# III. Summary of Findings

The following is a summary of the findings of this 32-county Appalachian Ohio housing analysis. We have compared and ranked various key data points by county in Section IV. Following is a summary of significant key findings.

**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**

- Overall, the majority of the 32 Appalachian Ohio counties have lower projected shares of population and household growth over the next five years (from 2012 to 2017) than the state of Ohio as a whole. The state of Ohio is projected to experience an increase in total population of 0.5% and an increase in total households of approximately 0.9% over the next five years. See page IV-3 for the comparison of projected population and household growth by county compared to the state of Ohio.

- According to the census, Tuscarawas, Carroll, Brown, Clermont and Holmes counties reported lower shares of population living in poverty than the state of Ohio as a whole. The remaining 27 counties in Appalachian Ohio are estimated to have higher shares of population living in poverty than Ohio's 2010 estimated 14.2% share. See page IV-5 for the comparison of the share of population living in poverty for the 32 counties and the state of Ohio.

- With the exception of Athens County, which includes a large student population at the Ohio University, the remaining 31 counties in Appalachian Ohio have lower shares of renter-occupied housing than the state of Ohio, which was 32.4% based on the 2010 Census. The comparably low share of renter-occupied housing structures is due in part to the limited supply of conventional rental alternatives in Appalachian counties. See page IV-7 for the comparison of the share of renter households of each county and the state of Ohio.

- All 32 Appalachian Ohio counties have lower shares of senior (age 55 and older) renter households than the state of Ohio as a whole, which was reported to be 27.9% based on the 2010 Census. Despite the low shares of senior renter households in the Appalachian Ohio region, as well as the comparable low rate of total household growth projected between 2012 and 2017, the rate of senior renter household growth among 27 of the Appalachian Ohio counties are projected to be greater than the state of Ohio. The state of Ohio is projected to experience a 10.0% increase in senior renter households over the next five years, while 27 of the Appalachian Ohio counties are projected to experience 10.2% to 16.4% rates of senior renter household growth. As such, the Appalachian Ohio region, in general, is considered to be aging in-place increasing the demand for senior specific housing. Older adults tend to remain in their community, while younger individuals and households are moving away from Appalachian Ohio for employment opportunities.

## ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

- The Appalachian Ohio region has generally experienced a more severe adverse economic impact over the past few years than other more developed areas of Ohio. The unemployment rate estimate through December 2011 for the state of Ohio was 8.8%. The unemployment rate of 26 of the Appalachian Ohio counties has been higher than the state unemployment rate, indicating the comparable economic weakness of the majority of the Appalachian Ohio region. See page IV-16 for the comparison of unemployment rates by county and state. The primarily higher than typical unemployment rates in Appalachian Ohio are due in part to the presence of the manufacturing and mining industries, which have historically been more susceptible to economic declines. In times of economic duress, demand for affordable housing often increases, which is reflected in the field surveys.

- The eastern portion of the state (and the eastern portion of the Appalachian Ohio region) has recently been positively impacted by the increases in the Marcellus Shale natural gas exploration projects. The state of Ohio's largest announced industrial expansion project in 2010 was V&M Star LP's decision to build a second pipe mill at its Youngstown (Mahoning County) site. The company began construction of the $650 million, 1- million-square-foot steel mill in March 2010 and expects additional employment of 350 full-time workers by the summer of 2012. V&M plans to produce pipe for natural gas explorations at Marcellus Shale natural formations that extend under eastern Ohio. Site preparation and construction will employ approximately 400 workers.

- Marcellus Shale natural gas projects are perhaps the Mahoning Valley's best economic opportunity since the steel and auto industries took root more than 100 years ago, and the county is still a meaningful player in what many anticipate as a coming energy boom. The potentially valuable shale formation now includes the deeper Utica Shale in Eastern Ohio extending from Trumbull County to Stark County and south along the Ohio River along the Appalachian Ohio region.

