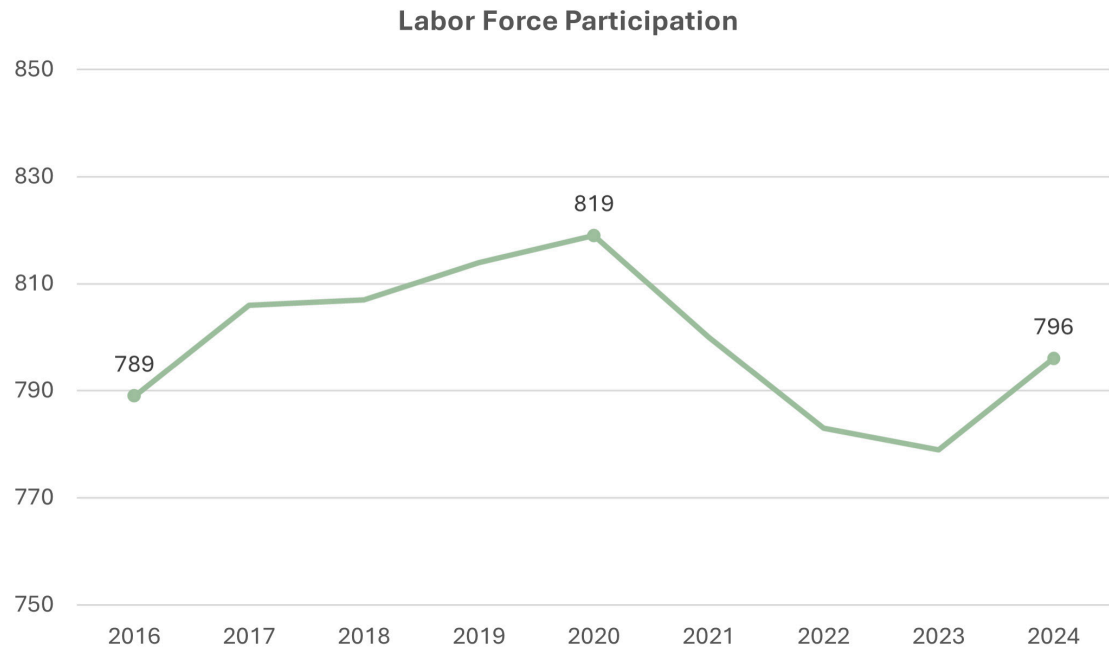
Source: NHELMI (2023)

market has limited flexibility and fewer available workers. Likewise, very low unemployment shows a strong labor market for workers but often creates hiring challenges for employers.

According to the New Hampshire Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau (NHELM), in 2024, Lincoln had a labor force of 796 workers,

with an unemployment rate of 2.5% (20 residents). This is well within the range of what economists consider to be “full employment,” which indicates that people who are actively looking for jobs have found them. This can lead to increased wages as employers compete for talent, but it is an indicator that there is very little slack in the labor market and hiring is likely a challenge.

Although unemployment in Lincoln rose sharply during the COVID-19 pandemic, reaching 9.8% in 2020 compared to a statewide rate of 5.9%, labor force levels and participation have since returned to pre-pandemic levels. The current combination of a slightly smaller labor force and sustained low unemployment indicates limited workforce availability, suggesting that employers face ongoing challenges in filling positions, particularly in a community with strong seasonal labor demand.



Source: NHELM (2023)

## LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

### Commuting Patterns

***Lincoln functions largely as a commuter town. The town attracts about 1,970 workers daily, reflecting its role as a regional employment hub. This pattern highlights a mismatch between local jobs and housing availability, increasing dependence on in-commuting workers and placing more pressure on public transportation systems and infrastructure, particularly during peak seasons.***

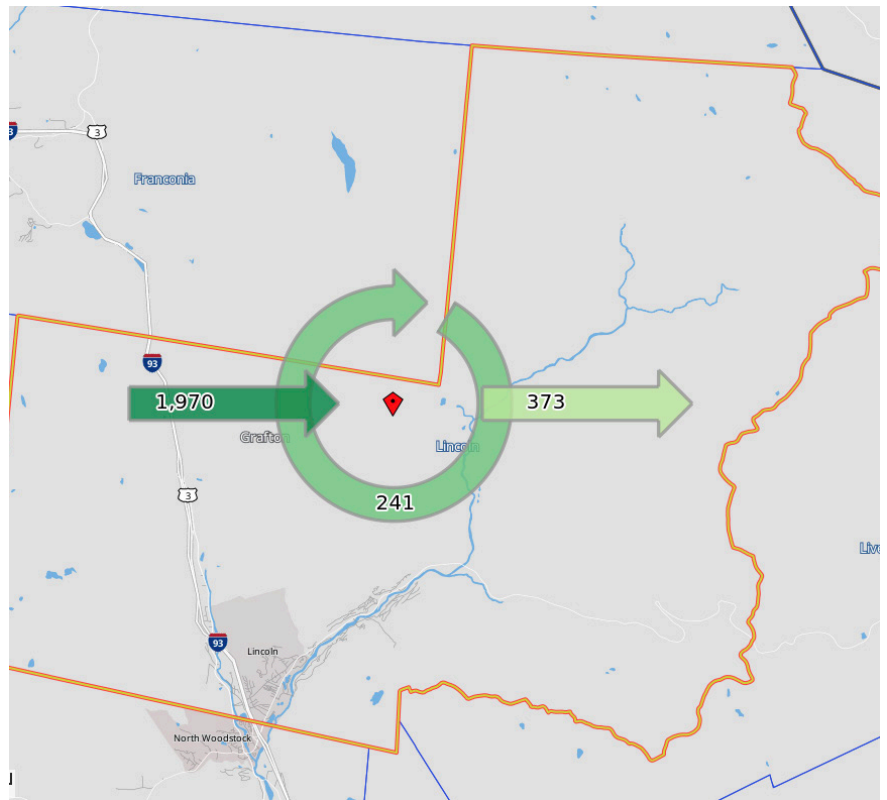
Commuting patterns play a critical role in shaping local economic activity, as daily inflows and outflows of workers affect daytime population levels, spending patterns, and demand for retail and services. In communities where many residents travel elsewhere for work, a large share of sales tax revenue is generated outside the local area. In contrast, places with shorter or more efficient commutes tend to retain more local spending and are often more attractive to businesses that rely on a stable and accessible workforce.

Commuting also affects household economic well-being. The time and cost of traveling to work influence disposable income and a worker’s ability to balance wages with housing costs. Long commutes, particularly for lower-income workers, can limit economic mobility and place added strain

on both households and employers. Understanding where workers live and work helps identify opportunities to address workforce housing needs and support industries that better align with local labor skills and employment patterns.

Lincoln experienced a significant net inflow of workers during the day. On a typical workday, about 1,970 workers commute into Lincoln for employment, compared to just 373 residents who travel outside the town for work. Roughly 241 workers both live and work in Lincoln.

The most common worker locations are Lincoln, Plymouth, and North Woodstock. About 18% of Lincoln residents both live and work in town. Residents who travel elsewhere for work most often commute to Manchester, North Woodstock, and Concord.



Source: US Census LEHD, OnTheMap

### Workers: Employed in Lincoln Town

Cities, CDPs, etc.	Count	Share
Lincoln CDP, NH	142	6.4%
Plymouth CDP, NH	87	3.9%
North Woodstock CDP, NH	70	3.2%
Littleton CDP, NH	49	2.2%
Manchester city, NH	27	1.2%
Concord city, NH	17	0.8%
Lebanon city, NH	16	0.7%
Laconia city, NH	15	0.7%
Berlin city, NH	14	0.6%
Bethlehem CDP, NH	14	0.6%
All Other Locations	1,760	79.6%
<b>Total All Jobs</b>	<b>2,211</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Workers: Lived in Lincoln Town

Cities, CDPs, etc.	Count	Share
Lincoln CDP, NH	107	17.4%
Manchester city, NH	18	2.9%
North Woodstock CDP, NH	17	2.8%
Concord city, NH	14	2.3%
Lebanon city, NH	11	1.8%
Littleton CDP, NH	8	1.3%
Plymouth CDP, NH	7	1.1%
Boston city, MA	6	1.0%
Keene city, NH	6	1.0%
Laconia city, NH	5	0.8%
All Other Locations	415	67.6%
<b>Total All Jobs</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>100%</b>

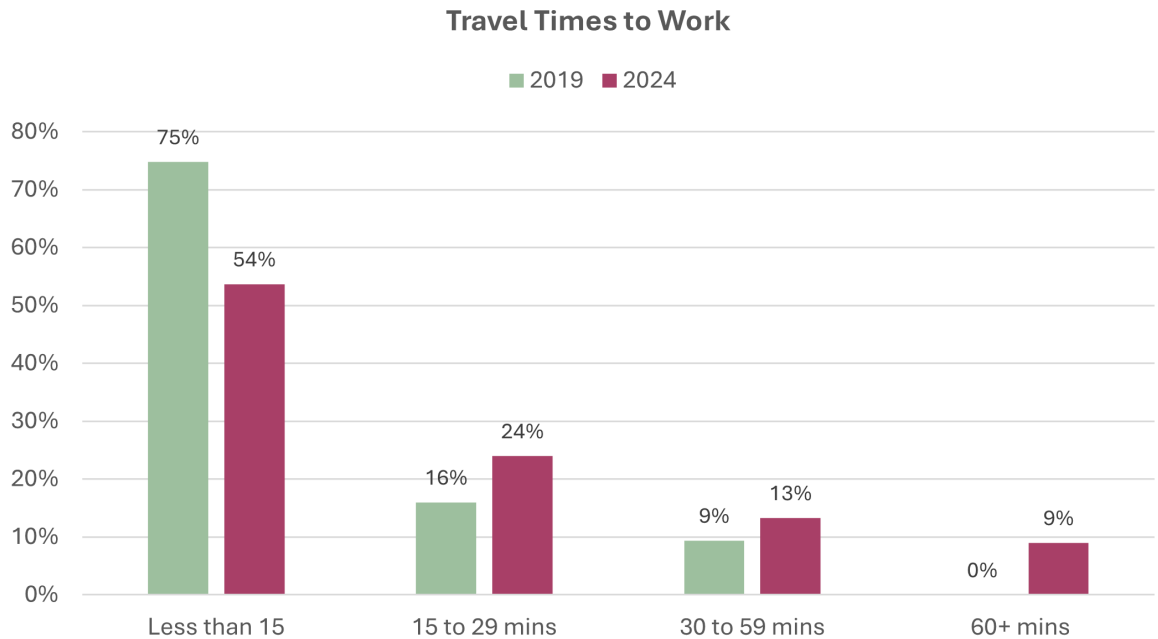
Workers commuting from larger employment centers such as Manchester, Concord, and Lebanon indicate that Lincoln draws workers from well beyond the White Mountains area. This broader reach helps meet demand for year-round, technical, or other specialized roles that may not be supported by the local workforce. In contrast, workers traveling from nearby communities such as Littleton, Bethlehem, and Laconia more likely reflect housing and lifestyle factors, where workers live in places with a wider supply of year-round housing and travel to Lincoln for tourism-related jobs.

For Lincoln residents, commuting beyond the top destinations includes places such as Concord, Lebanon, Littleton, Boston, Keene, and Laconia. This suggests that residents are connected to a wider regional labor market and may be traveling to communities that offer more stable year-round employment or higher wages. These commuting trends point to an opportunity to expand Lincoln's economy and create more year-round jobs that match the skills and career goals of local residents.

## Travel Times to Work

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates (2019-2024)

Although most Lincoln residents still commute less than 15 minutes to work (54%), commuting patterns have shifted over the past five years toward longer travel times. The share of residents traveling 60 minutes or more has increased by approximately 9%, indicating an increase in long-distance travel.



Overall, there is a decline in short commutes (less than 15 minutes), indicating that more residents are traveling outside Lincoln for work. This shift is likely due to limited local job opportunities, high housing costs near job centers, and hybrid work patterns that require longer but less frequent commutes.

## Employment by Industry

***Employment in Lincoln is concentrated in lower-wage sectors. Accommodation and Food Services, and Arts, Recreation, and Entertainment account for about 72% of the total jobs in Lincoln. However, these jobs are largely seasonal and provide incomes below the town's average, contributing to income instability, frequent workforce turnover, and housing affordability challenges.***

Lincoln's economy is anchored by tourism and hospitality sectors, influencing recent job growth and ongoing development activity. According to Lightcast's employment data, Lincoln supported 2,123 jobs in the last quarter of 2025, indicating a 26% increase from 1,682 jobs in 2015.

Accommodation and Food Services is the largest employment sector in Lincoln, with 809 jobs, followed by Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, which supports 731 jobs. Together these industries account for about 72% of all jobs in the town. In addition, Manufacturing supports 171 jobs, representing a smaller but relatively stable source of employment.

Over the past decade, tourism and recreation industries added 451 jobs, far outpacing employment growth in all other sectors. While this pattern highlights Lincoln's role as a regional tourist destination, it also indicates an employment base that is highly seasonal and wage-sensitive. Many of these jobs offer limited year-round stability, contributing to higher turnover and hiring challenges for employers. During peak seasons, increased labor demand combined with limited affordable housing options makes it difficult for workers to live in town, resulting in more employees commuting from surrounding areas.

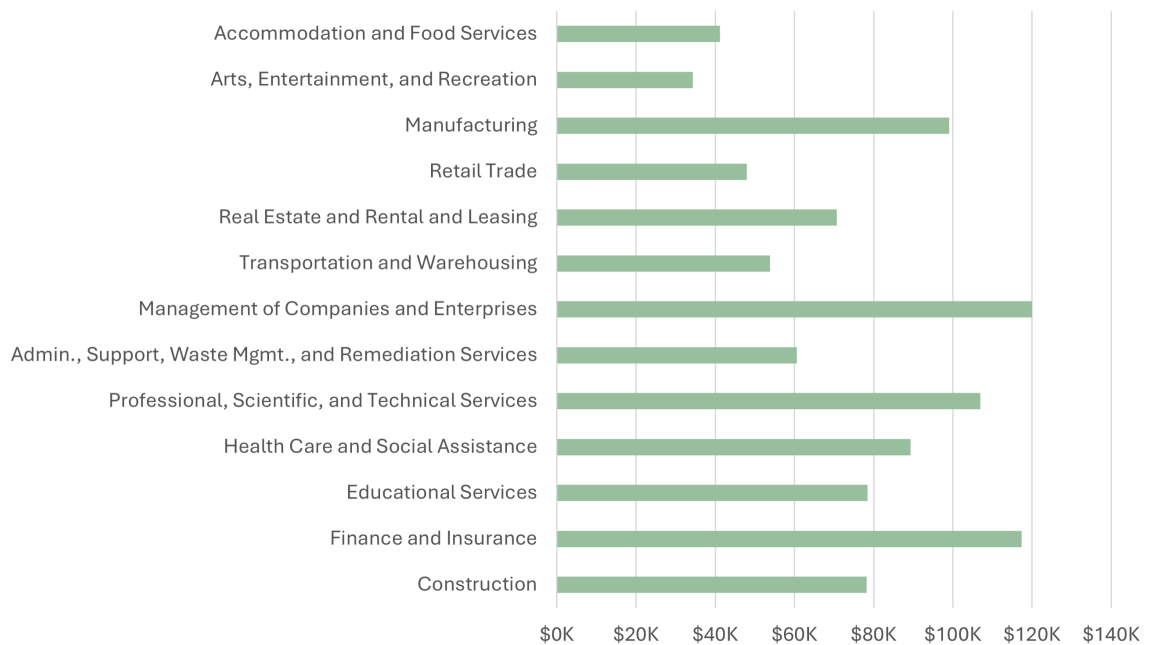
Lincoln's largest employment sectors also tend to offer the lowest average earnings, creating a mismatch between local wages and the cost of living. Average annual earnings in Accommodation and Food Services, Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and Retail Trade are all below \$50,000 per year. Together, these three sectors account for nearly 80% of all jobs in the town yet provide incomes that fall quite below what is typically needed to afford a home in Lincoln. In contrast, Manufacturing offers significantly higher average earnings, at approximately \$99,036, but represents a much smaller share of total employment.

One of the challenges this presents for Lincoln's economy, its employers, and employees is the balance between wages and housing affordability. At an average wage of \$37,000 a year, an employee in tourism-based sectors could afford a monthly rent of \$925 per month or a home priced at no more than \$114,000. With a median home sale price of \$709,000 in 2025, it is nearly impossible for a worker in these key economic industry sectors to be able to afford a home to live.

Description	2015 jobs	2025 jobs	2015 – 2025 change	2015 – 2025 % change	2025 Location Quotient	Average earnings per job
Accommodation and Food Services	591	809	218	37%	4.19	\$41,233
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	498	731	233	47%	20.26	\$34,314
Manufacturing	144	171	27	19%	0.98	\$99,036
Retail Trade	163	150	-13	-8%	0.72	\$47,991
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	63	57	-6	-10%	1.71	\$70,712
Transportation and Warehousing	25	33	8	32%	0.36	\$53,784
Management of Companies and Enterprises	0	30	30	Insf. Data	0.83	\$120,026
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	54	29	-25	-46%	0.23	\$60,596
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	17	26	9	53%	0.17	\$106,924
Health Care and Social Assistance	31	25	-6	-19%	0.08	\$89,301
Educational Services	15	24	9	63%	0.55	\$78,434
Finance and Insurance	24	19	-5	-20%	0.22	\$117,388
Construction	14	15	1	5%	0.13	\$78,265
<b>Total Jobs</b>	<b>1,682</b>	<b>2,123</b>	<b>442</b>	<b>26%</b>		<b>\$49,184</b>

Source: Lightcast 2025.4

Average Earnings Per Job by Top Industry Sectors

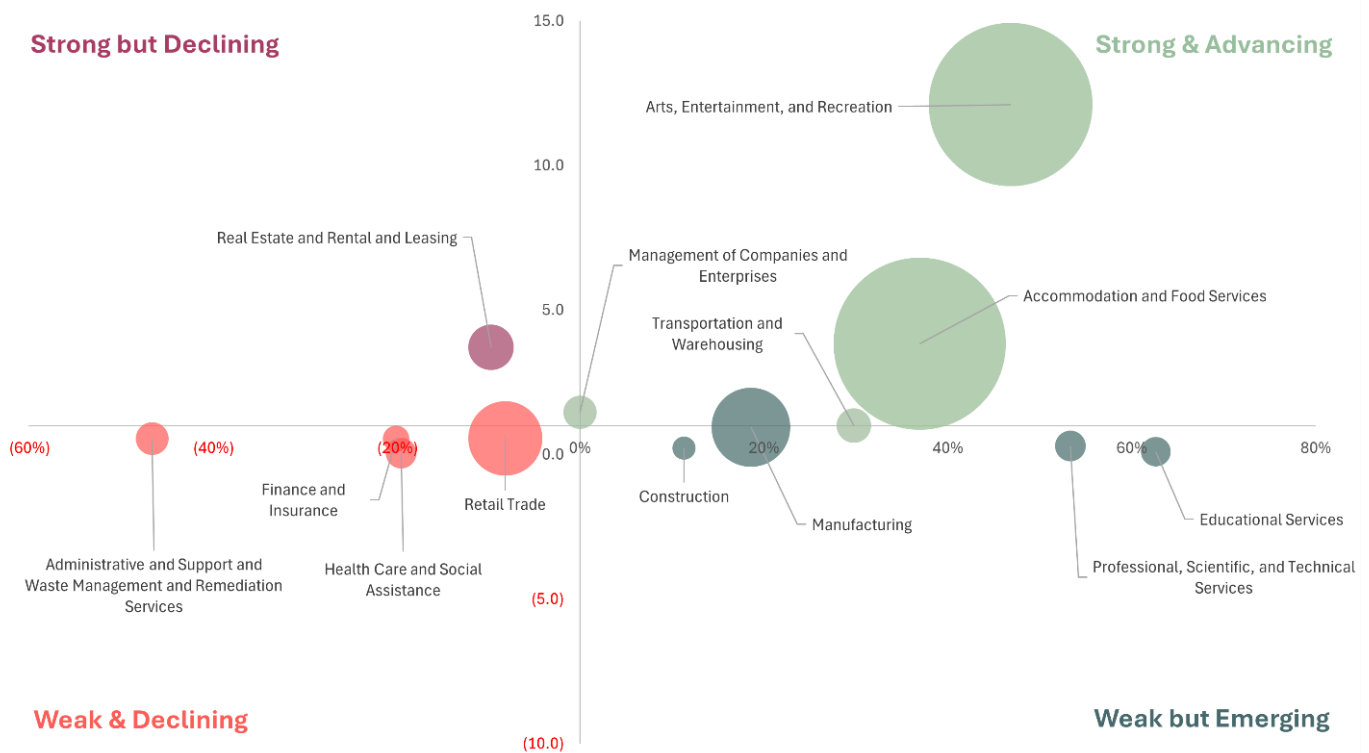


# Location Quotients

Location quotients (LQs) compare employment by industry in two or more geographic areas. The location quotient is a ratio of the percentage of an industry’s employment in one geography to that of a larger comparison geography. If the ratio falls between 0.80 and 1.20, then the proportion of jobs is very similar in both geographies. If the ratio is less than 0.80, then the identified industry sector is thought to be under-represented in the local economy. Conversely, a ratio greater than 1.20 can show a specialty within the local economy as compared to the larger geography.

