

DRAFT

**Town of Bellingham
Housing Production Plan:
Housing Needs**



Prepared by Metropolitan Area Planning Council



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The Housing Needs Analysis is organized into three sections: the Community Profile presents demographic information about Bellingham's current and projected population; income and educational attainment. The next section provides detailed information on Bellingham's housing characteristics, including age and ownership of existing housing, home sales activity and housing values. The last section examines the housing affordability gap.

I. Community Profile

The community profile provides an overview of population and income changes from 1990 to 2000, and projections for 2010 and 2020.

Relevance

This information is relevant for determining growth trends and the future needs for housing, public facilities and services in the community.

Key Findings

- **Slow rate of population growth, with projections for slight overall decline**
- **Steady increase in the population over age 65**
- **Household income has been increasing, with fewer households in the lowest ranges, and increasing numbers of households in the higher income ranges**

Bellingham is characterized by a slow rate of population growth. The 1990 population of 14,877 grew by 437 people or 2.9% to 15,314 in 2000. The 1998 Bellingham Master Plan estimated year 2000 population at 15,900 and year 2010 at 16,100. Current MAPC population projections for 2010 suggest a slight decrease in population to 15,189, and for 2020 a further decrease to 15,117 for a percent change of -1.3% between 2000 and 2020.

The projections for the next 10 years indicate that as the adult population matures, and their young children age, the senior population (65+) will significantly grow by 51% in 2020. This trend indicates a stable demand for housing overall, but projected changes in the distribution of the population have important implications for the type and affordability of the housing. The population over 55 years of

age is expected to increase, while the number of families with children is expected to decrease slightly, resulting in smaller household size. From 1990 to 2000, there was a slight decrease in household size, from 2.95 persons in 1990 to 2.75 in 2000. See Table 1, below, for a summary of population data.

Population

Table 1

Current and Projected Population in Bellingham												
	1990		2000		1990-2000 Change		2010 Projected		2020 Projected		2000-2020 Change	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total Population	14,877	100	15,314	100	437	2.9	15,189	100	15,117	100	-197	- 1.3
Population 0-4	1,289	8.6	1,077	7	-212	-16	854	5.6	802	5.3	-275	-25
Population 19 & Under	3,033	20.3	3,312	21.6	279	9	3,254	21.4	2,911	19.2	-401	-12
Population 20-64	9,407	63	9,442	61.6	35	3.7	7,093	46.7	9,161	44.6	-281	- 3
Population 65+	1,148	7.7	1,483	9.6	335	29.2	1,638	10.8	2,243	15	760	51

Source: U.S. Census, 1990 and 2000; MAPC projections

Table 2 below summarizes the projected changes in the number of households. Households are defined in the Census as including all families as well as non-related heads of households. The number of households in Bellingham increased from 4,981 in 1990 to 5,557 in 2000, an increase of 576 households, or approximately 11.5%.

Table 2

Number of Households in Bellingham, 1990-2030		
Year	Total Households	Change from Previous
1990	4,981	--
2000	5,557	576
2010 Projected	6162	605
2020 Projected	6649	487
2030 Projected	7076	427
TOTAL		2095

Source: MAPC/U.S. Census

The composition of households shows that of the total of 5,557 households, 4,282 or 77% are families with children, while 1,275, or 23% are non-family households. Of the 1,275 non-family households, 340 are 65 years of age or older. The ratio of families vs. non-family households may be expected to remain relatively the same for the projected households, primarily due to the large supply of single family homes in Bellingham. The average size of family households was 3.15 persons.

Income

The median household income for Bellingham in 1999 was \$64,496, up 42 % from the 1989 median income of \$45,397. Of the 5,557 total households in 1999, 258 or 4.6 % had incomes below \$10,000 while 229 households or 4.1 % had incomes of more than \$150,000. More than 25.5 % of the households were earning between \$50,000 and \$74,999. Those earning \$75,000 or more included 39 % of households, up significantly from 15 % in 1990. A comparison of 1989 and 1999 income distribution is shown below in Table 3. For 2010 and 2020, the relative income distribution of households is expected to follow the historic trends.

