

1. Population & Housing

Population

Introduction

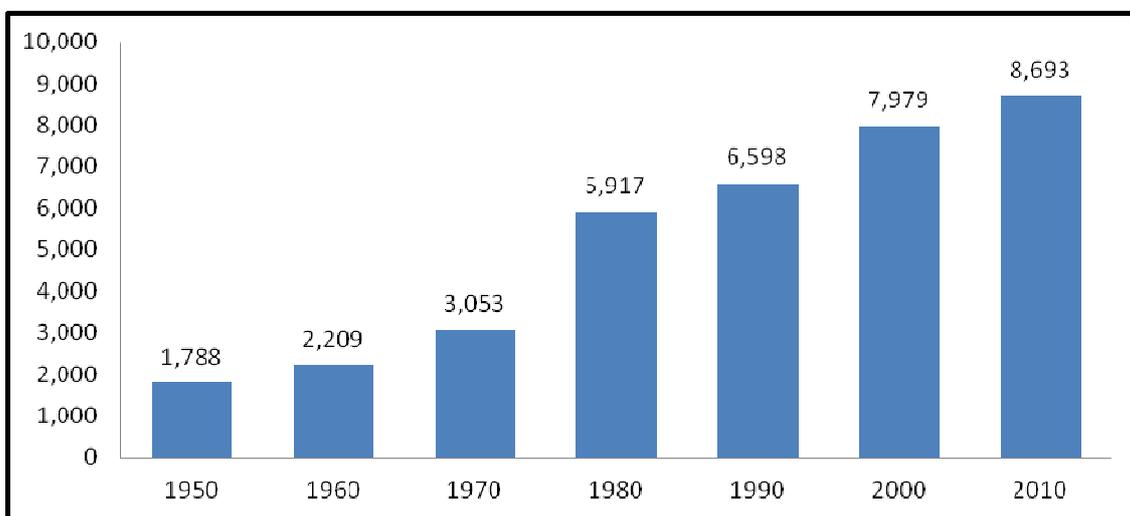
An understanding of Seabrook's population characteristics and trends provides the basis for short-and long-term community planning. Total population, rate of growth, long-term population projections and the characteristics of Seabrook's various population groups can have an important influence on housing, land use, community services and facilities and traffic circulation. Community officials can use this information to establish land use and housing policies as well as timely and efficient provision of community services

Population characteristics change due to several independent factors: births, deaths and migration both into and out of the town. In-migration has been a significant factor affecting the town's population.

Population History and Trends—Most Growth between 1960 and 2000

The population of Seabrook was 715 in 1790, the year of the first census. By 1800 it was 628 and by 1880 it had grown to 1,745. Over the next 60 years the population leveled off and reached only 1,782 by 1940. Since the end of World War II the population has grown steadily reaching 3,053 in 1970 and 6,503 in 1990 and 7,979 in 2000. **See Figure 1-1.** By 2010, the date of the most recent census, the population had reached 8,693 or 9.6% more than in 2000. The largest decennial increase in population was 94% between 1970 and 1980.

Figure 1-1. Population Trends since 1950



Source: 2010 US Census and NH Office of Energy and Planning.

Regional Population Change

From 1990 to 2000 Seabrook experienced a significant population increase both in terms of actual numbers and in the percentage of growth from approximately 6,500 to almost 8,000 or an increase of 17.4 percent. **See Table 1-1.** Along with Hampton, this percentage increase was the most of any of the surrounding towns except for Hampton Falls which had a 25 % increase although its total numbers were approximately ½ of Seabrook's. From 2000 to 2010 the actual numbers and percentage were less than the previous decade, although Seabrook experienced the greatest growth in numbers of people of the New Hampshire communities at 759 compared to Hampton which had an increase of only 39. Seabrook's rate of growth exceeded that of the county—6.4%