Location quotient can be useful in identifying opportunities for certain industry sectors to gain a larger share of the employment base or to indicate when a community may be heavily reliant on one or two industry sectors. In some cases, a high location quotient may indicate a specialty area in the local economy. The comparison geography used for Lincoln in this instance was Grafton County.

The Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation industry has a very high LQ of 12.1, indicating that jobs in this industry are 12 times as common in Lincoln as in Grafton County. Other sectors such as Accommodation and Food Services, Transportation and Warehousing, and Management of Companies and Enterprises also have a competitive advantage.



Source: Lightcast 2025.4

However, there are several industries that do not have a competitive advantage, so addressing the challenges posed by declining sectors is crucial for achieving a balanced and sustainable economic development strategy. Balancing growth opportunities in leading industries with targeted interventions in shrinking sectors will contribute to the overall resilience and prosperity of Lincoln’s economy.

## Local Businesses & Largest Employers

Employer	Business Description	Employer Size
Loon Mountain Resort	Skiing Centers & Resorts	500-999
Burndy	Electronic Equipment & Supplies-Mfrs	100-249
Clark's Trading Post	Family Entertainment Centers	100-249
Indian Head Resort	Resorts	50-99

Source: Economic + Labor Market Information Bureau

Recent investments at Loon Mountain have significantly expanded the resort's capacity and visitor experience. In 2023, the South Peak expansion added 11 new trails and a four-person chairlift, increasing skiable terrain to more than 400 acres and strengthening the resort's position as New Hampshire's largest ski area. The opening of a new chairlift (Timbertown Quad) in December 2023 improved access from downtown Lincoln and Interstate 93, providing direct lift access from on-site parking areas. This improvement allows guests to access the mountain directly from parking areas that were previously considered off-site, reducing the need for shuttle bus service and improving overall circulation. By decreasing reliance on parking shuttles, the resort can better utilize transit services to connect visitors from other locations in town, including local hotels and residential areas.

Looking ahead, Loon Mountain's Flight Path: 2030 outlines a phased program of short-term and long-term improvements focused on enhancing guest experience, resort operations, and year-round visitation. Near-term projects include upgrades to the West Basin, South Peak learning facilities, snowmaking systems, lift infrastructure, and trail networks. Long-term initiatives extend through 2030 and include gondola and lift modernization, expanded automated snowmaking, base area reinvestment, and additional terrain and recreation development.

The resort has also expanded its business to provide non-winter activities, including lift-served downhill mountain biking, cross-country biking terrain, ziplines, and the Ninja Wild obstacle course. Resort leadership states that the gondola has functioned as a four-season attraction for decades, highlighting the resort's longstanding commitment to year-round use.

Hospitality development is accelerating in the town center. A new four-story Hampton Inn and Suites is opening on Main Street, and the Planning Board has approved a Home2 Suites hotel, expanding Lincoln's accommodation supply.



In addition, a \$49 million expansion of Riverwalk Resort, a five-star property located along the Pemigewasset River opposite Loon Mountain, has significantly increased the town's resort capacity. Phase II of the project brings the resort to 145 total units and adds a second restaurant, a winery, an expanded spa, and a grand ballroom, further positioning Lincoln to host destination events, conferences, and extended stays.



Local businesses have increasingly diversified their offerings to establish Lincoln as a four-season destination. Whale's Tail Waterpark has operated for more than three decades, offering access to waterslides and other recreational activities. Its sister company, Alpine Adventures, offers zipline tours, off-road excursions, and adventure-based programming.



While winter sports remain a key draw, Lincoln's appeal extends well beyond the ski season. Large parts of the town lie within the White Mountain National Forest, providing access to campgrounds, rivers, hiking trails, and scenic landscapes that attract visitors throughout the year. These natural assets have long supported seasonal tourism, particularly among hikers, campers, and visitors from nearby urban areas seeking outdoor recreation.



One of Lincoln's key year-round economic anchors is Burndy Corporation, a manufacturing firm that produces connectors for power transmission and distribution systems. Burndy has maintained a long-standing presence in the region and provides stable, year-round employment. Demand for the company's products has increased in recent years, driven in part by hurricane-related power outages and ongoing investments in grid resilience. As a result, the firm continues to support highly-skilled and high-income manufacturing jobs.



# LOCAL INITIATIVES

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## **Town of Lincoln**

The Town does not currently have a staff position dedicated exclusively to economic development programs or initiatives. The Town maintains an online resource platform that provides information on ski resorts, community events, the Chamber of Commerce, maps, public safety services, and recreational amenities.

## **Grafton County Economic Development Council**

A county-level organization that promotes economic growth through an expanding loan program and entrepreneur-focused initiatives. In partnership with Dartmouth College and Plymouth State University, it runs business incubators and provides workshops, seminars, and counseling for startups and early-stage companies. The Council also works with high schools and local employers to develop internship programs that help businesses attract and retain talent.

## **Western White Mountains Chamber of Commerce**

The Chamber supports over 175 businesses and organizations across Lincoln, Woodstock, and Franconia Notch. It works to connect local businesses with residents and visitors while promoting the area as a destination. Through marketing, networking, and business support, it plays a key role in supporting economic vitality and tourism-related activity.

## **North Country Council Regional Planning Commission (RPC)**

As a federally designated Economic Development District (EDD), the Council leads the development and implementation of the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). It supports local governments through planning, technical assistance, and regional coordination focused on economic development, land use, transportation, and resource conservation.

## **New Hampshire Department of Business & Economic Affairs (BEA)**

State-level agency that administers programs and incentives (e.g., Economic Revitalization Zone tax credits) and provides business recruitment, retention, and incentive information that affects Lincoln projects.

## **White Mountains Attractions Association and Visitor Center**

Based in Woodstock, NH, the White Mountains Attractions Association and Visitor Center plays a key role in supporting Lincoln's tourism economy. It helps drive year-round visits to the area through marketing and strategic partnerships with more than 300 tourism-related businesses. It supports local business retention and growth, increases visitor spending, and strengthens Lincoln's position within the regional tourism economy, helping sustain jobs and long-term economic activity.



# DATA SOURCES

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# PARKS AND OPEN SPACE



Lincoln's parks and open spaces are central to the community's character and the tourism-based economy that defines the White Mountains. As a gateway to the White Mountain National Forest, Franconia Notch State Park, and nearby state forests, the town attracts residents and visitors year-round for skiing at Loon Mountain, hiking, biking, and scenic travel along the Kancamagus Highway. These regional destinations, along with Lincoln's natural setting, support a strong network of recreation and hospitality businesses that contribute directly to the local economy.

In addition to these assets, Lincoln maintains municipal facilities such as the Kancamagus Recreation Area, Lincoln Community Center, and Lin-Wood Skate Park, and is planning the proposed Riverfront Park to strengthen connections between downtown and the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River. The 2016 Master Plan and the 2022 North Country Rising Plan both emphasize investing in parks, open space, and recreation to enhance quality of life and sustain the town's economic vitality, highlighting the importance of integrating recreation planning with broader master planning and economic development efforts.

## FACTS AND FIGURES



Within the Town of Lincoln, there are **1 national forest, 1 state park, 2 state forests, and several other municipal parks and open spaces.** Together, these provide world-class outdoor opportunities for residents and visitors.



Loon Mountain Resort has a total of **403 acres of skiable terrain including 73 trails.** They also plan to expand their summer trail network to over **15 miles of biking and hiking trails.**



The **Lin-Wood Skate Park** represents one of the northernmost skate parks in New Hampshire and opened in November 2024.



There are **2 multi-use paths** within and close to Lincoln's village area. While these paths offer different user experiences while also benefiting residents and visitors.



Lincoln has grand plans for a **Riverfront Park, a 22-acre town-owned property** in the village center that poses the most significant park and open space opportunity in town.



The seasonal population creates unique challenges and opportunities for parks and recreation services, with **seasonal peak visitation potentially reaching 25,000 visitors**, according to the 2024 Hazard Mitigation Plan.



The **Parks and Recreation Department submitted 8 projects as part of the 2025 Capital Improvement Plan** for facility maintenance and improvements to address concerns raised in municipal and regional plans.

# MUNICIPAL PARKS & OPEN SPACE FACILITIES

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*Despite the amount of public and accessible land in Lincoln and the region, the Town of Lincoln plays a crucial role providing more intimate recreation opportunities for its residents and visitors. For instance, while Lincoln is the home of Loon Mountain Resort, the Town owns and manages the Kancamagus Recreation Area, which operates a small ski slope. Other resources like the Lin-Wood Skate Park offer smaller-scale, yet equally valuable, opportunities. The future of Lincoln's municipal parks and open spaces is bright with grand plans for the Riverfront Park, which would provide access to the East Branch of the Pemigewasset right from Lincoln's village area.*

## Kancamagus Recreation Area

The Kancamagus Recreation Area serves as one of Lincoln's primary municipal recreation facilities. The facility is located on Forest Ridge Road and provides multiple amenities for residents and visitors including a playground, basketball courts, and indoor recreation space for year-round activities. The Town also owns and operates a small ski slope on site. The facility serves as an important community gathering space and provides recreational opportunities close to residential areas. Despite its popularity, the facility has identified deficiencies and opportunities for expansion and improvement.



## Riverside Cemetery

Riverside Cemetery, located on Old Airport Road, provides cemetery services for the community. While primarily serving a functional purpose, the cemetery also contributes to the town's open space and historical character.

## Community Center

The Lincoln Community Center, located at 194 Pollard Road, functions as a central hub for community activities and recreation programming. Features of the Community Center include a multi-purpose room suitable for community events, meetings and recreation programs; kitchen facilities to support community gatherings and events; and office space for the Lincoln-Woodstock Recreation Department.

The Community Center is identified as the primary emergency shelter for Lincoln, offering a large sleeping area, restrooms, showers, and kitchen facilities, though it does not have a permanent generator. The Lin-Wood School serves as the designated secondary shelter and lacks a generator. The 2025 Capital Improvement Plan allocates \$10,000 for Community Center improvements, recognizing the facility's importance to the community.

## Lin-Wood Skate Park

The Lin-Wood Skate Park is a community-built outdoor skate park that officially opened in November 2024 after 11 years of effort beginning in 2013. Located adjacent to the Lincoln-Woodstock Community Center on Pollard Road, the park cost approximately \$305,000 to build and was funded through many sources including the Tony Hawk Foundation, Vans footwear, and other local establishments including but not limited to the Lincoln Woodstock Rotary Club, Loon Mountain Resort, and Western White Mountains Chamber of Commerce.

Spearheaded by local residents, it is described as “a beginner to intermediate park with a focus on progression” and is open to “anything that rolls,” including skateboards, bikes, and scooters. Originally planned for the Riverfront Park site along the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River, the location was changed to the Community Center after soil contamination at the original site would have made the project prohibitively expensive. The park is free, open to the public, and managed jointly by the towns of Lincoln and Woodstock, representing one of the northern most skate parks in New Hampshire.



## PUBLIC OPEN SPACE RECREATION FACILITIES

*Lincoln is likely best known for the access it provides to areas like the White Mountain National Forest with its miles of trails. Other well-known public areas in Lincoln include parts of Franconia Notch State Park and two other state forests – Second Presidential State Forest and Fay State Forest. These public parks offer a range of amenities from the bustling Lincoln Woods Recreation Area to the well-known Flume Gorge and the lesser-known Fay State Forest.*

## White Mountain National Forest

The Lincoln Woods Recreation Area, located five miles east of Lincoln’s downtown on the Kancamagus Highway, serves as a major trailhead and access point to the White Mountain National Forest. Facilities include parking area, visitor information cabin providing educational resources and trail information, trailhead for the Lincoln Woods Trail, a 180-foot suspension bridge of the East Branch Pemigewasset River, flush toilets, and wheelchair-accessible features. This federally managed facility plays a crucial role in the regional outdoor recreation economy.



## State Parks and Forests:

### Franconia Notch State Park

The southern portion of Franconia Notch State Park, including Lonesome Lake and the Flume Gorge Area, is located within Lincoln's boundaries. The park represents a mountain pass where Interstate 93 winds for eight miles between Kinsman peak and Franconia ridge. Major attractions include Flume Gorge and Visitor Center, Old Man of the Mountain historical site, Echo and Profile Lakes for fishing and swimming, miles of hiking, biking, and ski trails, and several campgrounds. Franconia Notch State Park is a significant driver of tourism and outdoor recreation in the region. However, the 2022 North Country Rising Plan identifies challenges with increased visitation including overcrowding, health and safety concerns, environmental impacts, and the need for continued maintenance.



### Second Presidential State Forest

Owned and operated by the New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands, the Second Presidential State Forest is lesser known than Franconia Notch State Park, but equally important. Totalling more than 1,100 acres, it is located west of Interstate 93 and sandwiched by the White Mountain National Forest to the west and Franconia Notch State Park to the north. The most popular activity in the state forest is hiking, and includes trails to Georgiana and Harvard Falls and Bog Pond.

### Fay State Forest

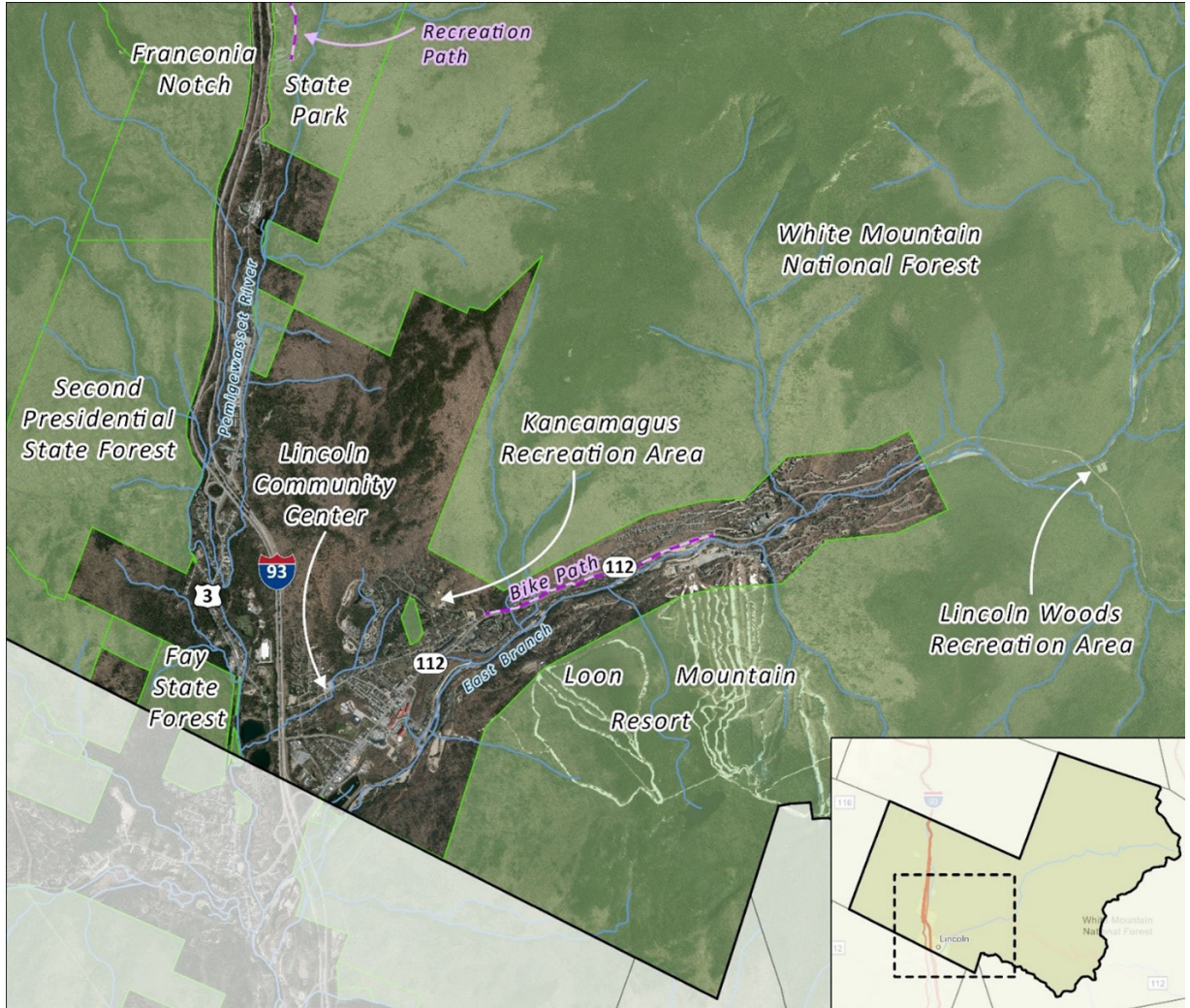
Although there are no official facilities, the Fay State Forest accounts for approximately 180 acres of undeveloped land in Lincoln and Woodstock. With nearly 70% of the property within Lincoln, this area represents another large block of open space that adds to the areas natural resources.



# LOON MOUNTAIN SKI AREA

*In addition to the public lands Lincoln is known for, it is also the home of Loon Mountain Resort, a sprawling year-round destination with tremendous access to large metropolitan areas in the region including Boston. Loon Mountain Resort has evolved over the years and continues to develop on- and off-mountain improvements. This development trend is likely to continue for Loon with continued expansions of terrain on South Peak and a reimagined base area. Loon also understands their responsibility to grow responsibly and is committed to being Net Zero by 2030.*

Loon Mountain complements Lincoln's broader open space resources by providing year-round structured recreation opportunities. Beyond winter skiing and snowboarding, the resort offers summer activities including hiking, disc golf, summer events, weddings, and is home to New England Disabled Sports and the range of programs they provide, New Hampshire's longest



scenic gondola skyride, ziplines, mountain biking, glacial cave exploration, and rock climbing.. While the surrounding White Mountain National Forest offers wilderness experiences and dispersed recreation, Loon Mountain serves as an accessible gateway that introduces visitors to the region's natural beauty through developed facilities and guided activities, making it a vital component of Lincoln's diverse recreational landscape.