Table 3

Income Distribution by Households 1989 -1999				
	1989		1999	
	# Households	% of Total	# Households	% of Total
Under \$10,000	345	6.9	258	4.6
\$10,000-\$24,999	682	13.7	531	9.5
\$25,000-\$34,999	630	12.6	418	7.5
\$35,000-\$49,999	1,082	21.7	754	13.5
\$50,000-\$74,999	1,491	29.9	1,424	25.5
\$75,000-\$99,999	580	11.6	1,212	21.8
\$100,000-\$124,999	128	2.6	524	9.4
\$125,000-\$149,999	35	.7	227	4.1
\$150,000-\$199,999	8	-	122	2.2
\$200,000 or more	-		107	1.9
Median Income	\$ 45,397		\$ 64,496	
Total # HH	4,981		5,557	

Source: 1990 and 2000 Census (Income for the previous year is reported)

The table demonstrates increasing affluence of Bellingham, with decreases in both the numbers and percent of lower income households. Those households earning more than \$75,000 more than doubled over the decade, outpacing what would be expected due to inflation.

Poverty Status

The next table indicates the poverty status in the community. The number of individuals below the poverty level increased in absolute numbers, as well as percentage of the total population, from .84% in 1989 to 2.5%. The most dramatic change was the decrease in number of female headed households in poverty, from 12.5% in 1989 to 5.2% in 1999. The percent of those individuals over 65 years of age in poverty could continue to increase as that population grows, as projected in the next 20 years.

Table 4

Poverty Status 1989-1999				
	1989		1999	
	#	% of Category	#	% of Category
Individuals Below Poverty	126	.84	384	2.5
Married Couple Families	179	5.0	70	1.6
Female-headed Households	56	12.5	26	5.2
Individuals 65 and Over	60	5.2	88	6.0

Source: U.S. Census, 1990 and 2000

The final table in the section shows the changes in educational attainment. Bellingham exceeds both Norfolk County and the Commonwealth in percent of residents, 25 years and older, who have completed high school. The Town lags slightly behind State-wide figures for completion of 4 years of college. In 2000, Bellingham had an additional 32.5% of its population who either attended some college, or had obtained an associates degree. This trend that over 50% of the adult population obtained post-secondary education correlates with increasing incomes in the community between 1990 and 2000.

Table 5

Educational Attainment Bellingham, Norfolk County and State, 2000				
	% Without High School Diploma*	% Completed High School	% Completed 4 Years College	% Completed Graduate/ Professional
Bellingham	11.8 %	33.7%	15.6 %	6.3 %
Norfolk County	8.1 %	24.2%	25 %	17.9 %
Massachusetts	13.6 %	27 %	19.5 %	14 %

* Includes less than 9th grade, and 9th – 12th grade, no diploma

Source U.S. Census 2000

II. Housing Characteristics

The next section of the Housing Needs report presents data about the housing in Bellingham.

Key Findings

- While median housing prices have decreased by almost \$90,000 in the last 4 years, low and moderate income households in Bellingham still lack housing options
- Housing choices are limited by the high proportion of single family units: 83.5% of all units and extremely low vacancy rates for owner-occupied (.4%) and rentals (1.5%)

Relevance

This information is relevant for analyzing existing opportunities and identifying potential problems with the housing stock

Table 6

Age of Housing Stock in Bellingham, 2000			
Year Built	Age	Number of Units	Percent
1939 or earlier	More than 70 years	779	13.8
1940 to 1959	50 – 69 years	1254	22.2
1960 to 1969	40 - 49 years	1535	27.2
1970 to 1979	30 – 39 years	694	12.3
1980 to 1989	20 – 29 years	706	12.5
1990 to 1999	19 -10 years	674	11.9
Total		5642	
2000-2007*		488	Permitted by Town