## GENERAL HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

- The majority of the Appalachian Ohio region (30 of the 32 counties) has lower median home values than the state of Ohio. Based on Census data and the American Community Survey, the state of Ohio was estimated to have a median home value of $136,400 in 2010. The majority of the Appalachian Ohio counties had estimated median home values ranging from $80,700 to $124,100. See page IV-26 for the comparison of median home values for the state and each of the 32 counties. In addition, most of the owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing structures in this region of Ohio are older than the average age of existing housing in the state.

- Although the Appalachian Ohio region has primarily higher unemployment rates than the state of Ohio and limited demographic growth, the January 2012 foreclosure rates were primarily less than the state of Ohio. According to RealtyTrac, the Ohio foreclosure rate in January 2012 was 0.17%, while 29 of the 32 Appalachian Ohio counties had foreclosure rates lower than the state of Ohio, ranging from 0.00% to 0.14%. As such, foreclosures do not appear to have adversely impacted the Appalachian Ohio region as much as other areas of Ohio. See page IV-28 for the comparison of foreclosure rates.

- The Appalachian Ohio region has a generally higher share of substandard units (defined as housing units that lack complete plumbing facilities). The estimated 2010 share of substandard units in Ohio is 0.4%. There are 27 Appalachian Ohio counties that have higher shares of substandard housing. As expected, some of the most populated counties in the region (Mahoning, Trumbull, Clermont, Columbiana and Tuscarawas counties) have similar shares of substandard housing to the state. The less densely populated areas of Appalachian Ohio generally have higher shares of substandard housing.

- With the exception of Mahoning County, the remaining 31 Appalachian Ohio counties have higher shares of non-conventional housing units, which includes mobile homes, boats, RVs, vans, etc. The state of Ohio has an estimated 2010 share of occupied non-conventional housing units of 3.7%, while Gallia, Meigs, Vinton, Pike and Adams counties have shares over 20.0%. See page IV-33 for the comparison of shares of non-conventional occupied housing units.

## RENTAL HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

- Demand for affordable, government-subsidized, conventional rental housing appears to be relatively strong in the Appalachian Ohio region. Of the 32 counties, 28 have overall government-subsidized occupancy rates and senior-restricted government-subsidized occupancy rates of 98.0% or higher. Many projects maintain small waiting lists. See pages IV-40 and 42 for the comparison of government-subsidized unit occupancy levels for each county.

- The overall non-subsidized Tax Credit occupancy levels in the Appalachian Ohio counties are not as high as the government-subsidized occupancy levels. There are nine counties with overall non-subsidized occupancy levels below 98.0%. However, only three counties have occupancy levels below 95.0%. This rate is often characterized in the industry as stabilized. There are six counties that do not have any projects operating as strictly non-subsidized Tax Credit communities (Gallia, Holmes, Meigs, Monroe and Noble counties).

- Of the 19 Appalachian Ohio counties that have non-subsidized, senior-restricted Tax Credit projects, 15 of these counties report a 100.0% occupancy rate. Considering the increasing senior renter demographic base in this region, the demand for affordable senior-restricted rental housing will likely remain strong and continue to grow over at least the next five years. See pages IV-44 and 46 for the comparison of non-subsidized Tax Credit occupancy levels for each county.

## HOUSING NEED – PENETRATION RATES

Vogt Santer Insights has conducted penetration rates for each county, which takes into consideration the number of existing affordable rental units (government-subsidized and/or Tax Credit), Housing Choice Vouchers in-use, compared to the number of income-eligible renter households at specific area median household income (AMHI) thresholds. For the purpose of this analysis, we have calculated a government-subsidized (very low-income households) penetration rate, analyzing renter households with incomes up to 50% of AMHI. We have also calculated a non-subsidized penetration rate analysis evaluating those households with incomes at 40% to 60% of AMHI, followed by an overall affordable (0% to 60% AMHI) calculation. In reality, most households occupying government-subsidized housing has incomes well below 50% AMHI.

The overall affordable penetration rate does not include Housing Choice Vouchers in-use at existing non-subsidized Tax Credit rental units in an effort to avoid double-counting and a inflating the penetration rate. The overall affordable penetration rate (0% to 60% AMHI) considers all affordable rental units compared to the number of income-eligible renter households that could potentially qualify for residency in affordable housing.