Standing at the centerpiece of Lincoln's recreation infrastructure, Loon Mountain Resort offers big-mountain skiing spread across three peaks – North Peak, Loon Peak, and South Peak. Established in 1966 under the direction of former New Hampshire governor Sherman Adams, the resort helped transition the region from a logging-based economy to tourism-based economy. The resort has evolved significantly over the decades of operation, with its newest trails on South Peak opening in 2007 and the Timbertown development opening in 2023.

## MULTI-USE TRAILS

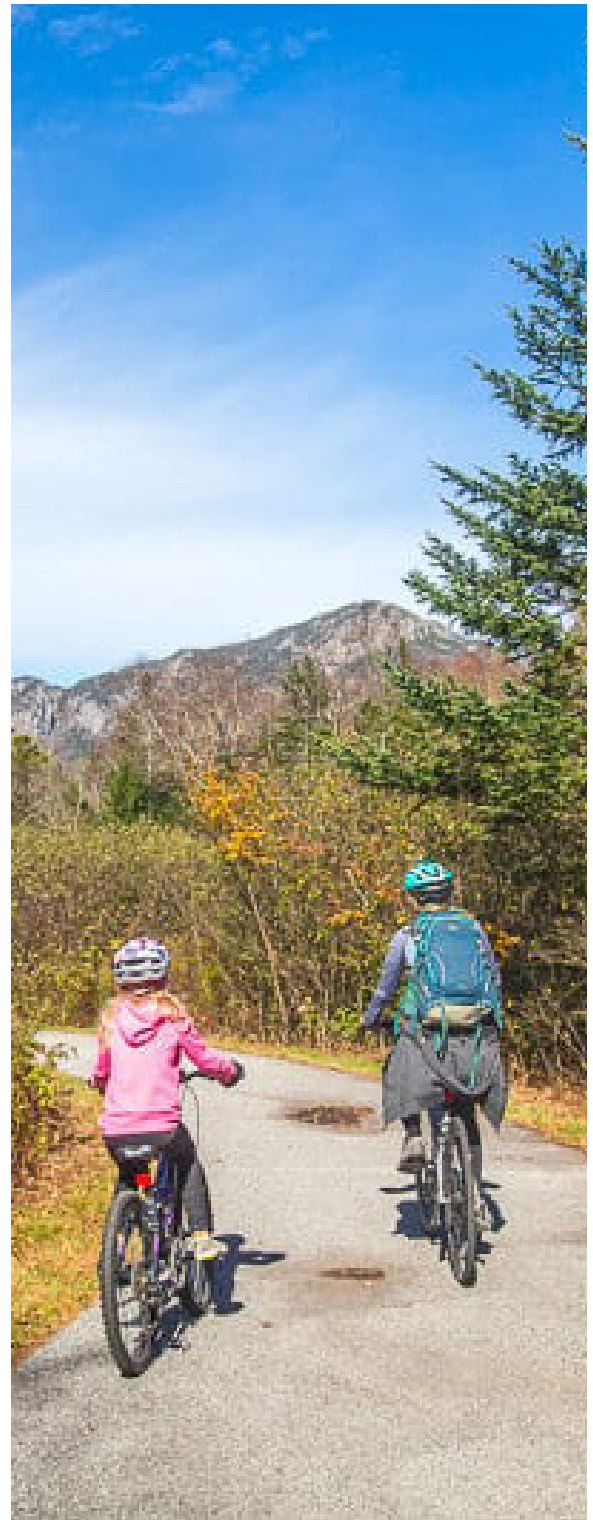
***Lincoln has approximately 10 miles of multi-use trails including a section starting at the Flume Gorge Visitor Center in Lincoln and running north through Franconia Notch State Park. Another shorter path connects Loon Mountain Resort with the village area of Lincoln. Together, these multi-use trails offer residents and visitors different experiences – one is focused on the natural and recreational resources, while the other is more of an alternative transportation option for people in town.***

The Franconia Notch Recreation Path is an 8.7-mile paved trail that stretches from the Flume Gorge Visitor Center in Lincoln to the Skookumchuck trailhead on Route 3 in Franconia. Built as part of the Franconia Notch Parkway construction, this path runs separate from the parkway and traverses the length of Franconia Notch, providing access to all park facilities and natural features. With more than half of the path within the boundaries of Lincoln, the path takes users past many of the state park's most iconic attractions including Flume Gorge, Echo Lake, Profile Lake (the former location of the Old Man of the Mountain), and Cannon Mountain Ski Area in Franconia. This multi-use path accommodates walkers, runners, cyclists, and in winter, snowmobilers, snowshoers, and cross-country skiers providing safe and accessible outdoor activities for residents and visitors to Lincoln.

Snowmobiling in Lincoln is further supported by the White Mountain Snowmobile Club, established in 1970, which maintains an interconnected trail system across both public and private lands. Approximately 25 miles of these trails are located within Lincoln, providing important recreational opportunities and connections to local businesses including lodging, fuel, and dining establishments, contributing to the local economy. The club maintains an active membership base of approximately 100 members annually.

There is also a shorter paved path that connects Loon Mountain Resort with the Town of Lincoln, measuring approximately 1.4 miles and providing an easy connection between the resort and downtown area for recreational use. The south/west end of the path terminates at the intersection of Forest Ridge Drive and Route 112 where users can connect to the sidewalks, which continue further downtown.

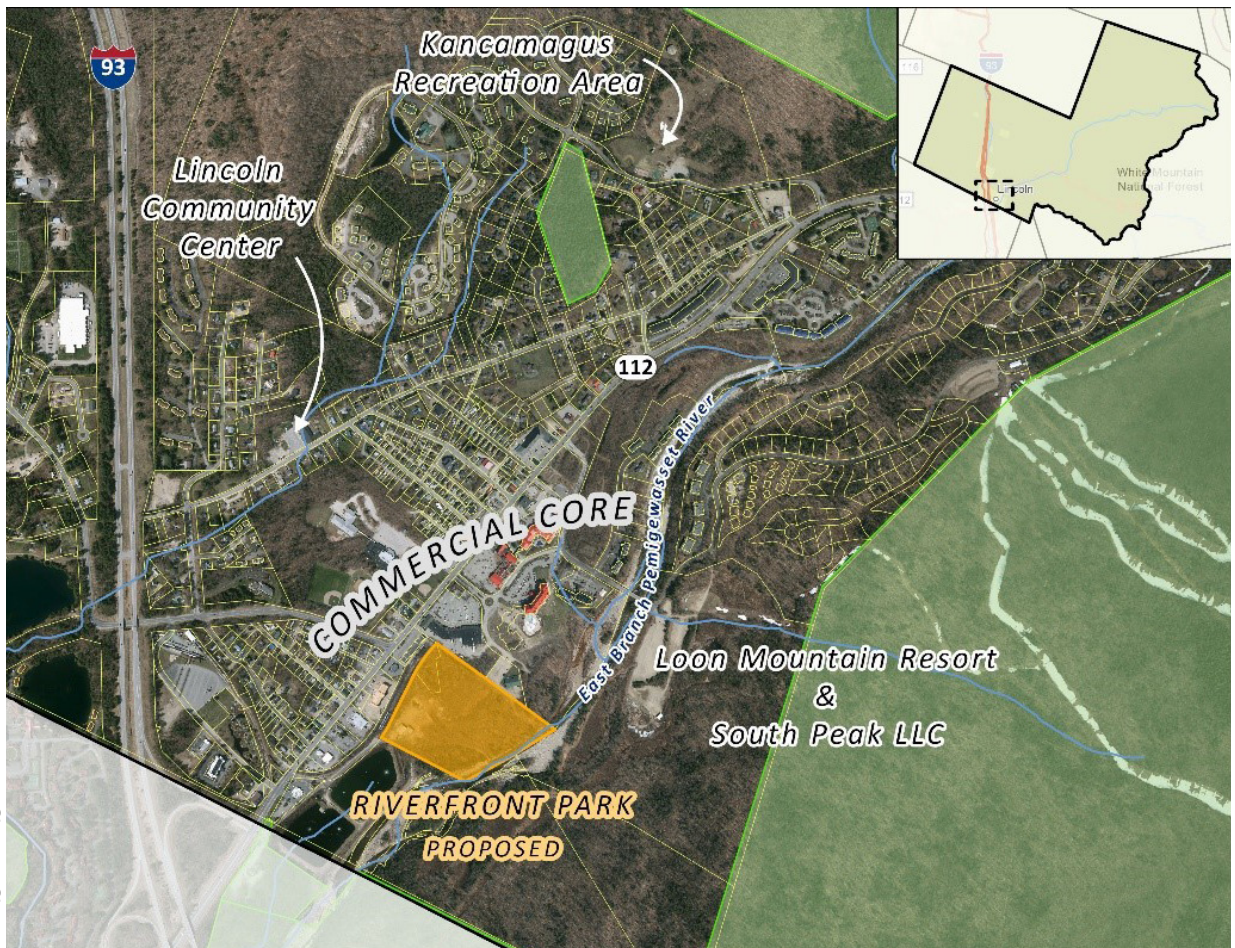
Another short trail – JE Henry Trail – near Loon's South Peak area starts on the east side of the Cooper Memorial Drive Bridge over the East Branch Pemigewasset River. From there it heads north along the river ending at the Riverfront Park Trail.



# PROPOSED RIVERFRONT PARK

*Riverfront Park represents the most significant open space and recreation opportunity for the Town of Lincoln. The 22-acre property, on the north side of the East Branch of the Pemigewasset, presents a unique opportunity to offer open space and recreation elements close to the village center including river access. While the project has been in discussion for decades and the complexities are substantial, the Town is committed to making this project a reality.*

The Town of Lincoln is considering development of this significant new municipal park on properties identified as Tax Map 112, Lots 008 and 009. It is important to consider this proposed new park in the broader context of Lincoln's existing park and open space network and the Town's core commercial area, which is



seen in Map 2. Sandwiched between Lincoln's commercial core and the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River, this potential park is poised to offer open space and recreation to the downtown and provide public river access. Additionally, if Loon Mountain Resort and South Peak LLC are open to partnering, one can envision creative opportunities to connect Lincoln's village to the south side of the East Branch. The conceptual Riverfront Park could represent a transformational project that will provide substantial new recreational amenities while addressing environmental remediation needs on a former industrial site.

The Riverfront Park site consists of approximately 22 acres of undeveloped land located at 63 Recycle Road. The site is positioned immediately south of the Linwood Shopping Center and north of the Lincoln Transfer Station. A wetland located in the central, northern portion of the site was historically used as a sludge disposal area associated with former paper mill operations. NHDES regulations classify this area as a pre-1981 landfill, exempt from current solid waste regulations.

Within the northwestern portion of the property is a soil-capped industrial waste disposal area known as the Burndy Landfill. The Burndy Landfill was closed with a certified clean closure in 1998, with documented removal and off-site disposal of sludge-impacted soils. Following confirmation of closure activities, NHDES issued a Certificate of No Further Action dated October 3, 2001, for the Burndy Landfill closure. Multiple environmental assessments have been conducted at the site to characterize contamination and develop remediation strategies. The 2024 Remedial Action Plan provides a comprehensive evaluation of site conditions and remedial alternatives.

## Proposed Park Features and Phasing

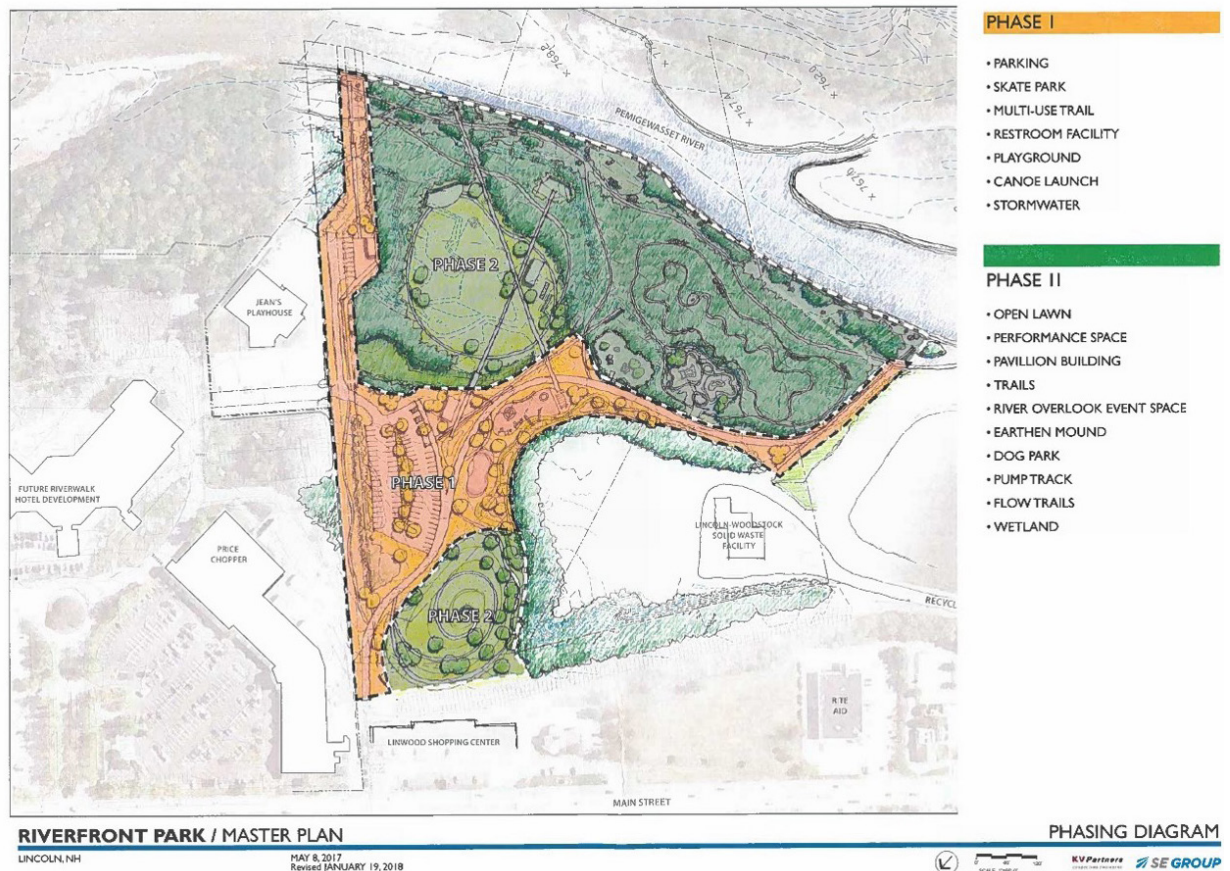
The 2018 Riverfront Park Phasing Diagram illustrates the planned layout and phased development approach for the park. The intent of the park is to include diverse recreational amenities designed to serve both residents and visitors while taking advantage of the site's river frontage and natural setting. Although it is still early and subject to change, desired amenities include parking, restrooms,

a kayak/canoe launch area, performance and event spaces, a pavilion building, playground(s), a dog park, bike trails, and numerous pathways and lawn/green spaces. Many of the park features mentioned here align with needs of the region outlined in the 2022 North Country Rising Plan, and a proposed skate park at this site has already been constructed elsewhere in town.

The park is planned for development in phases, allowing the town to secure funding incrementally and adjust plans based on community needs and available resources. The phasing diagram above indicates that different park features will be prioritized and constructed as funding becomes available.

The phased approach also allows remediation activities to be coordinated with park construction, potentially reducing overall costs by integrating environmental cleanup with site grading and preparation work. Elements the Town should consider include a funding mechanism for long-term maintenance of the Riverfront Park and facilities. Additionally, including Loon Mountain Resort and South Peak LLC in conversations would display an interest in collaboration and open the door for ways to leverage these municipal holdings into potential additional investment.

Phasing Diagram Proposed for Riverfront Park



# CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

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*The 2025 Capital Improvement Plan offers ambitious goals for the Recreation Department over the next 5 years. It represents Lincoln's forward-thinking approach to reasonable concerns raised throughout the planning process.*

A list of CIP projects that would have direct impacts on specific parks and open spaces that were submitted by the Recreation Director is included below.

- **CIP Item #19:** Garage/maintenance shed at Kancamagus Recreation Area
- **CIP Item #31:** Village Center Trails and Riverfront Park
- **CIP Item #39:** Community Center Building Infrastructure
- **CIP Item #40:** Ski Slope Top Shed
- **CIP Item #59:** Solar Panels (Kancamagus Recreation Area)
- **CIP Item #81:** Kancamagus Recreation Infrastructure (dug outs, lighting, etc.)
- **CIP Item #104:** Kancamagus Recreation Area Multi-Use Covered Structure
- **CIP Item #105:** Community Building Repairs
- **CIP Item #108:** Ski Slope Infrastructure (Kancamagus Recreation Area)
- **CIP Item #109:** Kancamagus Recreation Building

Many of these CIP projects speak directly to Lincoln's forward-thinking mindset and address concerns raised throughout municipal and regional recreation documents. With that said, given the infrastructure needs identified in the town's Hazard Mitigation Plan, future capital planning for parks and recreation should also address generator installation at the Community Center and other facilities that serve as emergency shelters.



Lincoln's parks and open spaces provide essential recreation opportunities, support quality of life, and contribute significantly to the local and regional economy. The extensive conserved lands within the White Mountain National Forest offer extraordinary outdoor recreational access, while municipal facilities serve important community functions. Loon Mountain Resort also provides structured recreation opportunities drawing visitors to Lincoln year-round.

The proposed Riverfront Park represents the most transformative opportunity to expand municipal recreation infrastructure, provide new amenities for residents and visitors, remediate contaminated land, and create a signature community space. Successful implementation will require careful coordination of environmental remediation, thoughtful design, strategic funding approaches, and long-term commitment to maintenance and stewardship.

Looking forward, Lincoln should continue to invest strategically in parks and recreation infrastructure, address deferred maintenance needs, plan for climate resilience, and collaborate regionally to address shared challenges and opportunities in outdoor recreation and tourism. By doing so, the town can maintain and enhance the exceptional quality of life and outdoor recreation access that define Lincoln and the broader North Country region.

# DATA SOURCES

- Town websites
- Lin-Wood Skate Park website
- Loon Mountain Resort & affiliated websites
- 2016 Town of Lincoln Master Plan
- 2022 North Country Council: North Country Rising Plan
- 2024 Town of Lincoln Land Use Plan Ordinance
- 2025 Town of Lincoln Capital Improvement Plan

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES



Lincoln’s community facilities and services support the daily needs of residents while also accommodating population fluctuations associated with seasonal visitation and second-home use. Municipal buildings, public safety facilities, schools, the public library, recreation amenities, public works operations, and water and wastewater systems form the foundation of municipal services delivered across the Town. These facilities and systems serve a relatively small year-round population. However, they must also respond to periods of increased demand during peak seasons.

Looking ahead, Lincoln’s municipal facilities and services will require continued planning and investment to address long-term maintenance and replacement needs. Coordination across departments and careful monitoring and management of municipal assets will remain important to ensuring that community facilities and services remain reliable and responsive to local needs over time.