Source: U.S. Census 2000; * US Census Building Permits Service

There is a wide range in age of the Bellingham housing stock, with 14 % of the units built in 1939 or earlier, 12% built in the last 20 years, and 488 additional units permitted between 2000-2007. The largest number of units, 1535, was added to Bellingham’s housing stock between 1960 and 1969, Each decade since then has added less than half of that amount, ranging from 706 to 674. Over 80% of all housing units are single family; either detached (77.6%) or attached (5.9%). As discussed in the Housing Supply Inventory and Demand Analysis, there are 4658 owner occupied housing units, or 83.8% and 899 renter occupied housing units, or 16.2%. Vacant units comprise 85 units, or 1.3% of the housing stock as of the 2000 Census.

Table 7

2000 Housing Values		
Value	Number of Units	% of Units
Less than \$ 50,000	7	.2
\$ 50,000 to \$ 99,999	161	3.8
\$100,000 to \$149,999	1,572	37.1
\$150,000 to \$199,999	1,674	39.5
\$200,000 to \$299,999	695	16.4
\$300,000 to \$499,999	126	3.0
\$500,000 to \$999,999	-	-
Median Value (dollars)	\$158,000	

Source: U.S. Census 2000/derived from Assessing data

In 2000, the median house value was \$158,000, up 11% from the median 1990 of \$ 142,200. In 2000, only 168 units, or 4% of the total housing stock was valued at less than \$100,000. Over 75% of the housing units were valued between \$100,000 to \$200,000.

Housing Sales Activity

The following two tables were developed by The Warren Group, publisher of *Banker & Tradesman*. Table 8 lists single family and condominium median sales prices for the past twenty years, from 1989 through September 2009). Table 9 shows the actual number of sales, for both condominiums and single family homes between 1989 and 2009.

The highest prices for single family homes occurred in 2005 (\$320,000), falling \$89,000 or 27.8% in 2009. Similarly, median prices for condominiums peaked in 2004, at \$309,900, and have decreased in price by \$78,900 to \$231,000. Home prices overall have increased 51.7% since 2000.

Bellingham has one of the highest foreclosure rates among municipalities in eastern Massachusetts. In 2007, the 115 foreclosure deeds filed represented 2.04% of the 2000 housing units.

Table 8

Bellingham, MA - Median Sales Price - Calendar Year				
Year	Period	1-Fam	Condo	All
2009	Jan - Sep	\$231,000	\$231,000	\$231,250
2008	Jan - Dec	\$265,000	\$239,200	\$257,700
2007	Jan - Dec	\$309,000	\$257,250	\$305,000
2006	Jan - Dec	\$303,000	\$265,000	\$310,000
2005	Jan - Dec	\$320,000	\$298,000	\$320,000
2004	Jan - Dec	\$294,950	\$309,900	\$309,900
2003	Jan - Dec	\$270,000	\$259,900	\$269,950
2002	Jan - Dec	\$242,500	\$225,750	\$235,000
2001	Jan - Dec	\$215,000	\$178,500	\$207,500
2000	Jan - Dec	\$187,000	\$148,500	\$174,000
1999	Jan - Dec	\$165,450	\$130,000	\$158,000
1998	Jan - Dec	\$153,000	\$115,000	\$141,950
1997	Jan - Dec	\$134,900	\$107,000	\$128,250
1996	Jan - Dec	\$127,450	\$100,500	\$121,450
1995	Jan - Dec	\$123,000	\$ 94,500	\$116,000
1994	Jan - Dec	\$121,000	\$ 86,500	\$116,500
1993	Jan - Dec	\$119,000	\$ 88,000	\$114,500
1992	Jan - Dec	\$116,750	\$ 86,000	\$114,000
1991	Jan - Dec	\$119,100	\$ 87,750	\$112,000
1990	Jan - Dec	\$132,500	\$105,450	\$127,250
1989	Jan - Dec	\$139,900	\$119,950	\$136,400

Source: The Warren Group, 2009

Note the correlation between the highest prices and the some of the highest sales volumes for housing. The highest median sale price for a single family home (\$320,000) home occurred in 2005, when the number of sales of single family homes was the highest in six years. Similarly, the highest sales price for a condominium (\$309,900) occurred in 2004, the year the largest number ever of condominiums was sold in Bellingham.