Table 1-1. Population Change—Seabrook Region

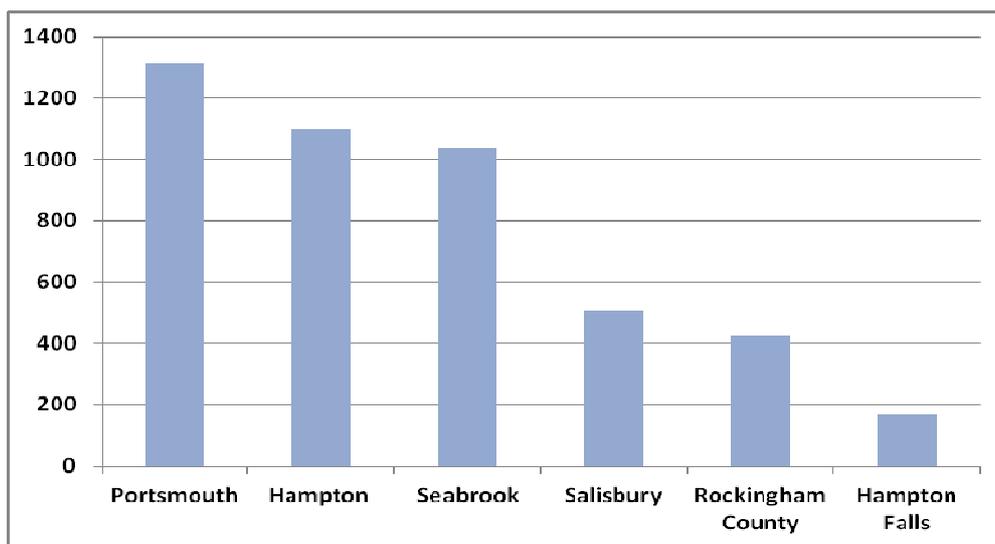
Town	1990	2000	% Chg	2010	Change	% Chg
Seabrook	6,503	7,934	17.4	8,693	759	9.6
Amesbury	14,997	16,450	9.7	16,283	(167)	(1.0)
Hampton	12,278	14,937	17.7	14,976	39	.3
Hampton Falls	1,503	1,880	25.1	2,236	356	18.9
Kensington	1,631	1,893	16.1	2,124	231	12.2
Salisbury	6,882	7,827	13.7	8,283	456	5.8
South Hampton	740	844	14.1	814	(30)	(3.6)
Rockingham County	245,845	277,359	12.8	295,223	17,864	6.4

Sources: The Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, NH OEP, and the 2000 & 2010 U.S. Census.

Population Density

Seabrook's population density increased from 947 persons per square mile of land area in 2000 to 1038 persons per square mile in 2010. **As shown in Figure 1-2,** this density is one of the highest in the area just under Hampton and Portsmouth which has 1312 persons per square mile.

Figure 1-2. Comparative Population Densities



Source: 2010 US Census

Births & Deaths—Since 2004, More Births than Deaths

During the period 1980 to 1989, there were 35 more births than deaths while between 1990 and 2000 the situation reversed—there were 236 more deaths than births. The 2000 Master Plan noted that this trend appeared to be the result of a decline in long-term existing families residing in Seabrook. Since there was an overall increase in population during this period, the main force behind this increase was significant in-migration. This trend of greater deaths than births continued until 2004 when there were more births through 2008 as shown in **Table 1-2**. During this same period the overall population increase slowed as shown in **Table 1-1**. While there was continued in-migration it was much less than the previous decade. The drop in in-migration may be the result of slower job growth in southeastern New Hampshire.

Table 1-2. Births v. Deaths, 2000-2008

Year	Births	Deaths	Difference
2000	65	78	(13)
2001	86	81	(5)
2002	38	79	(41)
2003	44	47	(3)
2004	51	50	1
2005	61	58	3
2006	63	46	17
2007	61	59	2
2008	52	42	12
Total	521	540	19

Source: 2000 US Census 2010 US Census not yet available

Population by Age—Largest Segment between 35 and 54

By analyzing the change in population distribution by age, a picture emerges with respect to the dynamics of Seabrook's population. **Table 1-3** presents the age distribution of the town's last three national censuses. During this period the overall population increased by 2190 persons. Most of this increase occurred in the 35-54 age group, an indication that families were moving into Seabrook, conforming the trend of in-migration during this same period. Finally, the population over age 65 increased significantly an indicator of an aging population. This group will very likely continue to increase as the relatively large 55-64 age group continues to age.