There are indications that Lincoln may face future infrastructure upgrades, including improvements related to the wastewater treatment plant, water storage and distribution systems, fire department facilities, and Town Hall.

## FACTS AND FIGURES

**Lincoln manages 9 municipal facilities**, including Town Hall, the Police Department facility, the Fire Department station, the Community Center, the Public Library, the Department of Public Works facility, the Water Treatment Plant, the Wastewater Treatment Facility, and the Recycling Center.



The Lincoln–Woodstock Recreation Department manages at least **5 major recreation facilities**, including the Community Center, the Kancamagus Recreation & Ski Area, the Community Ball Field, the Lincoln-Woodstock Community Garden, and the LinWood Skate Park.

There are **18 different town departments** in Lincoln.



In 2025, **Lincoln Fire Department responded to 301 emergency calls**, a 24% increase from 242 calls in 2024.

In 2025, the **Lincoln Public Library** recorded approximately **9,000 visits** and circulated **more than 12,000 items**, with electronic circulation continuing to increase compared to prior years.



In 2025, the **Lincoln Police Department responded to 7,128 calls for service**—consistent with 2024 levels. Reported totals reflect an updated records management system implemented in 2022, limiting direct comparison to earlier years.

# TOWN GOVERNMENT AND DEPARTMENTS

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***Lincoln's Town Manager–Select Board form of government provides a stable framework that combines elected policy leadership with professional administrative management. This structure supports coordinated service delivery across municipal departments while allowing elected officials to focus on policy direction, fiscal oversight, and long-term planning in a community with diverse and seasonally variable service demands.***

Lincoln operates under a Town Manager–Select Board form of government, which combines elected policy oversight with professional administrative management. This structure is intended to provide continuity in day-to-day operations while maintaining accountability to voters through elected officials. The Select Board, historically the executive body of New England town government, serves as the Town's primary policy-setting authority. Board members are elected by voters and work collaboratively to oversee municipal finances, departmental operations, and community affairs. In Lincoln, the Select Board works in close coordination with the Town Manager, department heads, and Town staff to establish priorities, approve budgets, and guide long-term planning efforts. While Select Board members are not typically present in Town offices during regular business hours, residents may raise concerns or questions through the Town Manager or administrative staff.

The Town Manager is responsible for implementing Select Board policy, overseeing municipal departments, managing personnel, and coordinating Town services. This professional management model supports consistent administration across departments and allows elected officials to focus on policy, fiscal oversight, and community goals. Lincoln delivers services through 18 municipal departments that are supported by a range of elected, appointed, and volunteer boards and committees that address planning, budgeting, capital investment, regulatory oversight, and community initiatives. Together, this governance framework supports the Town's ability to provide services efficiently while responding to local

- Assessing Department
- Cemetery
- Emergency Management
- Finance
- Fire Department
- Health Department
- Human Resources Department
- Police Department
- Public Works
- Public Library
- Lincoln Water Works
- Wastewater Treatment
- Solid Waste
- Recreation
- Short-Term Rental Department
- Town Clerk / Tax Collector
- Town Manager
- Town Welfare

In addition to the town departments, Lincoln has a variety of elected, appointed, and volunteer boards working on a wide range of efforts across the town and region which include:

- Board of Selectmen
- Building Committee
- Capital Improvement Planning Committee
- Cemetery Trustees
- Impact Fee Committee
- Joint Loss Management Committee
- Lincoln Library Board of Trustees
- Planning Board
- Trustees of the Trust Fund Committee
- Zoning Board of Adjustment

## Town Hall

Lincoln's Town Hall was rebuilt in 1998 and is located at 148 Main Street in Lincoln's village center. The building functions as the Town's primary administrative facility, housing core municipal offices including the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Town Manager, Assessing, and Welfare. In 2024, the Police Department relocated to a new facility on Pollard Road, leaving the former police space within Town Hall available for future administrative use. The Town plans to expand departments into this space; however, no departments have relocated to date, and upgrades will be required to fully adapt the lower level for administrative use. The 2025–2030 Capital Improvement Plan identifies ongoing maintenance needs at Town Hall, including exterior masonry repairs and future building system replacements. The roof, replaced in 2013, has a projected 20-year life expectancy, with replacement anticipated around 2033.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

***Public safety services in Lincoln reflect increasing operational demands, evolving service models, and continued investment in facilities, staffing, and regional coordination to support both year-round and seasonal emergency response needs. Police, fire, and emergency medical services have experienced overall growth in call volume since 2019, with activity peaking in recent years and remaining elevated through 2024. This trend has driven significant capital investments, including a new police facility with centralized dispatch, planned apparatus and infrastructure upgrades for the Fire Department, and Linwood Ambulance's transition to a fully staffed 24-hour service model. Together, these changes highlight the Town's reliance on coordinated emergency services, shared dispatch infrastructure, and long-term planning to maintain service reliability, response capacity, and public safety outcomes.***

## Police Department

Lincoln's Police Department is located at 250 Pollard Road, east of Interstate 93 near Exit 32. The department relocated to a new police facility in 2024, expanding from approximately 5,000 square feet to a 15,000-square-foot building designed to support police operations, regional dispatch, and emergency management functions. The facility includes a secure public lobby, administrative offices, patrol and investigative work areas, interview rooms, evidence processing and booking space, locker rooms, training and multi-purpose meeting space, a fitness and equipment support area, and covered vehicle storage including a carport and garage bays. A centralized 24-hour dispatch center is housed within the facility and provides emergency communications for Lincoln Police, Lincoln Fire, Linwood Ambulance/EMS, and Woodstock Police, consolidating dispatch services within a single location. Communications infrastructure has been incrementally upgraded since 2018 through the Capital Improvement Plan, with ongoing system-wide improvements to radios, base stations, and simulcast capabilities to strengthen reliability and interoperability across departments.



## Staffing

The Lincoln Police Department is staffed by sworn officers, dispatch personnel, and civilian support staff. Current staffing includes one Chief (also serving as Emergency Management Director), one Deputy Chief, two Sergeants, six full-time Officers, three part-time Officers, one full-time School Resource Officer, two Detectives (one grant-funded and one serving as Detective Lieutenant), one full-time Administrative Assistant, four full-time Dispatchers, six part-time Dispatchers, and one Dispatch Supervisor/Coordinator. The department also has one K9 Unit, which is an Electronic Storage Detection (ESD) K9 used for digital evidence investigations. The department’s detectives are assigned to investigative work including electronic and digital crimes, with a primary focus on Internet Crimes Against Children investigations conducted in coordination with state and federal partners. All sworn officers are equipped with body-worn cameras, and the department maintains mutual aid agreements with surrounding communities including Woodstock, Franconia, Thornton, Campton, Waterville Valley, and Plymouth. The vehicle fleet consists of approximately ten patrol vehicles, including patrol sedans, SUVs, a pickup truck, and traffic message boards used for roadway safety and incident management.

## Calls for Service

As shown in Table 1, the Lincoln Police Department’s activity between 2023 and 2025 reflects the distribution and types of calls handled under the Department’s current records management system. The Department implemented a new records system at the end of 2022, which changed how calls for service are categorized and compiled. As a result, call totals reported from 2023 forward are not directly comparable to data reported under the prior system.

Within this updated reporting framework, total calls for service increased from 5,994 in 2023 to 7,114 in 2024 and remained at a similar level in 2025, with a

total of 7,128 calls for service. While the overall volume appears relatively stable between 2024 and 2025, this consistency should be interpreted within the context of the revised reporting system rather than as a precise year-over-year trend.

Traffic-related activity continues to account for a substantial share of reported calls, with motor vehicle stops increasing in 2024 and remaining a dominant category in 2025. Medical emergencies, motor vehicle accidents, and fire department dispatch support remain among the more frequently reported call types. Other categories—including disturbances, assaults or domestic incidents, theft, fraud, and suspicious activity—generally reflect consistent levels of activity across the period, with variation that does not indicate a clear directional shift.

**Table 1: Lincoln Police Department Calls for Service**  
**Source: Lincoln Police Department**

	2023	2024	2025
Arrests	116	67	-
Citations/Warnings	751	2,003	-
Fire Dept Dis-patched/Responded	96	147	-
Animal Complaints	73	113	-
Assault/ Domestic Disturbance	43	39	-
Assist Citizen	74	102	-
Criminal Mischief	17	16	-
Civil Standby	13	10	-
Disturbance	38	37	-
Fraud	25	19	-
Medical Emergency	258	286	-
MVA	138	143	-
MV Complaints	151	203	-
MV Stops	1,642	2,548	-
Susp Activity	136	122	-
Theft	42	29	-
<b>Total Calls for Service</b>	<b>5,994</b>	<b>7,114</b>	<b>7,128</b>

## Fire Department

Lincoln’s Fire Department is located at 16 Church Street in the village center. The department operates out of a single fire station with four apparatus bays, administrative offices, a training room, kitchen, and break areas, and provides fire suppression, motor vehicle accident response, fire alarm response, limited medical assistance, and other emergency and non-emergency services in coordination with regional partners. Storage space within the building is limited, with some equipment currently housed within apparatus bay areas.



### Staffing

The department is staffed by one Fire Chief, who also serves as the Town’s Forest Fire Warden and Health Officer, along with two Deputy Fire Chiefs (part-time/on-call), one Captain, and one Lieutenant, supported by a call and paid-on-call membership. The Fire Warden role includes oversight of wildfire response, burn permits, and coordination with state

forestry officials, while the Health Officer role includes inspections and enforcement related to public health, housing, waste, and environmental conditions. Fire Department apparatus includes two engines, one rescue vehicle, one ladder/tower truck, and a command vehicle. A new Engine 2 has been ordered and is anticipated to be placed into service in 2026. The Town’s 2025–2030 Capital Improvement Plan identifies long-term replacement timelines for major apparatus, as well as facility infrastructure needs such as mechanical systems, building improvements, and the installation of vehicle exhaust removal equipment. Continued investment in fire communications equipment is also identified to maintain compatibility with mutual aid partners that operate on analog radio systems.

**Table 2: Lincoln Fire Department Calls for Service**  
**Source: 2019-2024 Town Annual Reports**

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Structure Fires	3 motor vehicle fires	3	2	5	2	7	N/A
Motor Vehicle Accidents/ Fires	45	44	31	29	46	50	N/A
Medical Assists	9	25	36	28	28	4	N/A
Fire Alarm Activations	49	65	65	73	105	96	N/A
Other Service Calls	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	77	85	N/A
<b>Total Calls for Service</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>301</b>

## Linwood Ambulance

Linwood Ambulance provides emergency medical services to the communities of Lincoln and Woodstock, and has served the region for more than 55 years. The organization operates as a nonprofit entity and responds as part of an all-hazards emergency response system alongside local fire and police departments. In 2024, Linwood Ambulance responded to approximately 850 calls for service, up from 829 calls in 2023, representing an increase of about 4 percent year over year. Nearly half (48%) of calls are non-billable, as they do not result in patient transport to a medical facility, which presents an ongoing financial challenge for the organization. In 2024, Linwood Ambulance transitioned from an on-call response model to a career-staffed service, with a primary ambulance staffed in the station 24 hours a day. The organization employs a mix of paid and call staff, including paramedics, EMTs, advanced EMTs, EMRs, and apprentices. A volunteer Board of Trustees provides governance and oversight to the organization. In addition to emergency response, Linwood Ambulance maintains more than 70 automated external defibrillators (AEDs) in the community and offers CPR, AED, and first aid training programs for residents and organizations.

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES

***Lincoln’s community facilities—such as the Community Center, the Public Library, and Town-owned recreation assets—support daily life, education, recreation, and social connection for residents of all ages. These facilities function as both service hubs and shared gathering spaces, accommodating evolving program needs, changing technology use, and year-round demand from a small permanent population supplemented by seasonal activity. Continued attention to facility maintenance, flexibility, and long-term capacity will be important to sustaining community programming and meeting future needs.***

## Lincoln Public Library

Lincoln Public Library is located at 22 Church Street and serves as a core community facility providing library services, educational programming, and meeting space for residents of all ages. The library operates out of a single-story facility totaling approximately 3,600 square feet, which includes



public reading areas, children’s and youth sections, adult collections, staff offices, a meeting room accommodating roughly 25 people, public computers, printing and fax services, and one ADA-accessible restroom. Demand for Wi-Fi and flexible indoor space has increased in recent years, particularly among remote workers and patrons using personal devices, influencing how interior space and technology are utilized.

### Staffing

Library staffing includes one full-time Director, one full-time Assistant Director/Youth Services and Social Media Specialist, and three part-time staff members serving circulation and specialty roles. The library is open Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and closed on Sundays. Part-time staff primarily support evening operations. Lincoln participates in the statewide Interlibrary Loan (ILL) system and utilizes resources from the New Hampshire State Library to supplement local collections and expand access for patrons.

The library offers a range of programs and services, including children’s programming, reading and literacy initiatives, cultural and humanities programming, author talks, workshops, and community information sessions. The library collaborates with the Lincoln-Woodstock Cooperative School District and the Lincoln Recreation Department to support reading programs, youth programming, and educational activities. The Friends of the Lincoln Library provide ongoing support through fundraising, volunteer assistance, and sponsorship of programs and community events, including the annual plant sale, a well-attended fundraising event that supports library programs and services.

### Library Statistics

Library usage patterns have shifted over time, with physical circulation and in-person visits declining from pre-pandemic levels, while electronic circulation has increased steadily, reflecting greater use of digital materials and online access. Library visits and registered users declined sharply during the COVID-19 period and have increased since 2021, though they have not yet returned to earlier peak levels. **In 2025,**

**the library recorded approximately 12,000 circulation checkouts and 9,000 visits, including residents, second homeowners, and area visitors.** These trends highlight changing patron behavior and increased reliance on electronic resources, while continued in-person use supports ongoing demand for library space, programs, and services.

The Town's 2025–2036 Capital Improvement Plan identifies ongoing needs related to library building maintenance and long-term facility capacity. Planned and anticipated projects include interior and exterior painting, flooring and carpet replacement, roof and HVAC system maintenance, accessibility improvements, and continued investment in building systems. The CIP also identifies a potential library building addition to expand meeting and multi-use space, reflecting growing demand for flexible community and program space within the facility.

## Recreation Department

Lincoln-Woodstock Recreation Department provides year-round recreational programming and manages multiple recreation facilities serving residents of Lincoln and Woodstock. The department operates out of the Community Center at 194 Pollard Road, which is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and houses administrative offices, program space, and community uses. The Recreation Department is staffed by a full-time Recreation Director and a full-time Program Coordinator. Staffing is supplemented by seasonal and part-time employees that fluctuate by program area, including approximately 14 part-time staff for summer camps, 6 part-time staff for after-school programming, and up to 20 part-time staff for winter programs at the Kancamagus Recreation & Ski Area. The department manages and programs a range of recreation facilities and assets, including:

### Kancamagus Recreation & Ski Area

The Kancamagus Recreation & Ski Area is a Town-owned facility used for both winter and summer recreation programming. The Kanc Recreation Building includes a small activity room on the upper level and a larger room on the ground floor. During the winter season, the ground floor functions as a base lodge and warming hut when the ski slope is open; during the summer, the facility serves as the base for Kanc Camp and other recreation programs. The recreation area includes a small rope tow-served ski slope, snowmaking infrastructure, and grooming equipment for winter operations. Additional amenities include a little league baseball field, sledding hill, basketball courts with seasonal pickleball nets and striping, and a playground. As of March 2026, the facility recorded 2,383 visitors during the winter season (December 26 through March 6), reflecting strong seasonal use of this Town-owned recreation asset.



## Community Center

The Community Center serves as the primary administrative and program hub for the Recreation Department. The building includes offices for the Recreation Director and Program Coordinator, a large open multipurpose activity space used for recreation programs and senior activities, a kitchen, and a small meeting room (capacity approximately 10 people). The

Senior Services Program, operated by an independent nonprofit organization, leases office and program space within the building. The Lin-Wood Childcare Center also leases space in the Community Center for early childhood programming. Outdoor amenities associated with the Community Center include the Lin-Wood Community Garden, maintained jointly by the Recreation Department and the Lin-Wood Rotary Club, and a skate park constructed in 2024.

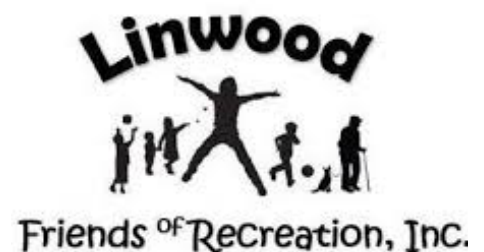


## Community Ball Field

The Community Ball Field consists of soccer and softball fields, dugouts, and a combined concession stand, storage, and restroom building. The facility is located on school property but is owned by the Town of Lincoln and used for both school athletics and community recreation programs.

## Programming

Recreation programming includes youth basketball, T-ball, baseball and softball, fall youth soccer, after-school programs, Adventure Camp, Kanc Kamp, and seasonal ski and snow sports programs. Pickleball programming has expanded through use of Town courts and cooperative arrangements with Forest Ridge, providing scheduled playing times for Lincoln and Woodstock residents. The department also coordinates community-wide events and seasonal activities throughout the year, supported in part by the Friends of the Recreation Department, which assists with volunteer coordination, fundraising, and event staffing. The Recreation Department collaborates with other Town departments and partners, including coordination with the Lincoln Public Library on the Story Walk along the Pemigewasset River Trail and shared-use arrangements with the Lincoln-Woodstock Cooperative School District for indoor recreation programming held in school gymnasiums.



# TOWN INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES

*Lincoln's infrastructure and utility systems—encompassing public works operations, solid waste and recycling, drinking water, wastewater, and cemetery services—form the operational backbone of municipal service delivery. These systems support daily community needs while accommodating seasonal fluctuations, aging infrastructure, and evolving regulatory requirements. Ongoing maintenance, strategic capital investment, and coordinated management across Public Works divisions will be critical to sustaining reliable service, protecting public health, and maintaining system capacity over the long term.*

## Public Works

The Lincoln Department of Public Works (DPW) is responsible for a broad range of essential municipal services that support daily operations, public health, and infrastructure maintenance. Core responsibilities include roadway maintenance and winter operations, solid waste and recycling services, drinking water production and distribution, wastewater collection and treatment, parks and recreation support functions, cemetery maintenance, and local code enforcement activities.



The Department of Public Works operates out of its primary facility located at 38 Old Airport Road. The DPW complex includes a four-bay, drive-through garage used for vehicle storage and maintenance, a salt shed, and equipment storage structures. In 2024, the Town began construction of an addition to the DPW building to address space and functionality needs, including a new office, break room, and cold storage area. As of 2024, foundation work, framing, roofing, and siding had been completed, making the addition weather-tight.



Interior build-out was completed in 2025, including the Director's renovated office. The facility supports daily DPW operations, vehicle storage, and equipment maintenance. DPW equipment and fleet assets include multiple dump trucks and utility vehicles, an excavator, loader, and support equipment used for roadway maintenance, drainage work, winter operations, and municipal site upkeep.

## Staffing

The Department of Public Works is organized to support multiple service divisions under a single department structure. Staffing includes:

- One full-time Director of Public Works, who also serves as a licensed water operator
- Two full-time DPW laborers supporting roadway maintenance, drainage, winter operations, and municipal facilities
- One full-time Water Operator/Equipment Operator supporting drinking water production and distribution in coordination with DPW operations

Solid waste and recycling operations are staffed separately, with three full-time and two part-time staff, overseen by a Solid Waste Supervisor under the DPW Director. Cemetery operations are supported through DPW coordination with the Cemetery Trustees, with grounds maintenance provided by contracted or assigned personnel as needed.

