



## Manufactured Housing

Manufactured housing is a critical yet often underappreciated segment of affordable housing. Built in a factory setting, these homes are transported to their final location, offering a cost-effective alternative to traditional site-built homes. Different types of factory-built homes include:

- **Manufactured Homes:** These homes must meet [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\) construction standards](#), ensuring safety, durability, and energy efficiency.
- **Modular Homes:** These homes are assembled on-site and must adhere to local or state building codes, making them similar in quality and appearance to traditional site-built homes.
- **Mobile Homes:** This term specifically refers to homes built before 1976 under less stringent codes.

In New York, manufactured homes represent approximately 2.4% of the total housing stock and 10.3% of stock in rural areas. As of 2023, Dutchess County ranks second in the state for the number of Manufactured Home Communities (MHCs) with 88, trailing Saratoga County's 105 and ahead of Ulster County's 83 ([Rural Housing Coalition of New York](#)).

### Benefits

- **Affordability:** Manufactured homes are more affordable due to higher construction efficiencies and faster construction times, costing approximately 40% less per square foot on average than site-built homes (NYU). This affordability, combined with energy efficiencies mandated by HUD regulations, reduces both the initial cost and ongoing utility expenses, and makes homeownership more accessible for a broader range of people.



Diversity of Manufactured Housing Options

Source: [ManufacturedHousing.org](https://www.ManufacturedHousing.org)





- **Design Variety:** Manufactured homes offer diverse design options, ranging from traditional to contemporary styles. Buyers can select from various floor plans, high-quality finishes, and customizable features like porches, decks, and garages, ensuring these homes meet a wide array of aesthetic and functional needs.
- **Sustainability:** Manufactured homes are often more sustainable than traditional homes. The factory-built process minimizes waste and maximizes the efficient use of materials while reducing energy consumption and emissions compared to traditional on-site construction. Many manufacturers also use environmentally friendly materials and incorporate energy-efficient systems, reducing the overall environmental impact.
- **Adaptable Siting:** Manufactured homes provide significant flexibility in terms of placement. They can be sited on private land, within manufactured home communities, as infill in urban areas, or used as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) to increase residential density in existing neighborhoods, making them suitable for a wide range of housing needs.



Source: [ManufacturedHousing.org](https://www.ManufacturedHousing.org)

## Common Concerns

**Allowing manufactured homes and MHCs will lower property values, disrupt established neighborhood character, and decline neighborhood quality and reputation.**

- **Response:** Modern manufactured homes feature amenities and aesthetics comparable to single-family residences. These homes can complement existing neighborhoods, enhancing neighborhood diversity and providing viable, affordable housing solutions.

**Manufactured home owners face instability from rent increases and potential land sales, as well as limited financing options, which hinder long-term financial security.**

- **Response:** Because manufactured housing owners often don't own the land their home occupies, chattel loans become necessary. A chattel loan is a type of financing secured by the home itself rather than the land. These loans typically come with higher interest rates and shorter terms, limiting homeowners' ability to build net worth as the land appreciates while the structure may depreciate. However, affixing a manufactured home to a permanent foundation and owning both the structure and land can open up more financing options and enhance the potential for property appreciation. Cooperative MHCs, where residents collectively own and manage the land, make this scenario more attainable.





## Strategies

- Permit manufactured homes and MHCs in a broader range of zoning districts to increase the availability of suitable sites and integrate these homes into more diverse communities. Consider basic (not overly restrictive) design standards to ensure that new manufactured homes will be compatible with neighboring residences.
- Allow manufactured homes to be used as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) or as infill projects to provide affordable housing options in existing neighborhoods.
- Promote cooperative MHCs to increase resident land ownership, fostering stability and enabling homeowners to build equity (see [Manufactured Home Cooperative Fund \(MHCFP\)](#)).
- Promote public awareness of the modern quality, design variety, and affordability of manufactured homes. These homes may help shift public perception and demonstrate the potential for manufactured homes to blend into neighborhoods. Additionally, they may qualify for more traditional financing options, making them more accessible to homebuyers (see [Off-Site Built Homes: An Evolving Industry that Meets Today's Affordable Housing Needs](#) [industry publication]).



Source: [ManufacturedHousing.org](https://www.ManufacturedHousing.org)

## Other Resources

- Recent Policy Changes/Legislation:
  - [HUD Announces New Actions to Support Affordability for Manufactured Homes and Communities as Part of the Biden-Harris Administration's Housing Supply Action Plan](#) (February 2024)
  - [Governor Hochul Signs Legislation to Support Homeowners at Manufactured Home Parks](#) (October, 2023)
- [Manufactured Housing Is a Good Source of Unsubsidized Affordable Housing – Except When It's Not – Part 1, Part 2, Part 3](#) (NYU Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy)
- [Municipal Regulation of Manufactured Housing](#) (NYS Division of Local Government Services, 2023)
- [A Review of Barriers to Greater Use of Manufactured Housing for Entry-Level Homeownership](#) (Joint Center for Housing Studies, Harvard University)