Table 9

Bellingham, MA - Number of Sales - Calendar Year				
Year	Period	1-Fam	Condo	All
2009	Jan - Sep	101	34	152
2008	Jan - Dec	137	48	220
2007	Jan - Dec	131	52	220
2006	Jan - Dec	171	71	314
2005	Jan - Dec	248	77	383
2004	Jan - Dec	208	103	365
2003	Jan - Dec	220	100	400
2002	Jan - Dec	203	74	339
2001	Jan - Dec	201	71	351
2000	Jan - Dec	215	69	345
1999	Jan - Dec	284	70	401
1998	Jan - Dec	277	81	410
1997	Jan - Dec	187	71	326
1996	Jan - Dec	174	69	280
1995	Jan - Dec	193	50	301
1994	Jan - Dec	221	41	297
1993	Jan - Dec	219	31	286
1992	Jan - Dec	160	27	210
1991	Jan - Dec	121	27	171
1990	Jan - Dec	141	34	216
1989	Jan - Dec	177	48	272

Source: The Warren Group, 2009

Affordability of Existing Housing Prices

The next table shows the income required to purchase a home or condominium in Bellingham. The calculations for income required are based on the following assumptions: 95% mortgage (5% down payment); for a 30 years, fixed rate conforming loan interest rate of 5.50% (the interest rate is variable, based on credit scores and fluctuations in the mortgage rates); and projected tax and insurance costs. The annual income required assumes no more than 30% of income will be spent on housing.

Table 10

Affordability of Existing Housing			
House Type	Price	Estimated Monthly Cost	Annual Income Required
Condominium: 2 bedroom, one bath	\$200,000	\$1,408.80	\$ 56,320
House, single family, 3 bedrooms, 1 bath	\$245,000	\$1,751.53	\$ 70,000
House, single family, 3 bedrooms, 1.5 baths	\$310,000	\$2,085.47	\$ 83,420
House: single family, 4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths	\$475,000	\$3,402.56	\$136,100

Source: Multiple Listing Service, October 16, 2009

As housing prices increase, the affordability gap widens. The affordability gap is defined as the difference between the cost of housing and the proportion of income that is reasonable to pay for housing, typically defined as 30% of gross income. To afford the median sales price of a single family house in Bellingham in 2008 of \$265,000 (from Table 8, above, data from The Warren Group), a household would have to earn approximately \$ 70,376.00, or approximately \$6,000 more than the 2000 median household income of \$ 64,496. Using 30% of gross income to calculate a household's borrowing power, the median household income of \$ 64,496 could afford a home priced at \$221,700. The affordability gap is \$43,300. This gap may in fact be narrowing, because median prices for both homes and condominiums sold in 2009 have fallen to \$231,000, while the 2000 median household income should be adjusted for inflation. Inflation-adjusted figures would be \$76,700 to \$84,100.

Affordable Housing

In 1969, Chapter 40B, the Massachusetts Comprehensive Permit Law was passed to facilitate the development of affordable housing for moderate and low income households. The legislation defined affordable housing to include any housing subsidized by the federal or state government under any program to assist in building housing for those earning less than 80% of median income. Chapter 40B

allows developers creating low and moderate housing to obtain a Comprehensive Permit to override local zoning and other restrictions if that community has less than 10% of its year round housing available for low and moderate income households.