## ***Cemetery***

The Town maintains Riverside Cemetery, located on Old Airport Road. Cemetery facilities include an older stone crypt, a cinderblock storage shed, and a small office building. Oversight is provided by a three-member Cemetery Trustees board, which hires a groundskeeper and works in coordination with the Department of Public Works for operational and maintenance support. The Public Works Director effectively fulfills the role of sexton for operational purposes. As part of ongoing cemetery planning, the Cemetery Trustees has expressed interest in installing a column burial feature to accommodate cremation interments.



## ***Solid Waste and Recycling***

Solid waste and recycling services are provided at the Town's Transfer Station located at 63 Recycle Road, which operates seven days per week from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., excluding major holidays. The facility serves both Lincoln and Woodstock under a shared service arrangement.

The Transfer Station includes a main operations building, compactors for municipal solid waste and commingled recyclables, designated collection areas for yard waste, scrap metal, appliances, construction and demolition debris, electronics, textiles, and household recyclables, as well as outdoor areas for brush and compost stockpiles.

Recycling is mandatory in Lincoln, pursuant to the Town's Transfer Station Regulations amended in 2019. Accepted and prohibited materials, fee schedules, and permit requirements are clearly defined and publicly available. In 2024, the Transfer Station processed approximately 946.8 tons of municipal solid waste, 771.9 tons of construction and demolition debris, and 136.9 tons of commingled recyclables, representing increases in municipal solid waste and construction and demolition debris compared to 2023, and a slight decrease in commingled recycling. The Town also hosts a bi-annual household hazardous waste collection day, with the next event scheduled for 2026.

## ***Lincoln Water Works***

Lincoln Water Works is operated by the Town as a division of the Public Works Department and provides public drinking water service to residential, commercial, and institutional users within Lincoln's developed areas. Municipal water and wastewater systems serve approximately 98% of the town, reflecting a high level of infrastructure coverage. The system primarily serves the Village Center and other areas with concentrated development and must accommodate significant seasonal population fluctuations associated with tourism, second homes, and recreational activity, which continue to influence system operations and capital planning.



Water is supplied through a combination of surface water and groundwater sources. Surface water is treated at the Lincoln Water Treatment Plant, while groundwater sources are treated at the wellhead. The public groundwater supply includes six gravel-packed wells located at Cold Spring. System operations and treatment processes have been modernized in recent years. A noted system limitation is the lack of water metering across the service area.

In October 2024, Lincoln Water Works completed a publicly accessible service line inventory, as required under state and federal drinking water regulations. The inventory documents approximately 1,996 municipal water service connections served by the public water system. Consistent with regulatory requirements, the inventory identifies service lines associated with properties connected to public water and includes both publicly and privately owned portions of those service lines. The inventory is intended to support transparency and lead risk evaluation, rather than to document infrastructure ownership.

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## ***Wastewater Management***

The Town of Lincoln operates a municipal wastewater collection and treatment system that serves developed areas of the community, including the Village Center and other areas with public sewer access. Wastewater is conveyed through a network of gravity sewer mains and pump stations to the Town's wastewater treatment facility, which is located off Main Street near Recycling Road. Treatment is provided through a lagoon-based system, a defining feature of Lincoln's wastewater infrastructure. The facility includes multiple treatment lagoons, associated pumping and control equipment, and on-site office and laboratory space used for system monitoring, sampling, and regulatory compliance. The system currently serves approximately 3,000 sewer connections.



## **Systems Operations and Planning**

System operations focus on maintaining lagoon performance, managing sludge accumulation, and ensuring compliance with state and federal discharge requirements. Routine activities include sewer main jetting, camera inspections, pump station maintenance, and monitoring of treatment processes to identify inflow and infiltration issues and address system wear. In 2024, the Town completed main sewer line cleaning from

Loon Mountain to the Depot and performed a sewer line repair at the end of Franklin Street, reflecting ongoing system maintenance and investment in collection system reliability. Wastewater service in Lincoln is governed by a municipal sewer ordinance adopted and amended in 2019, which establishes requirements related to system use, connections, maintenance responsibilities, and enforcement.

Wastewater planning in Lincoln is shaped by aging infrastructure, regulatory requirements, and the long-term need to maintain adequate treatment capacity and system reliability. The Town continues to monitor system conditions and performance to inform future capital planning and operational decision-making, including a future town-wide water distribution and sewer collection system upgrade identified in the 2025–2030 Capital Improvement Plan to improve system efficiency and expand capacity.

The following capital projects are identified in the Town’s 2025–2030 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Roadway-related infrastructure projects are addressed separately in the Transportation profile of this Existing Conditions Report.

**Table 3: Lincoln Public Works–Related Projects**  
**Source: 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)**

<b>Department of Public Works Divisions</b>	<b>Summary of CIP Projects</b>
Public Works (Facilities, Fleet & Equipment)	Ongoing repairs and upgrades to the DPW garage and supporting infrastructure, including garage doors, interior improvements, and the salt storage shed. Replacement of major DPW vehicles and equipment, including dump trucks, pickup trucks, plow trucks, tractors, a backhoe, a front-end loader, and associated accessories. Replacement of air compressors and other mechanical equipment used in DPW operations. Continued use of an equipment replacement fund to support scheduled and unforeseen equipment needs across DPW services.
Cemetery	Expansion of Riverside Cemetery to increase burial capacity, including the addition of cremation burial areas. Completion and use of a cemetery maintenance building to support long-term grounds management and operations.
Solid Waste and Recycling	Replacement of the Recycling Center building roof. Repaving and improvement of internal roadways serving the Recycling Center. Ongoing land, facility, and operational improvements to support solid waste handling and recycling services.
Lincoln Water Works	Replacement and upgrade of water system equipment, including pumps, valves, controls, meters, and monitoring devices. Communications upgrades linking water sources, pump stations, and the Water Treatment Plant. Maintenance and upgrades to Water Treatment Plant buildings. Replacement or rehabilitation of water intake infrastructure and pumping equipment. Planned upgrades to treatment processes, including future filtration improvements and media replacement. Improvements to water storage and distribution infrastructure, including investigation of additional storage capacity and potential service expansion areas. Repairs and upgrades to groundwater facilities, including the Cold Springs Well system.
Wastewater Sewer System	Ongoing sewer maintenance, including jetting, camera inspections, and targeted repairs. Replacement and upgrade of wastewater treatment equipment, including aerators, pumps, generators, motors, and control systems. Laboratory and office repairs and maintenance at the wastewater treatment facility. Evaluation and potential dredging of wastewater lagoons based on monitored sludge accumulation and regulatory requirements. Planning and preliminary design work for future wastewater treatment facility upgrades. Completion of required sewer inflow and infiltration studies. A future town-wide water distribution and sewer collection system upgrade to improve efficiency and expand system capacity.

# LINCOLN-WOODSTOCK COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT

## SAU #68

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***Enrollment in the Lincoln–Woodstock School District declined by approximately 13 percent between 2018–2019 and 2024–2025, reflecting an aging population and limited availability of year-round, family-oriented housing, trends that may influence long-term demand for school facilities, staffing levels, and shared community services.***

**\*For more information on school enrollment data, please visit the Population and Housing Chapter of this Existing Conditions Report\***

The Lincoln-Woodstock Cooperative School District (SAU #68) provides public education for students in kindergarten through grade 12 from the Towns of Lincoln and Woodstock. Lin-Wood Public School operates as a single K-12 campus located at 72 Linwood Drive in Lincoln, with grade spans serving elementary (K-5), middle (6-8), and high school (9-12) students. The district is administered through SAU #68, with the superintendent's office located at 78 Main Street, Suite 3, in Lincoln. In addition to school buildings, the campus includes a soccer field, baseball field, and concession stand that are located on school property but owned by the Town of Lincoln and used for both school and community purposes, including coordination with the Town's Recreation Department. The school also serves as a central hub for the community, supporting a range of civic, recreational, and shared-use functions.

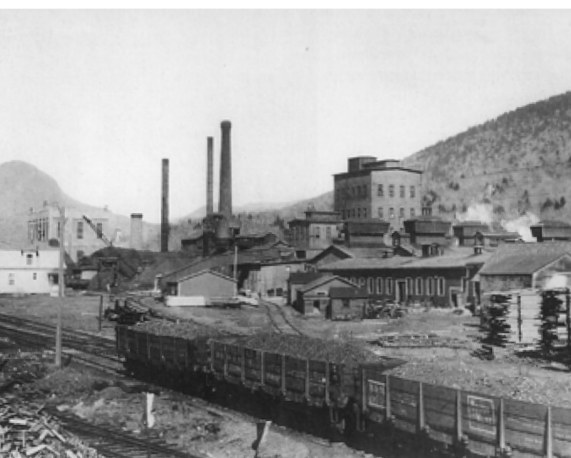
### Funding

School district operations are funded primarily through local property taxes and apportioned between Lincoln and Woodstock under the School Apportionment Formula, which determines how the district's net school budget—after accounting for revenues such as state aid and grants—is divided between the two towns. For the 2022–2023 fiscal year, the adopted formula allocated 65 percent of the district's operating costs to Lincoln and 35 percent to Woodstock. Based on the district's staff directory, the Lincoln-Woodstock Cooperative School District employs 70 total personnel, including administrative leadership, classroom teachers across grades K-12, and instructional and non-instructional support staff serving the school campus.



# DATA SOURCES

- 2016 Lincoln Master Plan – Public Facilities and Services Chapter
- 2019-2024 Town Annual Reports
- 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Plans (CIP)
- Town of Lincoln Website
- Interviews with Department Heads
- 2025 Consumer Confidence Report – Lincoln Water Works
- Lincoln Recreation Department Website
- Lincoln Public Library Website
- 2019-2024 NH State Library Statistics
- Lincoln-Woodstock Cooperative School District (SAU #68) Website
- 2025-2028 Lin-wood School Cooperative Strategic Plan
- 2018 Lincoln Fire Flow Assessment Report



Lincoln's history and heritage are defined by its location at the western edge of the White Mountains and along the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River, where natural resources, transportation access, and recreation have shaped the town's development over time. The area that is now Lincoln has long served as a corridor through the mountains: first for Indigenous travel and seasonal use, later for early settlement that led to large-scale industrial logging and paper manufacturing, and eventually tourism and recreation. These historic roles established Lincoln as both a gateway community and an economic center within the White Mountains region.

Physical reminders of Lincoln's past—including indigenous sites, historic covered bridges, preserved railroad equipment and locomotives, and others—remain evident in the town's landscape and community narrative. Local institutions and organizations, particularly the Upper Pemigewasset River Historical Society, continue to preserve and interpret Lincoln's history, while civic, faith-based, and service organizations support ongoing community traditions. Together, these historic and cultural resources reflect Lincoln's layered history and continue to influence the town's identity, community life, and role as a year-round destination in the White Mountains region.

## FACTS AND FIGURES



**The White Mountains shaped Lincoln's Indigenous history** as a travel corridor and seasonal landscape for Indigenous peoples associated with the Abenaki, whose name Woban-aden-ok refers to the "high white mountains."



Lincoln is home to **three historic covered bridges**, two of which—the Sentinel Pine Covered Bridge and the Flume Covered Bridge—are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.



**Lincoln was chartered in 1764** as a land grant by Royal Governor Benning Wentworth, though permanent European settlement did not begin until the 1780s.



**Loon Mountain Resort opened in 1966**, marking a pivotal shift from an industrial economy to a recreation- and tourism-based future, and further establishing Lincoln as a year-round destination.



Lincoln evolved into a **major industrial logging and mill town** by the late 1800s under the leadership of James E. Henry, with paper manufacturing serving as the town's primary economic engine for decades.



**The East Branch and Lincoln Railroads** once extended more than 70 miles, making it the largest logging railroad in New England and a defining feature of Lincoln's industrial landscape.



Lincoln's history is preserved locally by the **Upper Pemigewasset River Historical Society**, which operates a seasonal museum and archive in the former Union Church building.

# HISTORIC BACKGROUND AND TIMELINE

*Lincoln's history reveals a community that has continually adapted to changing uses of the White Mountain landscape—from Indigenous travel routes and early mountain hospitality to industrial logging and railroads and today's recreation economy. These successive eras shaped where development occurred, how the village formed, and which historic structures and landmarks remain, leaving a legacy that continues to define Lincoln's character, identity, and role within the White Mountain Region.*

## Indigenous Peoples and Early Land Use

According to Indigenous New Hampshire Collaborative Collective, the lands that now include Lincoln are part of a broader Indigenous homeland known as N'dakinna which consists of present-day New Hampshire and surrounding regions. Archaeological and historical evidence indicates Indigenous presence in this region for more than 11,000 years, with the Abenaki and related bands historically associated with the White Mountains. In the Abenaki language, Woban-aden-ok means “to the place of the high white or crystal/mica mountains,” a direct reference to what Euro-American settlers later called the White Mountains. Indigenous use of this landscape was largely seasonal, with the mountains serving as corridors for travel, hunting, and resource gathering rather than sites of permanent settlement.

Within today's White Mountain National Forest, the U.S. Forest Service has identified 21 Indigenous sites of spiritual, agricultural, and historical significance that are federally protected. While limited evidence of long-term habitation exists within Lincoln itself, Indigenous influence remains evident through regional place names and geography. Mount Pemigewasset, often referred to by its contemporary nickname Indian Head Mountain, derives from an Abenaki term describing swift-moving waters, reflecting the enduring connection between Indigenous language, landscape, and cultural meaning in the region.

## Early European Settlement and Town Formation

Lincoln was chartered in 1764 by Royal Governor Benning Wentworth as a land grant of approximately 32,456 acres to a group of investors from Connecticut. These original grantees were primarily land speculators rather than settlers, and there is no evidence that they occupied or developed the town at the time of the grant. Permanent settlement did not begin until around 1782, when Nathan Kinsman and a small number of others moved into the area. By 1790, Lincoln's population totaled just 22 residents.



IMAGE: LINCOLN IN 1906. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE CENTER WAS BUILT IN 1905. ALSO SHOWN ARE THE BOARDING HOUSES, GRIST MILL, AND ENGINE HOUSE. PHOTO PROVIDED BY THOMAS LESSARD

Early settlement patterns differed somewhat from the town's modern layout. The original center of activity was located north of today's village area, along the route toward Franconia Notch, reflecting early travel corridors rather than concentrated village development. Agriculture played a limited role in Lincoln's early economy due to poor soils and rugged terrain; an 1896 county gazetteer described the town as having "very little good farming land." Instead, early economic activity centered on hospitality and tourism, with the opening of an early hotel near the Flume in 1808 and additional inns and taverns following in the early 19th century. These early establishments laid the foundation for Lincoln's long-standing role as a gateway to the White Mountains and a destination for visitors traveling through the region.

## Logging, Mills, Railroads, and Economic Transition

By the late 19th century, Lincoln's economy shifted decisively from small-scale tourism and hospitality to large-scale logging and industrial production, reflecting broader regional demand for lumber, pulp, and paper. The town's extensive forest resources, combined with access to water power along the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River and its location along key mountain travel corridors, made Lincoln well suited for timber extraction and processing. This transition fundamentally reshaped the town's settlement pattern, land use, and economic structure, anchoring an industrial economy that dominated for decades and later set the stage for Lincoln's return to tourism and outdoor recreation as its primary economic driver.



IMAGE: HORSES AT WORK FOR THE JOHNSON LUMBER COMPANY.

Beginning in 1892, industrial logging operations expanded rapidly under the direction of James E. Henry, a New England lumber industrialist whose business interests spanned northern New Hampshire and western Maine. Henry consolidated thousands of acres of timberland and established major sawmill operations in what is now the center of Lincoln. These early mills evolved from lumber production into pulp and paper manufacturing, creating a vertically integrated industrial economy in which timber harvesting, processing, and manufacturing were closely linked. Housing, commercial services, utilities, and civic infrastructure developed alongside the mills, and Lincoln functioned as a company town, with mill operations serving as the primary employer and economic anchor throughout the height of the logging and paper era.

To support logging and mill activity, an extensive network of logging railroads was constructed, most notably the East Branch and Lincoln Railroads. Built beginning in 1894, the railroad extended approximately 72 miles, making it the largest logging railroad in New England. The system operated for more than fifty years, hauling logs from remote forest tracts to the Lincoln mills and shaping the physical and economic geography of the region. Its scale and durability allowed logging operations to continue well into the mid-20th century, long after similar rail-based systems elsewhere had been abandoned.

Lincoln's industrial economy relied on a diverse fleet of locomotives, including rod engines and geared locomotives such as Shays, Climaxes, and Heislars, designed to operate on steep grades and rugged terrain typical of logging railroads. Several of these historic locomotives remain in Lincoln today and are

preserved and displayed at sites such as Clark's Trading Post and the Granite State Scenic Railway. These relics provide tangible reminders of the town's logging and rail heritage and its central role in New England's forest products industries.



IMAGE: THE EAST BRANCH & LINCOLN CLIMAX, RESTORED AND LOCATED AT CLARK'S BEARS (FORMERLY CLARK'S TRADING POST)

As the 20th century progressed, broader shifts in land management and environmental policy began to alter the economic landscape in which Lincoln's industrial operations functioned. A major turning point came with the passage of the Weeks Act of 1911, which authorized federal acquisition of private forest lands in the eastern United States to protect watersheds and restore forested landscapes. Conservationist Philip W. Ayres was a leading advocate for forest protection in New Hampshire and played a key role in advancing the creation of the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF). Ayres later served as the first president of the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, one of the oldest and most influential land conservation organizations in the state.

The White Mountain National Forest was formally established in 1918, prioritizing watershed protection, forest restoration, scenic preservation, and public recreation. Over time, federal forest management policies significantly limited large-scale commercial timber harvesting on public lands in the White Mountains. These restrictions reduced the availability of timber for regional mills and directly constrained the long-term viability of private logging and paper manufacturing operations, including those centered in Lincoln. Combined with changing markets and transportation technologies, these policies contributed to the gradual decline of the town's industrial base.

Research conducted within the White Mountain National Forest has also documented that the landscape long predated industrial logging and had been shaped by human stewardship for thousands of years. Collaborative work with the Indigenous New Hampshire Collaborative Collective has identified evidence of past Abenaki land management practices, including the use of fire to influence forest structure and ecological diversity. This research underscores that while 20th-century conservation policies sought to restore forest health after extensive clearing, the White Mountains had been actively managed for millennia.

By the mid-20th century, Lincoln's logging and paper industries were in decline. The paper mill ultimately



IMAGE: THE WOODSHED, AS IT APPEARED C.1983. IT'S NOW A RESTAURANT IN THE VILLAGE SHOPS.

closed in 1981, ending more than eight decades of industrial production. The remaining mill buildings were demolished in 2009, marking a physical and economic turning point and clearing the way for redevelopment of the former mill site, now known as the Riverwalk Development.

As this industrial era waned, Lincoln experienced another major economic shift driven by local leadership and changing regional conditions. Sherman Adams, a longtime Lincoln resident, played a pivotal role in guiding this transition. Adams served as Governor of New Hampshire from 1949 to 1953 and later as White House Chief of Staff to President Dwight D. Eisenhower from 1953 to 1958, making him one of the most influential political figures in the nation during the mid-20th century. After returning to Lincoln following his national service, Adams recognized that the town's industrial economy was no longer sustainable in light of environmental regulation, forest conservation policy, and market change.