Table 1-3. Age Distribution

Age	1990	2000	Change	% Change	2000 % of Total
0-4	386	458	62	16	5.8
5-9	230	450	220	96	5.7
10-14	347	478	131	38	6.1
15-19	326	366	40	12	4.7
20-34	1711	1512	(199)	(12)	19.1
35-54	1631	2388	757	46	30.1
55-64	786	945	159	20	11.9
65+	1086	1337	251	23	16.6
Total	6503	7934	1431	22	100.0

Source: 2000 US Census and 2000 Master Plan

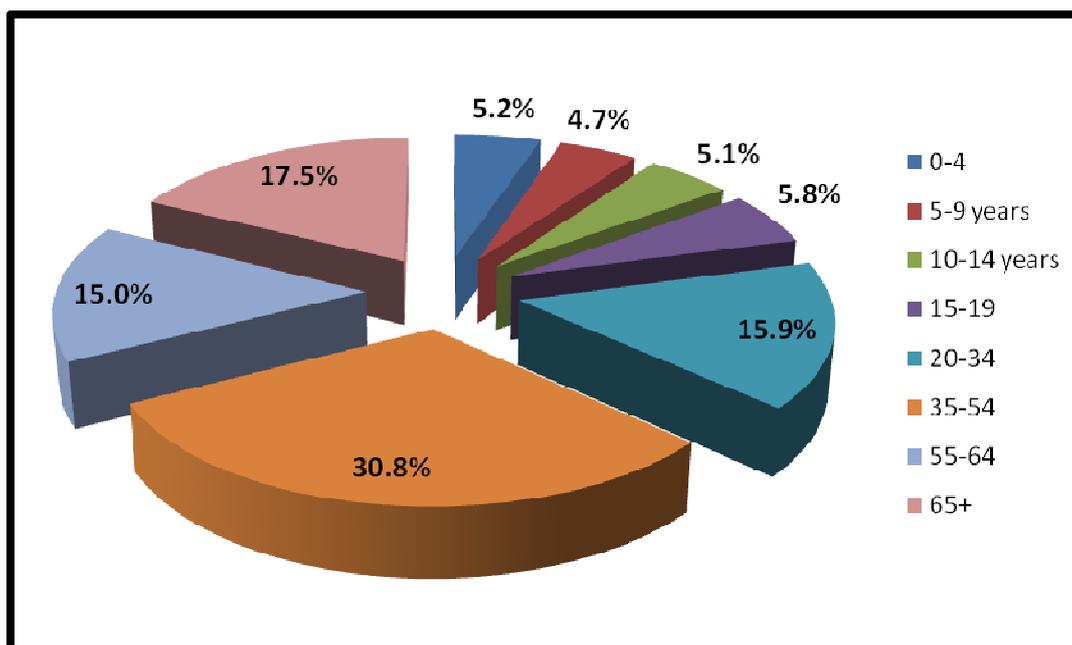
Table 1-3. Age Distribution (cont.)

Age	2000	2010	Change	% Change	2010 % of Total
0-4	458	454	(4)	(1)	5.2
5-9	450	408	(42)	(9)	4.7
10-14	478	445	(33)	(7)	5.1
15-19	366	502	136	37	5.8
20-34	1512	1379	(133)	(9)	15.9
35-54	2388	2676	288	12	30.8
55-64	945	1304	359	38	15.0
65+	1337	1525	188	14	17.5
Total	7934	8693	759	10	100.0

Source: 2000 & 2010 US Census

Figure 1-3 represents a graphic representation of Seabrook’s age distribution for the year 2010 indicating the large size of the 35-54 population and the significant size of the older population.

Figure 1-3. 2010 Age Distribution



Source: 2010 US Census

Other Population Characteristics

Population Movement

Seabrook appears to have a relatively stable population, slightly more so than the Rockingham County. Based on the 2000 census almost 60% (58.6) of the population had lived in the same residence for five years while the figure for Rockingham County was 57.1 %. In the 2000 Master Plan a similar observation was made. It indicated that 40% of Seabrook’s residents had lived in the same dwelling for more than ten years while the county was just 31%.

Place of Birth—Most Born out of State

Only about ¼ of Seabrook’s citizens (28%) were born in New Hampshire while 68% were born in another state with the remainder (about 4%) born outside the United States. These figures are very similar to those from the 1990 Census.

By contrast even more citizens of Rockingham County by percentage were born outside the state at almost 75%. About 23% were born in-state and the remaining population was foreign born (about 2%).

Median Age—Seabrook is higher than Rockingham County

Median age represents the age of the mid-point in Seabrook’s population—half the population of Seabrook is above this age and half is below this age. In 1990 this number was approximately 36 and by 2010 the number had jumped to 44.6. This figure is higher than for Rockingham County as a whole which is 42.2, but similar to surrounding towns such as Hampton at 41.1, Hampton Falls at 41.1, and South Hampton at 47.2. Kensington has a the same median age at 44.6 years. These data clearly indicate that the population of Seabrook and the region is aging.