The following summarizes the counties with the five highest/lowest overall government-subsidized penetration rates. Note that counties with lower penetration rates indicate counties with greater potential support for additional affordable housing. Counties with high penetration rates indicate the counties may have a more sufficient supply of existing affordable rental opportunities compared to income-eligible households. Thus, counties with low penetration rates indicate counties that may have greater demographic need for affordable rental housing.

| OVERALL GOVERNMENT-SUBSIDIZED PENETRATION RATES | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| LOWEST (I.E. GREATEST POTENTIAL NEED) | | HIGHEST (I.E. LOWEST POTENTIAL NEED) | |
| Noble | 10.8% | Perry | 45.6% |
| Lawrence | 13.9% | Pike | 45.5% |
| Ross | 16.3% | Harrison | 42.3% |
| Carroll | 17.7% | Hocking | 38.1% |
| Washington | 18.1% | Jefferson | 37.9% |

The following summarizes the counties with the five highest/lowest overall senior-restricted (age 62 and older) government-subsidized penetration rates:

| SENIOR GOVERNMENT-SUBSIDIZED PENETRATION RATES | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| LOWEST (I.E. GREATEST POTENTIAL NEED) | | HIGHEST (I.E. LOWEST POTENTIAL NEED) | |
| Noble | 9.8% | Brown | 51.5% |
| Monroe | 14.1% | Highland | 44.8% |
| Holmes | 18.8% | Trumbull | 43.4% |
| Belmont | 21.0% | Athens | 43.0% |
| Ashtabula | 21.1% | Perry | 43.0% |

See pages IV-48 and 50 for the comparison of government-subsidized penetration rates.

The following summarizes the counties with the five highest/lowest overall non-subsidized Tax Credit penetration rates, as well as the counties that do not have any non-subsidized Tax Credit units:

| OVERALL NON-SUBSIDIZED TAX CREDIT PENETRATION RATES | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| LOWEST (I.E. GREATEST POTENTIAL NEED) | | HIGHEST (I.E. LOWEST POTENTIAL NEED) | |
| Tuscarawas | 1.4% | Ross | 33.1% |
| Brown | 3.6% | Morgan | 28.5% |
| Scioto | 4.2% | Jefferson | 22.1% |
| Perry | 4.6% | Clermont | 21.1% |
| Athens | 4.7% | Harrison | 20.3% |

The following counties do not have any non-subsidized Tax Credit projects/units:

- Gallia
- Holmes
- Jackson
- Meigs
- Monroe
- Noble
- Vinton

The following summarizes the counties with the five highest/lowest overall senior-restricted (age 55 and older) non-subsidized Tax Credit penetration rates:

| SENIOR NON-SUBSIDIZED TAX CREDIT PENETRATION RATES | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| LOWEST (I.E. GREATEST POTENTIAL NEED) | | HIGHEST (I.E. LOWEST POTENTIAL NEED) | |
| Scioto | 6.8% | Harrison | 62.1% |
| Mahoning | 6.9% | Jefferson | 44.7% |
| Belmont | 9.2% | Morgan | 41.4% |
| Clermont | 9.6% | Highland | 33.3% |
| Washington | 10.7% | Hocking | 26.1% |

The following counties do not have any non-subsidized senior-restricted Tax Credit projects/units:

- Adams
- Carroll
- Coshocton
- Gallia
- Guernsey
- Holmes
- Jackson
- Meigs
- Monroe
- Noble
- Perry
- Tuscarawas
- Vinton

See pages IV-52 and 54 for the comparison of non-subsidized Tax Credit penetration rates. The counties with the lowest penetration rate indicate a higher likelihood of greater proportionate need (based on county-size) for affordable housing. As previously stated, counties with higher penetration rates likely have a more sufficient share of conventional affordable rental housing compared to the counties with lower penetration rates. The counties with the lowest penetration rates indicate the greatest share of income-eligible renters that could support additional affordable rental housing.