Drawing on his regional connections and long-term vision for the White Mountains, Adams championed a renewed focus on recreation and tourism. He was instrumental in spearheading the development of Loon Mountain Resort, hiking the mountain himself and advocating for its potential as a ski destination. Adams served on the resort's board of directors and played a central role in guiding its early planning and development. Loon Mountain opened in 1966, marking a decisive shift toward a recreation- and tourism-based economy that generated new employment opportunities, stimulated private investment, and reinforced Lincoln's role as a year-round destination community.

Together, the rise and decline of industrial logging, the establishment of the White Mountain National Forest, and the strategic pivot toward recreation and tourism illustrate Lincoln's long pattern of economic adaptation. These transitions—from early tourism to industrial production and back to recreation-based development—continue to shape the town's land use, community character, and role as a gateway to the White Mountains today.

## HISTORIC STRUCTURES AND PHYSICAL RESOURCES TODAY

***Lincoln still retains some of its historic past through physical resources that reflect earlier periods of transportation, industry, and civic development. Their continued presence highlights how Lincoln has evolved while maintaining elements of its historical foundation.***

While much of Lincoln's early industrial infrastructure has been removed or redeveloped, several historic buildings, structures, and physical features remain that reflect the town's transportation, industrial, civic, and cultural heritage. In 2026, Lincoln established its first historic district listed on the National Register of Historic Places—the East Branch and Lincoln Logging Railroad Historic District—recognizing the historical significance of the town's extensive logging and railroad infrastructure. Together, these resources contribute to Lincoln's historic identity and community character and continue to support civic life and tourism.

Lincoln has three historic covered bridges, summarized in Table 1 on the following page, which represent some of the town's oldest and most visible historic structures. Constructed between the late 19th and early 20th centuries, these bridges supported early travel, tourism, and recreation and remain closely associated with Lincoln's identity as a gateway to the White Mountains. Collectively, they illustrate the evolution of transportation infrastructure and the enduring role of historic bridges in the town's landscape. According to the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, the Sentinel Pine Covered Bridge and the Flume Covered Bridge are identified as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, while Clark's Covered Bridge is recognized for its local historic significance.

**Table 1: Covered Bridges in Lincoln**  
**Source: New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources**

Bridge Name	Year Built	Location/Crossing	Current Use	Historical Significance
Flume Covered Bridge	1872	East Branch of the Pemigewasset River (NH Route 112 area)	Vehicular and pedestrian	One of Lincoln’s most recognizable landmarks; reflects 19th-century bridge construction and early transportation routes
Sentinel Pine Covered Bridge	1886	Pemigewasset River at Flume Gorge	Pedestrian	Closely associated with early tourism and visitor access to the Flume Gorge
Clark’s Covered Bridge	1904	Near Clark’s Trading Post	Pedestrian	Supports access to a historic recreation site and reflects continued use of covered bridges into the early 20th century

Remnants of Lincoln’s logging and railroad era are preserved through historic equipment and structures associated with the town’s industrial past. Several steam locomotives once used in logging and industrial rail operations are maintained and displayed locally, including those associated with the Granite State Scenic Railway and Clark’s Trading Post. The Upper Pemigewasset Historical Society Museum, housed in the former James E. Henry paper mill office building (now 26 Church Street), is one of the few remaining structures directly associated with Lincoln’s industrial era and preserves artifacts, photographs, and archival materials related to the town’s logging, railroad, and mill history.



Lincoln’s Town Hall and Public Library reflect a later phase of community development focused on civic governance, education, and public services. While not as old as the town’s industrial or transportation structures, these buildings continue to serve their original public functions and remain important civic landmarks within Lincoln’s village area. Thoughtful maintenance and reinvestment in these facilities will help ensure they remain functional, recognizable civic landmarks over time and allow them to become part of Lincoln’s historic legacy for future generations.



Together, these historic structures and physical resources provide visible and accessible connections to Lincoln’s past, from early transportation and industry to civic development and recreation and form a foundational inventory of historic assets that continue to shape community identity today.

# HISTORIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS AND TRADITIONS

*Lincoln's historic, civic, faith-based, and nonprofit organizations play an ongoing role in preserving local history, maintaining traditions, and providing community support services. Their continued presence reflects the role of local institutions in sustaining community functions beyond municipal services.*

Lincoln's history, identity, and sense of community are supported by a range of long-standing historic, civic, faith-based, and service organizations. While not a comprehensive inventory, the organizations highlighted below represent key groups that preserve local heritage, support community traditions, and provide social and civic infrastructure that has evolved alongside Lincoln's economic and demographic changes.

**The Upper Pemigewasset Historical Society** serves as the primary steward of Lincoln's historic record and collective memory. The Society operates a museum and archival collection housed in the former Union Church building, located at 26 Church Street. The museum is open seasonally (Fall, Spring and Summer), typically on Wednesdays from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., with additional access available by appointment. Additional information is available at [www.uphsnh.org](http://www.uphsnh.org).

The Society maintains extensive collections of historic photographs, maps, documents, artifacts, and ephemera documenting Lincoln's Indigenous context, early settlement, industrial logging and railroad operations, paper manufacturing, civic development, recreation history, and everyday community life. These materials support local research, genealogical inquiries, educational efforts, and planning-related historical reference. In addition to its physical collections, the Society provides digital and written resources, including a regularly updated historical blog and online features that highlight people, places, events, and themes drawn from its archives. Through museum operations, exhibits, publications, and outreach, the Society functions as the central repository of Lincoln's historical knowledge and a key resource for residents, researchers, and visitors.

Veterans' service and civic tradition are represented locally by the **American Legion Joseph Newton Smith Post #83 Post**, which serves as a gathering place for veterans and their families and plays an active role in community life. The Post supports Memorial Day observances and hosts a well-attended Veterans Day community breakfast, reinforcing civic tradition and public recognition of military service in Lincoln.

**The Lin-Wood Rotary Club** plays a visible and hands-on role in civic life and community service in Lincoln. In addition to fundraising and volunteer efforts, the Rotary Club helps coordinate and support local initiatives, including involvement with the Lin-Wood Community Garden, which provides shared growing space and supports food access and community connection. Rotary members also assist with and support local community events and service activities throughout the year, often working in partnership with other organizations to meet community needs.



**Bridge Project** began as a Lincoln-Woodstock Rotary initiative and is now a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit focused on assisting individuals facing addiction, poverty, and other life challenges. Based in Lincoln at 264 Main Street, The Bridge Project hosts recovery meetings, individual support services, youth mentorship programs, and seasonal community events such as the Pedal It Purple bike ride for recovery awareness and annual coat and school supply drives.

Faith-based organizations contribute to Lincoln's cultural and social fabric. **Loon Mountain Ministry** provides non-denominational seasonal and year-round religious services, outdoor worship opportunities on the summit of Loon Mountain, and community outreach, with a particular focus on serving visitors, seasonal workers, and the recreation community. Its programming reflects Lincoln's identity as a destination town with a fluctuating population. St. Joseph's Church, located at 25 Church Street is one of Lincoln's longstanding religious institutions and reflects the town's industrial-era population growth when immigrant and working families settled in the area to support logging and mill operations. The church continues to serve as a spiritual and community anchor for some residents.



Community service and basic needs organizations are also an important part of Lincoln's social infrastructure. **The Lin-Wood Food Pantry** is located in the Community Center at 194 Pollard Road, providing food assistance to individuals and families in the Lincoln-Woodstock area experiencing food insecurity. The pantry operates weekly distributions and accepts donations that support household stability and essential needs.

Other nonprofit organizations play important roles in community resilience and support. **The New England Disabled Sports (NEDS)** is a nationally recognized adaptive sports organization headquartered at 39 Loon Brook Road, where it provides year-round adaptive sports instruction to children and adults living with physical and cognitive disabilities. Programs include winter skiing and snowboarding and summer activities such as kayaking, cycling, golf, and other adaptive recreation, supporting more than 500 student-athletes annually and offering volunteer, coaching, and donation opportunities.

**The Loon Mountain Area Community Fund** is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to improving quality of life for community members facing adversity due to personal injury, medical need, fire, natural disaster, or other hardship. Administered through a board associated with Loon Mountain Resort, the Fund provides direct assistance to individuals and families in need within the Lincoln area and supports coordinated community giving efforts.

**Additional civic and charitable initiatives contribute to Lincoln's strong culture of volunteerism and community support**, reflecting a community that has maintained strong local institutions while adapting to economic change, seasonal population shifts, and evolving community needs.

# DATA SOURCES

- Upper Pemigewasset Valley Historical Society Website
- Interview with President of Upper Pemigewasset Valley Historical Society
- National and State of NH Register of Historic Places
- Lin-Wood Rotary Club
- Lincoln American Legion Joseph Newton Smith Post #83
- Lincoln Public Library Website
- New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources
- MWV Chamber of Commerce
- Indigenous New Hampshire Collaborative Collective
- Loon Mountain Resort Website
- Riverwalk Resort Website
- Loon Mountain Ministry
- St. Joseph's Church
- Lincoln-Woodstock Food Pantry
- Western White Mountains Chamber of Commerce
- University of New Hampshire - Research with Indigenous Communities

# NATURAL HAZARDS



Lincoln faces a diverse array of natural hazards due to its location in the White Mountains region. The town is vulnerable to severe winter weather including heavy snowfall, ice storms, and extreme cold that can disrupt transportation, damage infrastructure, and isolate residents. Flooding poses a significant risk, particularly along the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River and its tributaries, with spring snowmelt and intense rainfall events capable of causing rapid water level rises and erosion. Tropical Storm Irene represents the most damaging natural disaster in Lincoln's recent history, resulting in the collapse of the Loon Mountain Bridge, damage to the levee, impacts to the sewer lagoons, and widespread flooding. The mountainous terrain increases susceptibility to landslides and debris flows, especially on steep slopes during heavy precipitation.

As demonstrated in 2025, drought conditions can also severely impact the community and water supplies, with the town experiencing extreme rainfall deficits that stressed both surface water and groundwater resources. The area's extensive forests also create wildfire risk during dry periods. Additionally, the region experiences occasional severe thunderstorms with damaging winds, lightning, and potential tornadoes, while the changing climate may be intensifying the frequency and severity of some of these hazards, creating challenges for a small mountain community with significant seasonal population fluctuations.

## FACTS AND FIGURES



**Wildfires, severe winter weather, and inland flooding** were determined to be the natural hazards with the highest probability of impacting Lincoln in the 2024 Lincoln Hazard Mitigation.

Lincoln has seen many devastating natural hazards:

- An **inland flooding** event caused by heavy rain occurred on July 1-2, 2017, which caused flooding downtown
- **Heavy rain and snowmelt** in the spring of 2014 brought flooding to several parts of Lincoln.
- On February 8, 2013, a **severe winter storm** resulted in heavy snowfall across Lincoln. A major declaration (DR-4105) was issued.
- **Tropical Storm Irene in 2011** caused severe flooding, including the collapse of the Loon Mountain Bridge and damage to homes and infrastructure.



In the summer of 2025, **33% of New Hampshire experience extreme drought.** Several other droughts have impacted Lincoln over the past decade including 2016-2017, 2020-2021, and 2022.



**Lincoln has a very small floodplain** with approximately 0.40 square miles of land in the 100-year floodplain, representing less than 1% of the land in the community. However, the abundant rivers, streams, and brooks often produce flooding.



**Winter temperatures** in Lincoln can fall below -30°F, and summer temperatures, laden with **high humidity**, can soar to nearly 100°F.

# HAZARD MITIGATION FRAMEWORK & COMMUNITY CONTEXT

*Lincoln faces a range of natural hazards associated with its mountainous terrain, extensive forest cover, and river systems, while seasonal population fluctuations and infrastructure limitations add complexity to emergency response and long-term risk reduction efforts.*

The Town of Lincoln adopted their Hazard Mitigation Plan in February 2024. The document is a tremendous resource designed to help Lincoln reduce and mitigate future losses from natural, technological, or human-caused hazardous events. Developed by the Lincoln Hazard Mitigation Planning Team (HMPT), community stakeholders, residents, and a hazard planning consultant, the plan provides tools to identify, understand, estimate losses, and mitigate various hazards.

Lincoln's population has increased from 1,230 in 1990 to 1,484 in 2023, showing an increase of 254 residents according to the American Community Survey. There are an estimated 2,824 housing units, many of which are vacant (2,015), while occupied housing units total 809. This confirms the presence of many second homes in the community. The large seasonal population changes create unique emergency response challenges because the town must maintain infrastructure, staffing, and emergency services capable of handling peak populations that can be several times larger than the year-round resident count, and in some cases, limited use of water metering makes it more difficult to monitor and manage system demand during peak periods or emergency conditions. Additionally, seasonal residents and tourists may be less familiar with local hazards, evacuation routes, and emergency procedures, and during crises like the 2025 drought. Tracking water usage and communicating conservation measures becomes more complex when a significant portion of property owners are absent or only periodically present.

The 2024 Lincoln Hazard Mitigation Plan focuses on natural hazards but also addresses technological and human-caused hazards. The plan identifies twelve natural hazards that could potentially impact the community, which are:

- |                          |                                       |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Wildfires             | 7. Extreme Temperatures               |
| 2. Severe Winter Weather | 8. Drought                            |
| 3. Inland Flooding       | 9. Lightning & Hail                   |
| 4. Infectious Diseases   | 10. Tropical & Post-Tropical Cyclones |
| 5. Landslide & Erosion   | 11. Earthquakes                       |
| 6. High Wind Events      | 12. Avalanches                        |



Some hazards listed in the 2018 New Hampshire Hazard Mitigation Plan were not included in the Lincoln plan as the team felt they were unlikely to occur in Lincoln or were not applicable, including coastal flooding, solar storm & space weather, and radiological hazards (2024 Hazard Mitigation Plan).






Hazard mitigation is the action taken to reduce or eliminate the risk of future damage to people and property from various hazards. Examples of hazard mitigation could include raising home building elevations to avoid flood events, retrofitting structures to withstand high wind events, improving drainage in flood-prone areas, and tree maintenance and removal around power lines. In addition to reducing the loss of life and property, hazard mitigation efforts can reduce the need for emergency response and disaster recovery services following an event, which can lower costs. Impacts on the economic, social, and environmental landscapes can also be reduced if hazard mitigation is taken seriously.

The 2019 Natural Hazard Mitigation Saves Report produced by the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS), in collaboration with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), determined that every \$1 spent on mitigation saves \$6 on future disaster losses, as seen in figure 1.

Figure 1



Figure 2

National Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) Per Peril <small>*BCR numbers in this study have been rounded</small>		Beyond Code Requirements	Federally Funded
<b>Overall Hazard Benefit-Cost Ratio</b>		<b>\$4:1</b>	<b>\$6:1</b>
 <b>Riverine Flood</b>		<b>\$5:1</b>	<b>\$7:1</b>
 <b>Hurricane Surge</b>		<b>\$7:1</b>	Too few grants
 <b>Wind</b>		<b>\$5:1</b>	<b>\$5:1</b>
 <b>Earthquake</b>		<b>\$4:1</b>	<b>\$3:1</b>
 <b>Wildland-Urban Interface Fire</b>		<b>\$4:1</b>	<b>\$3:1</b>

The study “also estimates what society could save if buildings were to be constructed to exceed the minimum requirements of the 2015 International [Residential & Building] Codes.” These are referred to as beyond code requirements. Figure 2 summarizes hazard-specific benefit-cost ratios (BCR), which measure the cost-effectiveness of a hazard mitigation project, for federally funded projects and projects that go beyond the international code requirements. Lincoln should be aware of these numbers when considering financial investment in mitigation projects.

Because of its comprehensiveness, much of the information in this natural hazard existing conditions profile, is taken directly from the 2024 Lincoln Hazard Mitigation Plan update. For more information on the technological and human-caused hazards, see the 2024 Lincoln Hazard Mitigation Plan update.



# Hazard Mitigation Mission, Vision, Goals, & Objectives

The mission and vision of Lincoln's Hazard Mitigation Plan are:

**Mission:** To make Lincoln less vulnerable to the effects of hazards through the effective administration of hazard mitigation planning, wildfire hazard assessments, and a coordinated approach to mitigation policy and planning activities.

**Vision:** The Town of Lincoln will reduce the impacts of natural hazards and other potential disasters by implementing mitigation measures, public education and deliberate capital expenditures within the community. Homes and businesses will be safer and the community's ISO rating may be improved.

The 2024 Lincoln Hazard Mitigation Plan outlines 5 overarching hazard mitigation goals adapted from the State of New Hampshire Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan:

- **Minimize loss and disruption** of human life, property, the environment, and the economy due to natural, technological, and human-caused hazards through a coordinated and collaborative effort between federal, state, and local authorities to implement appropriate hazard mitigation measures.
- **Enhance the protection** of the general population, citizens, and community guests before, during, and after a hazard event through public education about disaster preparedness and resilience and expanded awareness of the threats and hazards that face the community.
- **Promote comprehensive hazard mitigation planning** at local levels to identify, introduce, and implement cost-effective hazard mitigation measures.
- **Address the challenges posed by climate change** related to increasing the risk and impacts of the hazards identified within this plan.
- **Strengthen Continuity of Operations and Continuity of Government** at the local level to ensure the continuation of essential services.

## EMERGENCY SERVICES

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*Lincoln maintains comprehensive emergency services including a designated Emergency Operations Center at Town Hall, a full-time Police Department with 12 full-time officers, a municipal Fire Department with 14 paid-on-call firefighters, and Linwood Ambulance providing 24/7 medical response, all supported by mutual aid agreements with regional partners. The town's emergency infrastructure includes the Community Center as the primary shelter and Lin-Wood School as secondary shelter (neither with permanent generators), a year-round Department of Public Works maintaining seven paved miles of roads, and access to regional medical facilities at Speare Memorial Hospital in Plymouth (23 miles) and Littleton Regional Healthcare (28 miles).*

**Emergency Operations Center & Emergency Management Director:** The Town of Lincoln has a designated Emergency Management Director (EMD) and a Deputy EMD. The Town Hall has been designated the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) as part of the town's emergency preparedness program. The EOC is where the EMD, department heads, government officials, and volunteer agencies gather to coordinate their response to a significant emergency or disaster.

**Fire Department:** The Lincoln Fire Department is a municipal fire department providing quality fire services to Lincoln residents and visitors 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The department employs a full-time Chief and 14 paid-on-call firefighters and operates one station within the community. The Fire Department participates with the Twin State Fire Mutual Aid Association.

**Linwood Ambulance (EMS):** Linwood Ambulance serves visitors and residents of Lincoln and Woodstock 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, providing medical response services and emergency medical transportation.

**Police Department:** The Lincoln Police Department is a full-time department providing quality law enforcement services to residents and visitors. The department employs a part-time Chief, twelve full-time sworn officers, and two part-time officers. The Lincoln Police Department has mutual aid agreements with the NH State Police, the Grafton County Sheriff's Office, and surrounding towns.

**Department of Public Works:** The Lincoln Department of Public Works operates on a year-round, 24-hour basis as needed. The department staffs a full-time Director and five full-time employees. The department is a member of the NH Public Works Mutual Aid Association and maintains approximately seven paved miles of Class V roads with no town-owned gravel roads.

**Medical Facilities:** Lincoln's closest medical facility is Speare Memorial Hospital in Plymouth (23 miles, 25 beds). An alternative medical facility is Littleton Regional Healthcare in Littleton (28 miles, 25 beds).