Educational Achievement—Increases in Higher Education Levels

The 2000 Master Plan noted that from 1970 to 1990 there was a general increase in the percentage in education among Seabrook residents. The Plan cited the number of residents with high school diplomas had increased by almost 30% during that period. During the 1990’s this change appeared to have reversed itself as the number of individuals completing high school or attaining a high school diploma decreased as shown in **Table 1-4**. By contrast the number of individuals with higher education continued to increase with individuals having some form of college or an Associates Degree both increasing by 5%. The drop in high school educated individuals may reflect a trend in either fewer such students at this age group or students dropping out of high school.

Table 1-4. Educational Achievement

Educational Level	1990-%	2000-%	Change	County 2000
Less than 9 th grade	8	6	-2	3
9 to 12 th grade	22	16	-6	7
High School Graduate	42	37	-5	29
Some College, No Degree	14	19	+5	21
Associate Degree	3	8	+5	10
Bachelor’s Degree	10	11	+1	21
Graduate or Professional Degree		4	+4	11

Source: 2000 US Census and 2000 Master Plan. 2010 US Census not yet available

Marital Status

From 1970 to 1990 the number of marriages decreased from 67% to 54%. The categories of single, separated and divorced increased correspondingly. This trend indicated a greater acceptance for divorce as well as a trend to delay marriage as the number of single individuals increase from 17 to 25 percent over this same period. In 1990 both the county and state had higher percentages of married individuals.

As indicated in **Table 1-5** the trend in marital status seems to have stabilized by 2000 as the percentages of married individuals has only gone up 1% to 25% while the categories of single, separated and divorced have generally remained the same as 1990. Both the county and the state

now also have similar marital status numbers as Seabrook, although both have slightly higher married individuals—the county at 60% and the state at 57%.

Table 1-5: Marital Status

Status	Seabrook 1990	Seabrook 2000	County 2000	NH 2000
Single	25%	24%	23%	25%
Married	54%	55%	60%	57%
Separated	2%	2%	2%	2%
Widowed	7%	8%	5%	6%
Divorced	11%	11%	10%	11%

Source: 2000 US Census and 2000 Master Plan

Heads of Households—Most are Family, but Non-family Increasing

The 2000 Master Plan noted that the number of married heads of households was decreasing in Seabrook. This trend appears to be continuing with the 2000 census indicating that married heads of households are now less than ½ (48%) of all households in the town as shown in **Table 1-6**. In addition over one-third of households are nonfamily (37%). There are also twice the number of female heads of family households than are male.

These trends are similar for both Rockingham County and the state although both of these areas have a higher number of family households (71% and 68%, respectively) and a higher number of married households (60% and 55%, respectively).

Table 1-6. Heads of Households

Status	Seabrook 2000	County 2000	NH 2000
Family Household	63%	71%	68%
Married	48%	60%	55%
Female Head	10%	8%	9%
Male Head	5%	3%	4%
Nonfamily households	37%	29%	32%

Source: 2000 US Census

Population Projections

The 2000 Master Plan predicted population increases of 1.6% from 2000 to 2010 or an increase from 7,934 to approximately 8,061. Seabrook is well ahead of this projection with almost 8,700 as shown in **Table 1-7**. Current population projections have Seabrook growing at a more moderate rate through 2030 or an overall increase of 1503 or a 17.7% increase. This increase would be an average of approximately 0.5% annually.

The other communities in the region have similar growth rates except for the two (2) Massachusetts communities of Salisbury and Amesbury which both have increases of more than 27%. This apparent discrepancy is based on the manner in which the projections were derived. The Merrimack Valley Regional Planning Commissions based its projection on a recent 2007 regional transportation plan. The Commission is planning to revise these projections in the near future. The projections for the New Hampshire communities are based on data from the NH Office of Energy and Planning which uses its own predictive model as described on the OEP website--*2010 - 2030 Population Projections for New Hampshire Municipalities*.