Bellingham has 532 units in its Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). This represents 9.4% of the total housing units of 5642 identified in the 2000 census. The target number of affordable units is adjusted as the number of housing units increases in the community. At this time, the community has identified seven subdivisions that have been approved and if all are constructed, will result in 224 new housing units for 2009-2010.

Proposed projects that include an affordable component include Lakeview Estates, currently in the State's 40B appeal process. This proposed condominium project on South Main Street would include 250 units, with 63 affordable units. An application by South Center Realty for the South Main Street property, includes 250 residential units, with 204 single family units, 23 duplexes, and 53 affordable units. This application was filed in September, 2009.

The following table from the U.S. Census Building Permits Survey shows the permits, by single and multi-family type, since the 2000 census. The total number of single family units permitted from 2000-2008 is 442. From the permitting data, an additional 44 units of affordable housing is required to keep pace with housing construction.

Table 11

Year	Single-Family	Multi-Family
2000	44	12
2001	44	8
2002	61	23
2003	71	0
2004	71	2
2005	84	0
2006	43	10
2007	15	0
2008	9	2

Bellingham Housing Authority

According to the Bellingham Housing Authority, there were 12 applications for elderly housing on the waiting list, and 34 applications for non-elderly/handicapped subsidized units on the waiting list as of September, 2009. A summary of the Bellingham Housing Authority's units is below:

Table 12

Bellingham Housing Authority Developments	
Name of Development	Number of Subsidized Units
Depot Court	64
Wrentham Manor	56
115/117 Center Street	2
Arthur Street	1
TOTAL counted toward SHI	123

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides annual estimates of Area Median Income (AMI) for communities across the United States. From this amount, percentages of affordability are calculated. For example, for the Boston Area (Bellingham is included in the Boston Area) a household of 4 persons is eligible for subsidized housing with an income range of from \$27,050 to \$59,550. The incomes represent 30% of the Area Median of \$ 90,200 up to 80% of the household median. Various programs provide housing for varying income levels, with the households earning up to 30% of the Area Median generally targeted for rental opportunities, while those from 50 to 80% eligible for ownership opportunities (condominium or other).

Table 13

2009 Targeted Income Levels for Affordable Housing in the Boston Area			
2009 Boston Area Median Income: \$ 90,200			
# Persons in Household	30% of Area Median Income	50% of Area Median Income	80% of Area Median Income
1	\$ 18,950	\$ 31,550	\$ 46,300
2	\$ 21,650	\$ 36,100	\$ 52,950
3	\$ 24,350	\$ 40,600	\$ 59,550
4	\$ 27,050	\$ 51,000	\$ 66,150
5	\$ 29,200	\$ 48,700	\$ 71,450
6	\$ 31,400	\$ 52,300	\$ 76,750
7	\$ 33,550	\$ 55,900	\$ 82,050
8	\$ 57,000	\$ 59,550	\$ 87,350

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

III. Needs Analysis

The section will identify the housing needs in the community according to particular segments of the community: including low and moderate income households and priority populations such as the elderly and people with disabilities. for purposes of this report, elderly refers to ages 65 and older based on U.S. Census criteria.

Key Findings

- **The demand for housing for elderly residents is expected to increase significantly in the next 20 years**
- **Alternatives to single family housing will provide opportunities not currently available to individuals living alone, single-parent households, empty-nesters and younger couples with children**

Low and Moderate Income Households

As discussed above in the Affordability section of Part II, HUD calculates the median income for U.S. metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas each year. HUD establishes three income groups according

to households whose incomes fall within specific percentages of the area's median income. Most state and federal programs are available for households who earn up to 80% of the area median income, adjusted for household size. Characteristics of the three income groups, very low, low, and moderate, are summarized below, and use data from the 2000 U.S. Census.