Lincoln Urgent Care, located on Railroad Street next to the Holiday Inn Express and across from the Hobo Railroad, provides local access to care and is open seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

**Emergency Shelter(s):** The primary shelter is the Community Center, which offers a large sleeping area, restrooms, showers, and kitchen facilities but does not have a permanent generator. The designated secondary shelter is the Lin-Wood School, which also does not have a generator.



# NATURAL HAZARD IDENTIFICATION, RISK ASSESSMENT & PROBABILITY

**Lincoln faces three high-probability natural hazards with estimated structure losses between \$9.7 million and \$48.7 million each: wildfires throughout the heavily forested Wildland Urban Interface (encompassing essentially the entire community with five critical infrastructure facilities at risk), severe winter weather including debilitating ice storms that can cause millions in damage to forests and structures, and inland flooding along the East Branch Pemigewasset River where a rebuilt levee (certified “active” in 2019) now protects village areas that experienced significant damage during Tropical Storms Irene and Sandy.**

The Lincoln Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies 12 natural hazards that can potentially affect the community. Table 1 “estimates the level of impact that each listed hazard could have on humans, property, and business and averages them to establish an index of severity. The probability estimate for each hazard is multiplied by its severity to establish an overall relative threat factor.”

## Natural Hazard Effects in Lincoln

The following descriptions of natural hazards represent the local impact on the community of the high-risk hazards as identified by the hazard mitigation planning team.

### 1. WILDFIRES

Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment: High Probability: Very High Estimated Structure Loss Value: \$9,742,938 to \$48,714,689.

Any wildfire discussion must include a discussion of the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). The WUI represents the area where the forest and human habitation intersect. All structures within the WUI are assumed to be at some level of risk and therefore vulnerable to wildfire. In heavily forested communities such as Lincoln, many Rangers feel that the entire community is in the WUI and, therefore, the extent of a wildfire could potentially be the entire community.

**Table 1: Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment**

Scoring for Probability (Columns A, B & C)	Column A	Column B	Column C	Column D	Column E (A+B+C)/3	Column F D x E	Column G Risk
1=Very Low (0-20%) 25	What is the probability of death or injury?	What is the probability of physical losses & damage?	What is the probability of interruption of service?	What is the probability of this occurring within 25 years?	Average of Human, Property & Business Impact	Relative Threat	High 13.0-16.9
2=Low (21-40%) 20							Medium 6.0-12.9
3=Moderate (41-60%) 15							Low 0.0-5.9
4=High (61-80%) 10	Human Impact	Property Impact	Business Impact	Probability of Occurrence	Severity	Risk Severity x Occurrence	
5=Very High (81-100%) 5							
<b>Natural Hazards</b>							
1) Wildfires	2.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	3.33	16.67	High
2) Severe Winter Weather	3.50	3.50	3.00	4.50	3.33	15.00	High
3) Inland Flooding	2.00	4.00	2.00	5.00	2.67	13.33	High
4) Infectious Diseases	3.00	1.00	5.00	4.00	3.00	12.00	Medium
5) Landslide & Erosion	2.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	2.67	10.67	Medium
6) High Wind Events	1.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	2.33	9.33	Medium
7) Extreme Temperatures	2.00	2.00	3.50	3.00	2.50	7.50	Medium
8) Drought	1.00	2.00	3.00	3.50	2.00	7.00	Medium
9) Lightning & Hail	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	6.00	Medium
10) Tropical & Post-Tropical Cyclones	3.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	2.67	5.33	Low
11) Earthquakes	2.00	3.00	2.00	1.00	2.33	2.33	Low
12) Avalanches	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	Low
<b>Technological Hazards</b>							
1) Aging Infrastructure	2.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	2.67	10.67	Medium
2) Long Term Utility Outage	2.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	9.00	Medium
3) Hazardous Materials	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	6.00	Medium
4) Conflagration	3.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	2.67	5.33	Low
5) Dam Failure	2.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	Low
<b>Human-Caused Hazards</b>							
1) Transport Accidents	5.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	4.33	13.00	High
2) Mass Casualty Incidents	4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.67	11.00	Medium
3) Cyber Events	1.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	2.33	9.33	Medium
4) Terrorism & Violence	3.00	3.00	4.00	2.00	3.33	6.67	Medium

Due to the predominance of the White Mountain National Forest and the abundance of hiking and camping opportunities, wildfires are a concern in Lincoln. Due to the abundance of slash on the forest floor left by logging operations, blowdowns, and storms, there is potential for fast-burning fuels in Lincoln's forests. The recreational use of woods trails by snowmobilers, campers, and other outdoor enthusiasts creates an opportunity for sparks and out-of-control fires to ignite the town's forested areas.



Using GIS analysis, five Critical Infrastructure & Key Resources (CIKR) were found in the Wildland Urban Interface: the Cold Spring Well, the Village of Loon Water Tank, the Indian Head Dam, the Infiltration Gallery, and Jean's Playhouse. Town Officials and emergency responders are aware of the risk associated with wildfire when a production occurs there.

Given the right conditions - drought, lightning, the human interface, the abundance of forested land, hiking trails, camping, and large homes being built closer together near or within the forest - the potential for significant wildfire is substantial. Because of these factors, the potential loss value was determined to be between 1% and 5% of the total assessed structure value.

## Fire Flow Assessment and Water Supply Challenges

The 2018 Fire Flow Assessment Report identified significant challenges in Lincoln's ability to fight fires, particularly wildfires and structure fires in certain areas of town. The assessment was performed to properly define existing deficiencies in available fire flow throughout the system.

**Water System Overview:** The Lincoln water supply includes a surface-water treatment plant (WTP) receiving raw water from the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River and Loon Pond, and a groundwater supply (Cold Spring Well). The water distribution system contains three storage tanks with a combined capacity of 1.6 million gallons:

- Forest Ridge Tank: 1,000,000 gallons (main pressure zone)
- Loon Village Tank: 500,000 gallons (Loon Village pressure zone)
- Indian Head Tank: 146,000 gallons (Indian Head pressure zone)

**Fire Flow Availability:** Available fire flow in certain areas was estimated to be <50 gallons per minute with no available distribution storage. These areas of concern are private developments including The Landing and portions of the Clearbrook condos and South Peak.

**Fire Flow Duration:** Although the water distribution system contains 1.6 million gallons among the three storage tanks, none of that storage is considered available for fire flow based on minimum system pressure criteria.

**Critical Infrastructure Vulnerability:** At least five CIKRs were found in areas with limited water resources for firefighting: the Loon Mountain Bridge, the Cooper Memorial Bridge, I-93 at the Pemigewasset, the Sewerage Pump station on Route 3, and the Infiltration Gallery. Other CIKR may also be in areas with limited fire flow in addition to several culverts and bridges on the evacuation routes.

**System Improvement Needs:** The 2018 Fire Flow Assessment concluded that “Lincoln is at a crossroads; upgrading the water system is inevitable to serve and protect not only potential development, but the current residential and commercial buildings.” Besides the fire flow and available storage deficiencies, both non-fire flow storage and water supply/treatment capacity has, or soon will, exceed the system’s ability to keep up with development and meet normal demands. The assessment recommended development of a comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) with goals to provide adequate available fire flow throughout the system, provide adequate usable storage, and maintain or improve distribution system water quality (2018 Fire Flow Assessment Report).

## 2) SEVERE WINTER WEATHER

Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment: High  
Probability: High Estimated Structure Loss  
Value: \$9,742,938 to \$48,714,689

Heavy snowstorms typically occur from December through April. Power outages, extreme cold, and impacts on infrastructure are all effects of winter storms felt in Lincoln in the past. These impacts are a risk to the community, including isolation, especially to the elderly (21.3% of the population) and other vulnerable populations. In addition, the ability to get in and out of town can be hampered.



Damage caused by severe winter snowstorms vary according to wind velocity, snow accumulation, duration, and moisture content. Seasonal accumulation can also be as significant as an individual snowstorm. Heavy overall winter accumulations can impact the roof load of some buildings. Significant snowstorms, nor’easters, and blizzards could diminish food supplies within two days.

### Ice Storms:

Ice storms are more concerning than 2-4’ snowstorms, though the probability of a significant ice storm is lower than a significant snowstorm. An ice storm can inflict several million dollars of damage on forests and structures. Unlike typical snowstorms, which are generally handled well by the DPW, ice storms present significant problems. Downed power lines and fallen trees make it difficult for the highway crew and emergency responders. School buses are also at risk.

Since the last hazard mitigation plan, no damaging or debilitating winter storm events have occurred in Lincoln. However, due to the widespread nature of severe winter weather, particularly from ice storms, the potential loss value is estimated to be between 1% and 5% of the total assessed value of all structures in town.

### 3. INLAND FLOODING

Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment:  
High Probability: Very High Estimated  
Structure Loss Value: \$9,742,938 to  
\$48,714,689.

#### 100-Year Flood Events, Riverine Flooding:

Riverine flooding and 100-year flood events can occur due to hurricanes, tropical and post-tropical cyclones, and heavy summer and fall rains. Local road flooding is often the result of rapid snowmelt and heavy spring or autumn rain events. Heavy rain from tropical downpours, hurricanes, severe

thunderstorms, and rapid snowmelt often cause culverts to be overwhelmed and roads to wash out. Additionally, timber harvesting if conducted improperly, undersized or aging culverts, and inadequate ditching are possible causes of local road flooding.



Based on the Grafton County Floodplain Map, Lincoln has a relatively small 100-year floodplain, with less than 1% of the land in the floodplain. The floodplain is mainly along the East Branch and the Pemigewasset Rivers, not far from Lincoln's downtown and the intersection of NH Routes 3 and 112. Despite this small floodplain, 100-year flood events are common occurrences in Lincoln. Another area of concern is Loon Pond Brook, a ravine for approximately 300 yards, dropping 1,000 feet in elevation. Despite mitigation efforts to lower the level of the pond, spring rains can still overburden the brook. The East Branch of the Pemigewasset is the principal riverway through Lincoln. The main stem of the Pemigewasset River usually does not pose a significant threat; however, during extremely heavy rainfall or rapid snow melt, the Pemigewasset can overflow its banks. During Tropical Storm Irene in 2011, the East Branch River was recorded at 29,000 cubic feet per second; homes on Bunker Lane experienced flood damage from the Pemigewasset during Irene.

**The Levee:** The East Branch Pemigewasset River Levee was originally built in 1912 (and refurbished in 1960) by the Army Corps of Engineers as a "Local Protection Project" (LPP) to protect the paper mill in Lincoln and to help divert logs heading downstream during the peak of the paper industry. Although there was never a structure to hold back water, this levee did redirect the flow of the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River and protected low-lying buildings that existed at that time. This structure had been in disrepair. During Tropical Storms Irene and Sandy, the protection afforded by the levee was unable to keep up with the amount of water in the East Branch of the Pemigewasset; homes on Bunker Lane experienced significant flooding. Although the levee helped redirect the storm waters of Tropical Storm Irene to some degree, the damage caused to the levee was not adequately repaired; Tropical Storm Sandy worsened the condition. Worth noting is that the levee is considered a "high hazard dam" meaning that if failure were to occur, the resulting consequences would likely be severe to downstream structures and life.

**Local Road Flooding:** While staying within its budget, the Department of Public Works (DPW) has been proactive in the maintenance and repairs of culverts and has reduced the incidence of local road erosion and washouts. The DPW maintains approximately seven paved miles of Class V roads; there are no town-owned gravel roads. The DPW estimated more than 240 drainage pipes; nearly all are in good shape, are well-maintained, and do not need improvements. Nonetheless, significant rain, particularly if combined with rapid snow melting, can cause considerable road damage.

**Flooding – Dam Failure:** Lincoln is not home to any significant dams or hydro dams; however, a few locations deserve consideration. While considered a low priority hazard, a failure of the town-owned Loon Pond Dam would cause significant flooding to the areas downstream on the Loon Pond Brook. Due to the geography of Loon Pond Brook, flood water from a dam failure at Loon Pond would funnel quickly down the mountainside, causing damage to the forested land along the brook and several roads. Failure at the Loon Pond dam would also significantly impact the public water supply. It is noted that the Loon Pond dam was rebuilt in 2017 and is in excellent condition and well-monitored and maintained. The expected loss value from inland flooding would be based on the cost of repairing roadways and the potential cost of damage to structures. Flooding can be severe enough to take out utilities and create areas of town that become inaccessible to emergency responders.

**National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Status:** Lincoln entered the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) on March 1, 1995. The latest Flood Insurance Rate Studies (FIRS) and Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMS) are dated April 20, 2008, although it is noted that these maps are under review and being updated. According to the Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI), there are 143 NFIP policies in Lincoln, including 13 single-family, one 2-4 family, 122 other residential, and seven non-residential policies, for \$31,020,500 of insurance in force. There were eight paid losses for a total of \$96,577. The BEA/OSI reports that no repetitive loss claims have been paid.



**Lincoln faces significant natural hazard risks due to its geographic location in the White Mountains, extensive forested lands, and position in a valley with numerous rivers and streams. The three highest-risk hazards—wildfires, severe winter weather, and inland flooding—pose the greatest threats to life, property, and infrastructure.**

The 2018 Fire Flow Assessment revealed critical deficiencies in the town’s ability to fight fires, with inadequate fire flow availability in many areas and no usable storage in the water distribution system’s tanks for fire flow duration. These deficiencies, combined with the high wildfire risk due to 97% forest coverage and extensive WUI areas, create significant vulnerability.

The town has made progress in addressing some hazards, including rebuilding the East Branch Pemigewasset River levee and improving stormwater management systems. However, considerable work remains to adequately protect the community from natural hazards. The 2024 Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies 35 mitigation action items to address these vulnerabilities, recognizing that upgrading infrastructure—particularly the water system—is inevitable to serve and protect current residents, businesses, and potential future development.

Lincoln’s emergency services are well-coordinated and participate in mutual aid agreements, but the challenges posed by the town’s geography, seasonal population fluctuations (up to 25,000 visitors during peak times), limited egress routes, and aging infrastructure require continued focus on hazard mitigation and emergency preparedness. The integration of hazard mitigation strategies into the town’s planning mechanisms, including the Master Plan, Capital Improvement Plan, and land use regulations, will be essential to reducing long-term risk and building community resilience.

# DATA SOURCES

- 2018 State of NH Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan
- 2018 Fire Flow Assessment Report
- 2018 FEMA Mitigation Saves Factsheet
- 2019 National Institute of Building Science: Natural Hazard Mitigation Saves Report
- 2023 NH State Hazard Mitigation Plan
- 2024 Town of Lincoln Hazard Mitigation Plan

# LAND USE



Lincoln’s existing land uses exist across eight zoning districts and significant federal- and state-owned land. Together they present a complex pattern of uses, limitations, and new possibilities. This pattern is further shaped by geographic constraints, natural hazard risks, and the town’s identity as both a year-round residential community and major tourist destination. This reality has driven land use and development decision-making throughout the community’s history, and the resulting development pattern has concentrated growth in a narrow valley corridor while large tracts of surrounding forest remain protected.

Perhaps most significantly, Lincoln’s housing composition reflects the tourism-focused economy in an unusual way. The near-equal split of land area for single-family and multi-family residential uses in Lincoln is uncommon for New Hampshire. This reflects Lincoln’s dual identity as a year-round community and a significant tourist draw for the White Mountain Region.

## FACTS AND FIGURES



The area of the community being planned for represents about **5% (4,148 acres) of Lincoln’s total area** and is focused in the valleys around the Pemigewasset and the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River and along major state transportation routes. This excludes the areas of the community that accommodate the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF), Franconia Notch State Park, and Fay State Forest.



Within the developable portion of Lincoln, **residential uses account for 20% of the land area**, with single-family residential and multi-family residential each accounting for 10% respectively.



**Commercial land uses account for 12% (482 acres) of the developable area**, concentrated primarily along New Hampshire Routes 3 and 112.



**Open space represents 17% (690 acres) of the town’s land area** outside of the WMNF, Franconia Notch State Park, and Fay State Forest, while **vacant land accounts for 18%** (767 acres), suggesting there is potential for future land development or conservation.



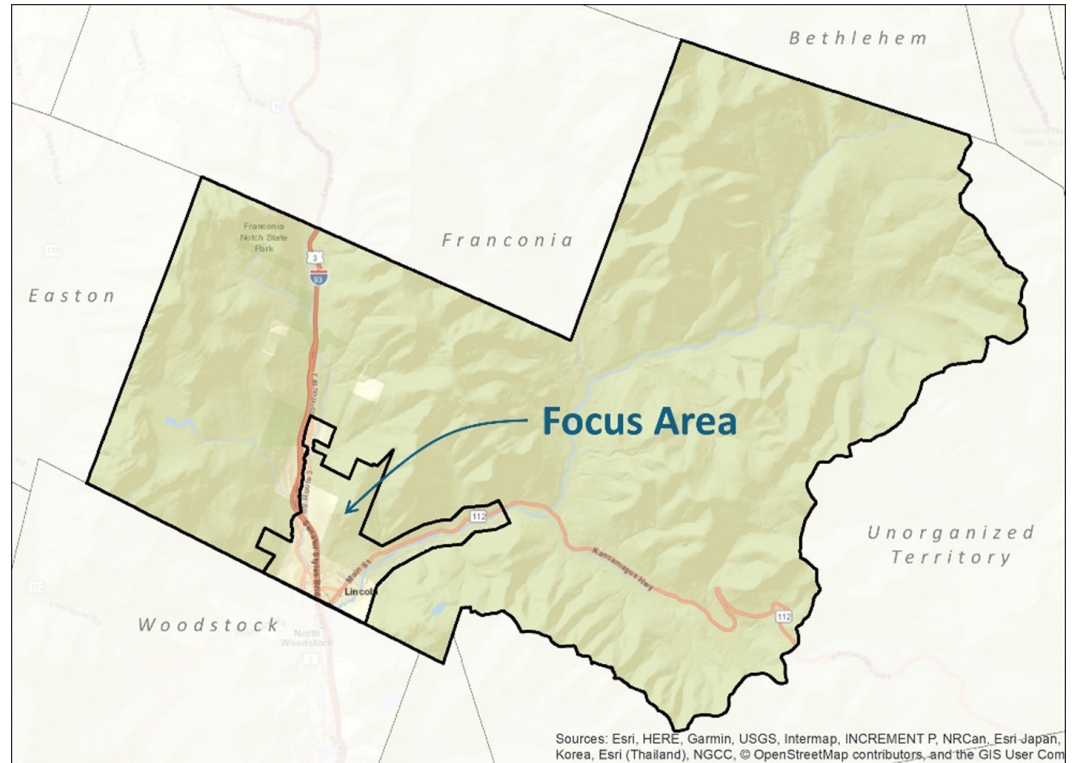
**Tax-exempt properties account for 17%** (738 acres total) of the area of the community being planned for, **with the majority (472 acres or 11%) owned by the Town of Lincoln.**



**The Rural Residential zone is by far the largest zoning district**, covering 57% (2,365 acres) of this area of the community, followed by General Use at 36% (1,476 acres).

# DEVELOPMENT PATTERN & LAND USE CONTEXT

Existing land use is generally understood as the on-the-ground uses currently happening on any given property. Uncovering and understanding the land use pattern in Lincoln today is a critical part of planning for Lincoln's future. Given that nearly 95% of Lincoln is permanently protected through the White Mountain National Forest, Franconia Notch State Park and two state forests, this analysis and planning is focused on an area of the community that is approximately 4,148 acres.



**Map 1**

This developable area, referred to as the focus area (as shown on Map 1), of Lincoln has been shaped by the town's unique geography creating a concentrated development pattern within the valley floor along the Pemigewasset River, the East Branch, and major transportation routes. The map below shows the extent of this portion of the community.