Table 1-7. Population Projections

Town	2007	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Chg. 2007-2030	% Chg. 2007- 2030
Seabrook	8,477	8,700	9,080	9,380	9,690	9,980	1503	17.7
Amesbury	16,429	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	21,685	5436	33.1
Hampton	15,185	15,960	16,670	17,240	17,820	18,360	2575	17.0
Hampton Falls	2,080	2,150	2,240	2,330	2,450	2,550	470	22.5
Kensington	2,091	2,200	2,280	2,370	2,500	2,580	489	23.4
Salisbury	8,521	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	10,853	2332	27.3
S. Hampton	885	920	960	990	1,030	1,060	175	19.8
Rockingham County	295,948	308,220	320,490	331,190	341,850	351,660	55,712	18.8

Source: Merrimack Valley RPC, NH OEP

Summary and Observations

- Most of Seabrook's population growth took place between 1970 and 2000. Much of this increase was due to in-migration. Most of Seabrook's residents were born out of state.
- The largest segment of Seabrook's population is in the 35-54 age category; however the population is aging as the median age increased from 36 in 1990 to just over 44 in 2010.
- Current population projections have Seabrook growing at a moderate rate through 2030 with an overall increase of 1503 individuals or a 17.7% increase from today.
- Individuals with post high school education increased from 1990 to 2000, but lag behind the county.
- Seabrook has an aging population similar to surrounding communities.

Housing

Introduction

An examination of Seabrook's housing situation is an important component of the Master Plan and of the Housing and Conservation Planning Program (HCPP). The HCPP has been established to work with communities toward permitting a balanced housing stock while promoting reuse of existing buildings and protecting the community's natural resources through compact development.

NH RSA-4:30 (3)

Identification of and planning for the full range of current and future housing needs for families of all income levels, as encouraged in RSA 672:2, III-d.

The housing section of a local master plan is an optional element under the state's planning enabling legislation for Master Plans—RSA 674:2. By including a housing section a community must assess local housing conditions and project future housing needs of residents of all levels of income and ages in the municipality and the region.

This policy is also stressed as one of the ten principles of the HCPP as embodied in NH RSA 4:30.

As noted in Seabrook's 2000 Master Plan, Seabrook has an established policy for providing for its "fair share" of the of the regional housing demand.

This policy is based on that a community is made up of a wide range of individuals with various incomes. To accommodate the needs of the people who live and work in the Seabrook areas, the housing must reflect the demand and diversity of the market.
Master Plan, Town of Seabrook, 2000.

It is critical for Seabrook to continue to provide an opportunity for a wide variety of housing types and in particular provide opportunity for affordable housing.

State Policies and Statutes Provide Guidance for Local Housing Policy

There are a number of state statutes that provide guidance to a municipality as it prepares information for a Housing Chapter as part of its Master Plan process.

As noted above RSA 674:2 describes the required elements of a Master Plan which includes Land Use and a Vision statement. The statute also describes optional elements of a Master Plan—including the Housing Chapter under III (I) which states:

"A housing section which assesses local housing conditions and projects future housing needs of residents of all levels of income and ages in the municipality and the region as identified in the regional housing needs assessment performed by the regional planning commission pursuant to RSA 36:47, II, and which integrates the availability of human services with other planning undertaken by the community."

In RSA 36:47 II the state addresses the issue of housing for all income levels on a regional basis.

"For the purpose of assisting municipalities in complying with RSA 674:2, III(I), each regional planning commission shall compile a regional housing needs assessment, which shall include an assessment of the regional need for housing for persons and families of all levels of income. The regional housing needs assessment shall be updated every 5 years and made available to all municipalities in the planning region."

Seabrook is in the Rockingham Planning Commission's (RPC) planning region and the RPC is responsible for preparing the regional housing needs assessment. The most recent assessment was conducted in 2004 and updated in 2008.

In NH RSA 672:1 III e, the state encourages housing opportunity for low and moderate income persons and families:

"All citizens of the state benefit from a balanced supply of housing which is affordable to persons and families of low and moderate income. Establishment of housing which is decent, safe, sanitary and affordable to low and moderate income persons and families is in the best interests of each community and the state of New Hampshire, and serves a vital public need. Opportunity for development of such housing, including so-called cluster development and the development of multi-family structures, should not be prohibited or discouraged by use of municipal planning and zoning powers or by unreasonable interpretation of such powers;"

Two additional state statutes directly address the need for communities to provide housing opportunities for a variety of incomes, particularly those with low to moderate incomes. RSA 674:32 I. states that "municipalities shall afford reasonable opportunities for the siting of manufactured housing, and a municipality shall not exclude manufactured housing completely from the municipality by regulation, zoning ordinance or by any other police power." Mobile homes and manufactured housing are oftentimes used interchangeably.

The most recent state statute, adopted in 2008, addresses the need for workforce housing. NH RSA 674:59 – 61 (also referred to as SB 342) , requires municipalities to provide reasonable and realistic opportunities for the development of workforce to be located in a majority, but not necessarily all, of the land area that is zoned to permit residential uses within the municipality.