Very Low Income (Households with incomes from 0 to 30% of area median income)

Approximately 497 of a total of 5557 households in Bellingham were classified as very low-income. This represents 8.9% of all households. These households are evenly split between renters (245) and homeowners (252). Almost 69% of the owner households pay over 30% of their income for housing costs. For example: a householder with up to 30% of Boston Area Median in 2000 would have an income not exceeding \$19,348.00. If 30% of this income is spent on housing costs ((\$5,804 or \$484 per month), the householder would have \$13,544 left after paying housing costs for all other expenses, or approximately \$1,128 per month. The situation is grimmer for those whose housing costs exceed 50% of their annual income. These households would spend \$9,674 per year, or \$806 per month for housing, leaving another \$806 left for all other expenses. Almost 48% of the very low income owner households and 31% of the renter households spent greater than 50% of their income on housing costs.

Low Income (Households with incomes from 31% to 50% of area median income)

Almost 7% of Bellingham's households, 379, may be categorized as low income households, meaning their annual incomes fall between 31% and 50% of the Area Median Income. The 2000 Census indicates that 154 rent their housing unit, with 48% paying more than 30% of their income for rent and another 6.5% spending more than 50% of their income on rent. For homeowners, 40% spent more than 30% of their income on housing costs, and 20% spending over 50%.

Moderate Income (Households with incomes from 51% to 80% of Area Median Income)

Almost 12% or 662 households in Bellingham fall within the moderate income category. Within this group, 76% or 504 households own their housing unit, with 158 households renting. A little over half (58%) of the owners spent more than 30% of their income on housing, and 18% spent more than 50% on housing. For renters, 19% spent more than 30%, with none spending more than 50%.

Table 14

2000 Area Median Income (Boston Area)	Annual Income: 0-30% of AMI	Amount spent if 30% is needed for housing	Amount spent if 50% is needed for housing
\$ 64,496	Up to \$19,348	\$5,804	\$9,674

There is a need for affordable homeownership opportunities for families (smaller families in particular) and singles. There are 20.3% of total households that qualify for affordable housing and 20.1% of those households pay over 30% of their income for housing.

Elderly

Mirroring the greater Boston region, Bellingham’s elderly population is projected to increase. Estimates produced as part of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council’s regional plan, MetroFuture show that the number of persons aged 65 and over in the region will increase by 261% between 2000 and 2020. Approximately 15% of Bellingham’s population will be over 65 by 2020, a 51% increase since 1990. Additional housing will be needed to meet the needs of “empty-nester” couples (those who children no longer live in the household).

According to the 2000 Census, there were 455 elderly households with household incomes equal to or less than 50% of the area median. This represents 8.2% of all Bellingham households, and includes both renters and owners. Another 150 elderly households (30 rental and 120 homeowners) earned between 50% and 80% of area median, and could be classified as moderate income households. Altogether, almost 11% of elderly residents would be income eligible for most state and federal housing programs.

The majority of households over 65 own their home, having done so for many years. This usually means that elderly homeowners no longer have a mortgage on their property, and monthly housing costs should be lower. However, due to proportionally lower incomes, elderly homeowners still pay a greater percentage of their income to own a home. Also, since most elderly are on fixed incomes, their income will not rise to meet increasing housing costs and the expenses of maintenance and repair that aging properties require. Currently, there are few affordable ownership options. As Bellingham’s population continues to age, appropriate ownership housing for elderly residents will be needed.

The following two tables , using data from 2000 give additional information on households identified as having “problems.” This is defined as households spending more than 30% of income on housing.