Town-owned properties represent 11% of Lincoln's developable area and are strategically concentrated in zones that provide public services. These strategic holdings ensure space for critical infrastructure and could offer significant opportunity in the future to build connections between the village core, the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River, and other land uses south of the river.

This analysis did not explore conformance to minimum lot requirements, setback compliance, or whether specific uses are permitted or non-conforming in their districts. However, the guidelines from the zoning ordinance appear to result in appropriate land use patterns, particularly along commercial corridors and in residential districts. The key challenges ahead for Lincoln involve managing growth within strict natural constraints while balancing year-round residential needs with tourism infrastructure demands.

Understanding these existing land use details within the focus area will inform and ultimately help guide the Town as it works to create a new future land use vision and goals for Lincoln. Given the constraints of limited developable land and the need to balance year-round residential needs with tourism-driven seasonal demands this will continue to be one of Lincoln's biggest planning challenges.

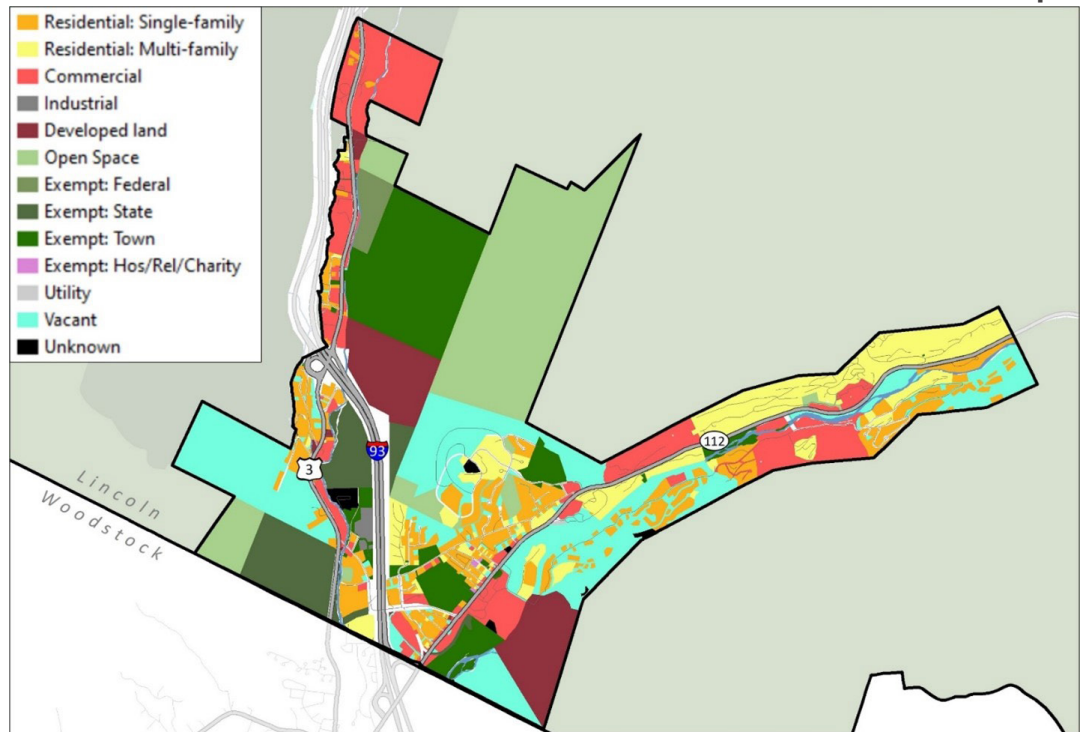


# EXISTING LAND USE

*To better understand the area of the community being planned for, this analysis focused on an area of 4,148 acres accounting for approximately 5% of Lincoln’s total land area. Based on this exploration, Lincoln’s land use reflects its dual character as both a year-round residential community and a major tourist destination within the White Mountains. A dense mixed-use pattern exists where residential uses, commercial activities, tax-exempt public lands, and open space serve both residents and the regular stream of daily visitors during peak seasons. The town’s unusual near-equal split in land used for single-family and multi-family housing, concentrated commercial corridors along Routes 3 and 112, and significant vacant land holdings – particularly south of Route 112 owned by Loon-affiliated developers – seem to position Lincoln for continued evolution as a mountain resort community.*

Map 2

The analysis of the 4,148 acres of developable area reveals a community where residential uses, commercial activities serving visitors and residents, and significant public land holdings create a dense mixed-use pattern. Table 1 summarizes Lincoln’s existing land uses, and the corresponding land use pattern is illustrated in Map 2.



## Residential uses

account for one-fifth of Lincoln’s land uses. Single-family and multi-family residential uses each represent 10% for a total of 810 acres combined. This reflects Lincoln’s need to provide diverse housing options for both year-round residents, seasonal workers in the tourism industry, and second homeowners. Multi-family residential uses are primarily concentrated in the village area and extend east along Route 112, providing housing density near commercial centers and employment. Significant multi-family areas, primarily in the form of condominiums and time share complexes, also exist the closer you get to Loon Mountain Resort.

There is a significant amount of **tax-exempt land** (17% of land uses), most of which is owned by the Town of Lincoln (11% or 472 acres). Town-owned properties include critical infrastructure such as water treatment facilities, the Town Hall and public safety complex, schools, and recreational facilities.

Land Use	Acres (Focus Area)	Percent (focus area)
Commercial	482	12%
Developed land	268	6%
Exempt: Federal	40	1%
Exempt: Hos/Rel/Charity	2	0.05%
Exempt: State	224	5%
Exempt: Town	472	11%
Industrial	12	0.3%
Open Space	690	17%
Residential: Multi-family	402	10%
Residential: Single-family	408	10%
Unknown	20	0.5%
Utility	1	0.02%
Vacant	767	18%
Other (road, water, etc)	360	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,148</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Commercial uses** account for 12% (482 acres) and are concentrated along Route 3 (the primary north-south corridor) and at key intersections. This commercial development serves the dual purpose of providing services to year-round residents and meeting the needs of significant tourist traffic, as winter and summer attractions can bring 25,000 visitors per day during peak season according to the 2024 Hazard Mitigation Plan.

**Open space parcels** represent 17% (690 acres), while vacant land accounts for 18% (767 acres). The designation of “vacant” land in Lincoln’s context is particularly important given much of it may be undevelopable or face significant development constraints due to natural resources or hazards including wetlands, steep slopes, and flood zones along the East Branch Pemigewasset River. With that said, much of the vacant land south of Route 112 is owned by Loon Land Development LLC and South Peak LLC and may be part of their future residential and/or commercial development plans.

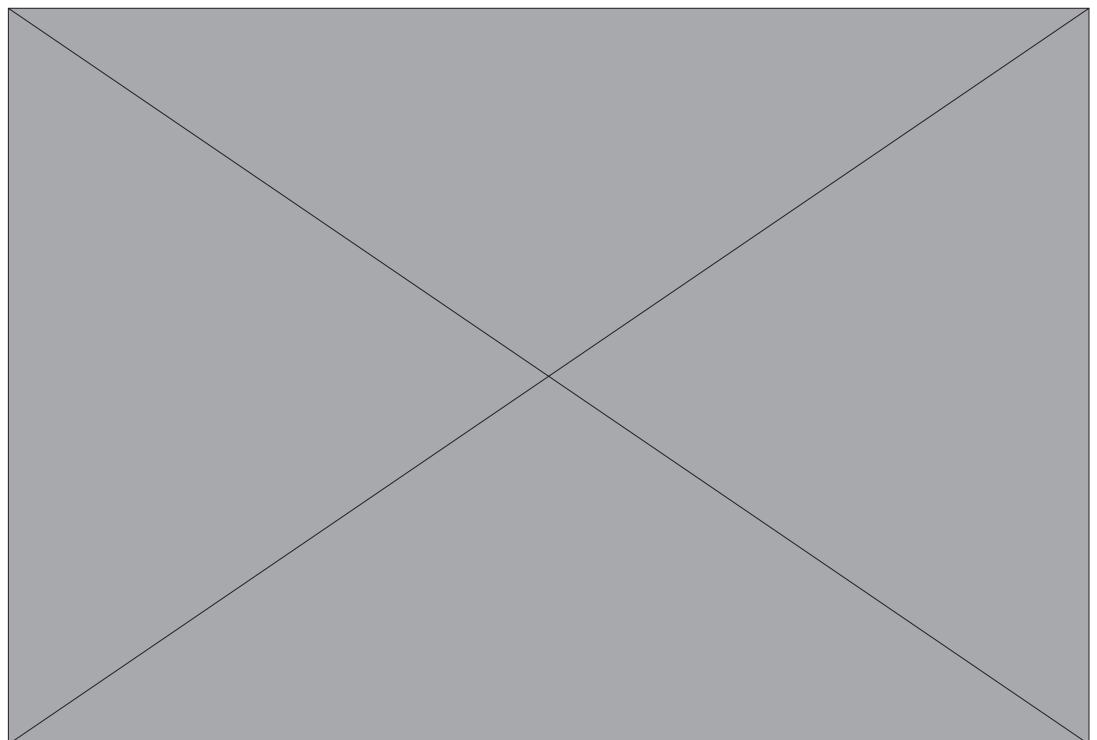
**Industrial uses** represent only 0.3% (12 acres), reflecting Lincoln’s economy based primarily on tourism, recreation, and service industries rather than manufacturing or heavy industry.

## EXISTING ZONING

***Lincoln’s zoning framework consists of seven districts within the 4,148-acre focus area, with the Rural Residential zone being the largest at 57% (2,365 acres) featuring significant multi-family residential structures. Both General Use zones concentrate commercial activity along main transportation corridors with substantial town-owned facilities and vacant land suggesting continued development opportunities exist. To that point, much of the town-owned vacant land in these districts already have future development plans. The remaining five smaller zones—Mountain Residential, Village Center, General Residential, Village Residential, and Small Business—each cover 2% or less but serve specialized functions, from the commercial-dominated Village Center (64% commercial uses) to the predominantly single-family General Residential zone (63% single-family) and the public facility-heavy Village Residential zone (62% town-owned properties).***

The Town of Lincoln has eight primary zoning districts. Table 2 provides details on the area covered by each zoning district and corresponds to the map below. Conducting a zoning and land use analysis provides helpful insight into how each zoning district is actively being used. The following subsections discuss specific zoning districts in detail and provide their subsequent land use breakdown.

*Note: The zoning district total (4,150 acres) differs slightly from the land use total (4,148 acres) due to rounding and mapping methodology differences.*



**Map 3**



**Table 2: Lincoln Zoning Districts**  
Source: Town Assessing & GIS Data

Zoning District	Acres (Focus Area)	Percent (focus area)
General Use Downtown	607	15%
General Use Route 3	869	21%
Small Business	8	0%
Village Center	75	2%
General Residential	65	2%
Mountain Residential	101	2%
Rural Residential	2,365	57%
Village Residential	60	1%

### Rural Residential Zone

The Rural Residential zone is by far the largest zoning district in Lincoln’s Focus Area, covering 57% (2,365 acres) of the core portion of town. Table 3 provides details on the area covered by each land use within the Rural Residential Zone.

This zoning district is predominantly characterized by open spaces that reflect Lincoln’s significant natural resources that work to constrain development. However, many residential neighborhoods exist in this zone that sit just beyond the village residential neighborhood. This zone also contains several recreational elements including the Kancamagus Recreational Area, Lin-Wood Skate Park, and Rachel Adams Memorial Forest.

**Table 3: Rural Residential Zone Land Use**  
Source: Town Assessing & GIS Data

Zoning District	Land Use	Acres	Percent
Rural Residential	Commercial	22	1%
	Developed land	33	1%
	Exempt: Federal	40	2%
	Exempt: State	219	9%
	Exempt: Town	65	3%
	Open Space	658	28%
	Unknown	3	0%
	Vacant	521	22%
	Residential: Multi-family	346	15%
	Residential: Single-family	192	8%
	Other (road, water, etc)	265	11%
	Total	2,365	100%

### General Use Downtown Zone

This district is characterized mostly by its proximity to the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River and Route 112. Most of this district is on the south side of the river and extends south to the boundary with the White Mountain National Forest. Much of this area is owned by Loon Mountain Resort and South Peak. Table 4 provides details on the area covered by each land use within General Use Downtown Zone. However, given the development and expansion plans for the ski area, it’s reasonable to assume the current land use pattern is likely to change, but difficult to predict how.

**Table 4: General Use Downtown Zone Land Use**  
Source: Town Assessing & GIS Data

Zoning District	Land Use	Acres	Percent
General Use Downtown	Commercial	182	30%
	Developed land	95	16%
	Exempt: State	3	1%
	Exempt: Town	27	4%
	Industrial	-	0%
	Open Space	-	0%
	Residential: Multi-family	24	4%
	Residential: Single-family	62	10%
	Unknown	6	1%
	Utility	1	0%
	Vacant	197	32%
	Other (road, water, etc)	11	2%
	Total	607	100%

## General Use Route 3 Zone

Following the Route 3 corridor through the southern portion of town, this district is characterized by predominantly commercial uses. Although they are interspersed with other uses including housing, the commercial uses are found throughout the zoning district from north to south. Worth noting is the 320-acre Campers World property that is owned by the town, which is likely slated for future housing development. Table 5 provides details on the area covered by each land use within the General Use Route 3 Zone.

Zoning District	Land Use	Acres	Percent
General Use Route 3	Commercial	224	26%
	Developed land	140	16%
	Exempt: State	0	0%
	Exempt: Town	335	39%
	Industrial	10	1%
	Open Space	33	4%
	Residential: Multi-family	3	0%
	Residential: Single-family	48	6%
	Unknown	11	1%
	Utility	-	0%
	Vacant	10	1%
	Other (road, water, etc)	55	6%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>869</b>

## Mountain Residential Zone

The Mountain Residential zone is a small district covering 2% (101 acres) of the focus area. This zone addresses the unique challenges of residential development on steeper terrain and in areas with higher wildfire risk due to proximity to forested lands.

The Mountain Residential zone represents neighborhoods directly connected to Loon Mountain. While vacant land exists, their proximity to surrounding single- and multi-family residential uses, it is likely these will become residential in the future. Table 6 provides details on the area covered by each land use within the Mountain Residential Zone.

Zoning District	Land Use	Acres	Percent
Mountain Residential	Residential: Multi-family	22	22%
	Residential: Single-family	47	46%
	Vacant	25	25%
	Other (road, water, etc)	7	7%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>

## Village Center Zone

The Village Center zone covers only 2% (75 acres) of the focus area but plays a critical role as Lincoln's historic village. This zone represents the commercial core of town as a compact, walkable area with some residential uses. Table 7 provides details on the area covered by each land use within the Village Center Zone.

Commercial uses dominate this area acting as Lincoln's compact village serving both residents and tourists. Although limited residential uses exist in this zone, it offers a walkable commercial core for the nearby residential neighborhoods.

Zoning District	Land Use	Acres	Percent	
Village Center	Commercial	48	64%	
	Developed land	0.3	0%	
	Exempt: Hos/Rel/Charity	1	1%	
	Exempt: State	2	3%	
	Exempt: Town	3	4%	
	Residential: Multi-family	2	3%	
	Residential: Single-family	3	4%	
	Vacant	9	11%	
	Other (road, water, etc)	7	9%	
		<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100%</b>



## General Residential Zone

The General Residential zone is a small district covering 2% (65 acres) of the focus area. Table 8 provides details on the area covered by each land use within the General Residential Zone.

The General Residential zone, made up of two nodes, represent primarily residential neighborhoods adjacent to core elements of Lincoln. The southern node is comprised of mostly single-family residences that have close access to Lin-Wood Public School and Lincoln's downtown core. The northern node, adjacent to Route 3, is a single-family residential neighborhood close to the Route 3 and I-93 interchange.

Table 8: General Residential Zone Land Use			
Source: Town Assessing & GIS Data			
Zoning District	Land Use	Acres	Percent
General Residential	Commercial	5	8%
	Residential: Multi-family	2	4%
	Residential: Single-family	41	63%
	Vacant	5	7%
	Other (road, water, etc)	12	18%
	Total	65	100%

## Village Residential Zone

The Village Residential Zone covers 1% (60 acres) of the focus area and is intended to provide residential density in or near the village center while maintaining its residential character. Table 9 provides details on the area covered by each land use within the Village Residential Zone.

The Village Residential zone is comprised of a combination of residential neighborhoods and municipal land. In addition to the Lin-Wood primary and secondary schools, this zone also includes the Lincoln Public Library; together these municipal properties offer access to the residential neighborhoods in this and adjacent zones.

Table 9: Village Residential Zone Land Use			
Source: Town Assessing & GIS Data			
Zoning District	Land Use	Acres	Percent
Village Residential	Commercial	0	1%
	Exempt: Hos/Rel/Charity	1	2%
	Exempt: Town	37	62%
	Residential: Multi-family	2	4%
	Residential: Single-family	15	26%
	Vacant	0	0%
	Other (road, water, etc)	3	5%
	Total	60	100%

## Small Business Zone

The Small Business zone is the smallest zoning district in Lincoln's focus area, covering only 0.2% (8 acres). Table 10 provides details on the area covered by each land use within the Small Business Zone.

More commonly known as the Lincoln Business Park, this zone consists of industrial uses and other properties that are exploring development, but without clear decisions. The Town recently sold the last two lots in the Business Park, which means the Town now only owns the roads and utility infrastructure.

Table 10: Small Business Zone Land Use			
Source: Town Assessing & GIS Data			
Zoning District	Land Use	Acres	Percent
Small Business	Exempt: Town	5	60%
	Industrial	2	28%
	Other (road, water, etc)	1	12%
	Total	8	100%



## FUTURE LAND USE CONSIDERATIONS

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As Lincoln plans for its future, several areas are worth attention. Drafting purpose statements for each zoning district could help determine whether existing land use patterns align with the community's vision or whether adjustments are needed to better reflect current realities and future goals. Understanding what portion of the town's vacant land is truly developable – versus constrained by flood zones, steep slopes, etc. – will be important for setting realistic expectations about growth capacity. While only about 5% of Lincoln's total area actively being planned for, several large parcels exist with uncertain futures; this means that individual development decisions – public and/or private – could still have significant impacts on the community's character and infrastructure. The town may also want to consider if the current housing mix, with its unusual balance of single- and multi-family development, adequately serves year-round residents, or if other approaches might better meet community needs while still supporting the tourism economy.

How Lincoln balances commercial capacity with workforce housing needs remains one of the town's most pressing challenges. While plans for municipally-owned land offer a promising start, including significant residential development efforts on the Campers World property, more work will be needed to address these concerns fully. Commercial areas along Route 3 and in the Village Center face the challenge of serving both daily resident needs and extraordinary peak tourist demands, raising questions about adequate capacity and infrastructure. The significant town-owned lands, particularly in the General Use and Village Residential zones, may offer opportunities for future municipal needs and enhanced connections between the core of the village and natural resources like the East Branch of the Pemigewasset River. They may also present opportunities for some creative public/private partnerships. Ultimately, Lincoln's planning future involves balancing year-round residential needs and community character with tourism infrastructure demands while respecting the natural constraints and hazards that define this mountain community.



# DATA SOURCES

- Town parcel data
- Town assessing data
- 2016 Town of Lincoln Master Plan
- 2024 Land Use Ordinance
- 2024 Hazard Mitigation Plan
- 2024 Pemigewasset River Corridor Management Plan