Current Housing Trends—Recent Slowdown in Construction after Rapid Growth

Until about 1940 there had only been about 319 housing units constructed in Seabrook. By 2000 that figure had reached almost 4066 units with most of the construction occurring since 1970.

Based on residential building permit data from the 8-year period of 2000 to 2007 there were a total of 448 housing units added to Seabrook's housing stock bringing the total to 4514 or . Of the total units, 237 (or 52%) were single-family, the predominant housing type in the community. During the last two years of this period only 61 units (or approximately 14% of the total number) were added, indicating a slow-down in housing construction. The only community in the adjacent New Hampshire area that accommodated more housing units than Seabrook was Hampton which added 524 units. No other community added more than 150 units.

During this same period an average of 56 units per year were built. Using a range of 95 units as the high and 16 units as a low (based on the recent slowdown) to extrapolate out to future years, Seabrook could expect to gain between 96 units and as many as 570 units during the six year period from 2010 to 2015. The length and severity of the current economic recession will determine the number of units that are constructed during that period.

Existing Housing Situation—Seabrook has Balanced Housing Stock

Housing by Type—Balanced Between Single Family, Multi-family and Manufactured Housing

Based on the 2000 US Census there were 4066 housing units in Seabrook. The 2000 Master Plan estimated the total to be 3,864, a 1998 estimate prepared by the Office of Energy and Planning (then known as the Office of State Planning) That figure was derived from a base figure using the 1990 census and applying estimated figures taken from community annual reports from 1990 to 1998 compiled by OSP. Since 2000, based on the estimated OEP figures Seabrook has added an

additional 448 units for an estimated total of 4514 units. **Table 1-8** compares the number of units by type between 2000 and 2007. Most of the additional units were single family although there continues to be significant amount of multi-family housing.

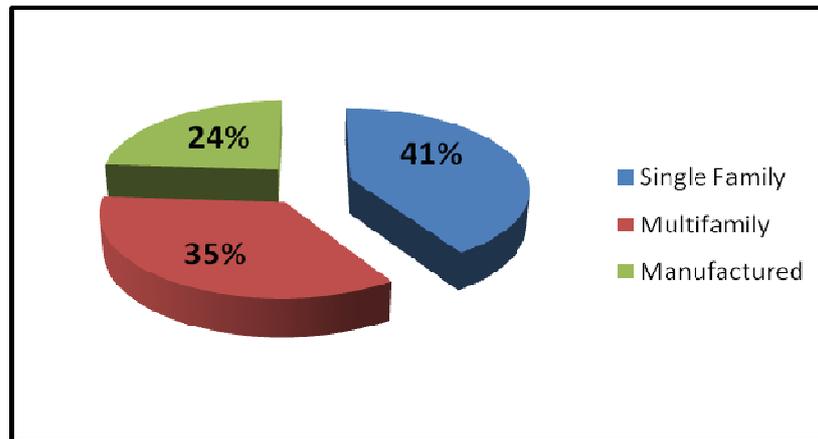
Table 1-8. Housing by Type

Residential Type	2000	2007	Increase
Single Family	1,617	1,854	237
Multi-family	1,411	1,563	152
Manufactured Housing	1,038	1,097	59
Total Units	4,066	4,514	448

Source: 2000 US Census

Based on these numbers Seabrook has a very balanced housing stock. **As shown in Figure 1-4**, 41% of the current housing stock is single family while 35% is multi-family and 24% is manufactured.

Figure 1-4. Estimated Housing Units by Percentage, 2007



Source: 2000 US Census and 2008 Housing Estimates from NH OEP

The 2000 Master Plan noted that based on 1998 housing estimates there were almost 38% single family homes in Seabrook while there were 34% multifamily and 28% manufactured. As a percentage, single family housing has increased slightly and manufactured homes have decreased slightly compared to 2007.