Table 15

Housing Expenditures by HUD Income Categories					
Owners					
Household by Type, Income, & Housing Problem	Elderly 1 & 2 member Households	Small Related (2 to 4)	Large Related (5 +)	All Other Households	Total Owners
Household Income (HHI) <=30% MFI	145	39	4	64	252
% with any housing problems	72.4	74.4	100	54.7	68.7
% Cost Burden >30%	72.4	74.4	100	54.7	68.7
% Cost Burden >50%	44.8	64.1	100	39.1	47.2
HHI >30% to <=50% MFI	95	80	15	35	225
% with any housing problems	0	62.5	100	71.4	40
% Cost Burden >30%	0	62.5	100	71.4	40
% Cost Burden >50%	0	37.5	0	42.9	20
HHI >50 to <=80% MFI	120	240	34	110	504
% with any housing problems	33.3	64.6	100	59.1	58.3
% Cost Burden >30%	33.3	64.6	100	59.1	58.3
% Cost Burden >50%	16.7	16.7	44.1	13.6	17.9
HHI >80% MFI	350	2,429	525	369	3,673
% with any housing problems	7.1	9.2	5.7	13.3	8.9
% Cost Burden >30%	7.1	9.1	5.7	13.3	8.8
% Cost Burden >50%	2.9	1.9	0	4.1	1.9
Total Households	710	2,788	578	578	4,654
% with any housing problems	23.9	16.4	14.4	30.1	19
% Cost Burden >30	23.9	16.3	14.4	30.1	18.9
% Cost Burden >50	13.4	5	3.3	12.1	7

Table 16

Housing Expenditures by HUD Income Categories					
Renters					
Household by Type, Income, & Housing Problem	Elderly 1 & 2 member households	Small Related (2 to 4)	Large Related (5 +)	All Other Households	Total Renters
Household Income (HHI) <=30% MFI	160	45	0	40	245
% with any housing problems	37.5	77.8	N/A	50	46.9
% Cost Burden >30%	37.5	77.8	N/A	50	46.9
% Cost Burden >50%	18.8	77.8	N/A	25	30.6
HHI >30% to <=50% MFI	55	54	0	45	154
% with any housing problems	18.2	72.2	N/A	55.6	48.1
% Cost Burden >30%	18.2	72.2	N/A	55.6	48.1
% Cost Burden >50%	0	18.5	N/A	0	6.5
HHI >50 to <=80% MFI	30	54	4	70	158
% with any housing problems	0	37	0	28.6	25.3
% Cost Burden >30%	0	18.5	0	28.6	19
% Cost Burden >50%	0	0	0	0	0
HHI >80% MFI	0	155	24	160	339
% with any housing problems	N/A	9.7	0	0	4.4
% Cost Burden >30%	N/A	9.7	0	0	4.4
% Cost Burden >50%	N/A	0	0	0	0
Total Households	245	308	28	315	896
% with any housing problems	28.6	35.4	0	20.6	27.2
% Cost Burden >30	28.6	32.1	0	20.6	26.1
% Cost Burden >50	12.2	14.6	0	3.2	9.5

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) CHAS Data: Housing Problems Output for all Households., Data as of 2000

Gaps Between Existing Housing Needs and Current Supply

As the above discussion indicates, there are some gaps between what most current Bellingham residents can afford and the current housing opportunities. However, recent trends may ameliorate some of the barriers to housing affordability, such as the decrease in housing prices and lower mortgage rates.

Summarizing:

- 884 homeowners paid more than 30% of income on housing
- 242 renters paid more than 30% of income on housing
- There were 384 individuals, including 88 individuals 65 and over; and 70 families that were classified as living in poverty. There were also 26 female-headed households in this category in 1999.
- 258 households had incomes of less than \$10,0000
- The Bellingham Housing Authority has a waiting list of 46 applicants, of which 5 are Bellingham residents

IV Key Findings

- Bellingham's population has shown a stable growth rate, and is projected to decrease slightly
- The number of elderly residents in Bellingham is expected to increase significantly in the next 20 years. For those with fixed incomes considerably less than the Area Median, housing costs will consume a disproportionate amount of annual income.
- The income levels of Bellingham residents have increased between 1990 and 2000, but remain slightly less than the Boston Area Median.
- Younger families seeking to purchase a home, or remain in the community, have a range of options as long as they are at or above the area median income