Regional Housing by Type

The 2000 Master Plan noted that Seabrook had a significant amount of both multi-family and manufactured housing compared not only to the planning area in New Hampshire, but also both the county and the state. This distribution of housing types is similar to the 2007 estimates. **See Table 1-9.**

Table 1-9. Regional Housing by Type

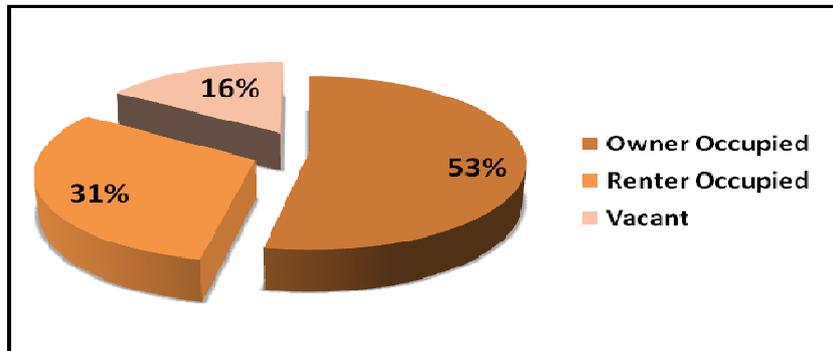
Town	Single-Family		Multi-Family		Manufactured Housing		Total 2000	Total 2007	Total Increase
	2000	2007	2000	2007	2000	2007			
Hampton	5,207	5,391	3,872	4,204	270	278	9,349	9,873	524
Hampton Falls	665	765	54	70	10	12	729	847	118
Kensington	602	14	40	41	30	29	672	777	105
N. Hampton	1379	1483	146	146	287	301	1782	1930	148
S. Hampton	290	315	15	19	3	3	308	337	337
Rockingham County	72,944	81,104	32,500	36,442	7,579	8,062	113,023	125,608	

Source: 2000 US Census and 2008 Housing Estimates from NH OEP

Housing by Tenure

According to the 2000 US Census, the Town of Seabrook had a total of 4066 housing units, of which 3,425 were occupied and 641 or 16% remained vacant—a relatively high number compared to Rockingham County which had a vacancy rate of approximately 8%. It is assumed that the majority of the vacant units are seasonal homes, located in the Seabrook Beach area. Of the 3,425 occupied units, 2,154 units or 63% were owner occupied and 1,271 or 37% were rental as shown in **Figure 1-5**. Compared to Rockingham County which has only 37% renter occupied units, Seabrook has a high percentage of rental units

Figure 1-5. Housing Tenure



Source: 2000 US Census

Apartment Complexes and Mobile Home Parks

During the 1970's and 1980's there was a dramatic increase in the number of dwelling units constructed in Seabrook as shown in **Table 1-12** below. Much of this was through the development of apartment complexes and mobile home parks much of it along major roadways such as Lafayette Road, Route 107 and Route 286. **See Table 1-10**. The largest apartment complex is Cimarron Apartments on Batchelder Street with 388 units, more than half of all the multi-family units within complexes in Seabrook.

Table 1-10. Count of Units in Apartment or Condominium Complexes

Name	Location	2000 Units	2008 Units	Change
Christopher Manor	Collins Street	24	24	0
Cimarron Apartments	Batchelder Street	388	390	+2
Governor Weare Apartments	Lafayette Road	84	84	0
Leisure Living Apartments	Weare Street	72	72	0
Park Place Apartments	New Zealand Rd.	96	96	0
Tudor Crest Apartments	Lafayette Road	36	36	0
Pinecrest Shore	Folly Mill Terr.	42	42	0
Captain Quarters Condos	Ocean Blvd.	10	10	0
Lafayette Road Condos	Lafayette Road		4	+4
Total Units		742	748	

Source: 2000 Master Plan and Seabrook Building Department

Similar to the apartment complexes, many mobile home parks were constructed during the 1970's and 1980's as shown in **Table 1-11**. Seabrook Village, Staples Mobile Home Park, and Stonybrook Village each have over 100 units and comprise more than half the mobile units in parks in the town.

Table 1-11. Count of Units in Manufactured Housing Parks

Name	Location	2000 Units	2008 Units	Change
Adams Mobile Home Park	Lafayette Road	59	59	0
Andy's Mobile Home Park	Route 107	5	7	+2
Blacksnake Mobile Home Park	Blacksnake Road	46	43	-3
Carolyn Mobile Home Park	Perkins Avenue	12	12	0
Seabrook Village	Perkins Avenue	102	103	+1
Staples Mobile Home Park	Walton Road	167	191	+24
Stonybrook Village	Route 286	100	97	-3
Zealand Mobile Home Park	Route 107	24	24	0
Total Year Round		515	536	+21
Meadowstone (Seasonal)	Route 286	52	104	+52
Twin Brooks (Seasonal)	Lower Collins		62	+62
Total Units		567	702	+135

Source: 2000 Master Plan and Seabrook Building Department

Age of Housing Stock—Majority built from 1970 to 2000

Seabrook experienced significant expansion of its housing stock during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990's. 3006 units, or an annual average of approximately 100 units, were constructed—1,237 from 1970-79, 575 from 1980-89 and 694 from 1990 to 2000 as shown in **Table 12**. The housing units built during this thirty-year period represent almost three-quarters or 74% of the town's entire housing stock. Even with the slowdown in housing construction in the late 80's and early 90's, Seabrook still managed to construct a substantial number of units. With the current slowdown in housing construction there are relatively fewer newer homes constructed between 2000 and the present.

The 2000 Master Plan noted that almost 2/3 of the housing stock (63%) was constructed during the period of 1940 to 1980. While the overall percentage has decreased slightly with the additional counts from the 2000 census, it is still the period with the greatest homebuilding. During the ten-year period of 1970 to 1980 alone, 30% of Seabrook's housing stock was constructed as shown in **Table 1-12**. The 2000 Plan also noted that during this period a number of apartment complexes and mobile homes were constructed and there were minimal land use regulations.

By comparison, Rockingham County had less than half of its housing stock constructed between 1940 and 1980 (44%). Prior to 1940, a very small percentage of homes were built prior during this period—only 8%, while the county had a much higher percentage

Table 1-12: Age of Housing by Period

Year Built	Seabrook Number	Seabrook Percent	Rockingham Cty. Number	Rockingham Cty. Percent
Total Units	4066	!	113,023	
1990 to 1999	694	17%	18,240	16%
1980 to 1989	575	14%	26,139	23%
1970 to 1980	1,237	30%	22,387	20%
1940 to 1970	1,241	31%	27,214	24%
1939 or earlier	319	8%	19,043	17%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, Summary File 3 and 2000 Master Plan

According to the 2000 Master Plan, much of Seabrook's older, historic housing stock was lost during the 1970's and 1980's to commercial de elopement along Lafayette Road. This development was the result of a large workforce at Seabrook Station as well as the consumer demand from Massachusetts' residents taking advantage of New Hampshire's lack of a sales tax. This commercial boom was complemented by a housing boom for new construction by the same Seabrook Station workforce and other businesses locating in Seabrook.

Recent Growth in Housing Stock-Residential Building Permits, 2000 to 2008

During the nine year period from 2000 through 2008, the town added a total of 497 new housing units bringing the total number to 4,563 as shown in **Table 1-13**. Of these 247 (or 49.7 %) were single family detached homes, 94 units were multi-family (18.9%) and 156 (31.4%) were manufactured housing. The rate of housing construction during this nine-year period (approximately 55 per year) was significantly less than the rate during the 10-year period of the 1970s when 1,237 units were built at a rate of approximately 124 units per year. The rate of housing construction was also less than the previous decade (1990-1999) when approximately 69 units per year were constructed.

Table 1-13: Recent Trend in Residential Building Permits, 2000 to 2008

Housing Stock as of 2000 Census		Residential Permits, Net Change										
		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Total	Change
Single Family	1,617	46	49	35	17	15	45	14	18	8	1,864	247
Multi Family	1,411	10	16	14	6	8	21	11	5	3	1,505	94
Mfg Housing	1,038	31	4	4	5	5	73	15	16	3	1,194	156
Total Housing	4,066	87	69	53	28	28	139	40	39	14	4,563	497

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, Summary File 3; Town of Seabrook Building Inspector, 2009; NH OEP, 2008

In 2008, there were a total of 1,864 single family units in Seabrook or 40.9% of all units with multi-family at 32.9% and mobile homes at 26.2%. The amount of new housing varied from year to year with peaks in 2000 and especially in 2005 when 139 units were constructed. Since that year, the town has experienced a decline in residential permits with the lowest number of units constructed in 2008—14 units. Several adjacent communities also experienced a similar decline in housing construction during this same period. The national economic recession that began in late 2007/early 2008, coupled with a decline in the number of persons entering the housing market contributed to this condition. In spite of the current downturn, it appears that market conditions still favor a mixed demand for housing.

Based on the numbers of units constructed during this period Seabrook could expect to gain approximately 385 units (approximately 55 per year) between 2009 and 2015. The length and severity of

the current economic recession will determine the actual number of units that are constructed during that period. Given these figures, the town will need to consider whether or not its land use regulations can accommodate this additional growth in a manner consistent with its 2000 Master Plan and the goals of this current master plan update

Other Housing Characteristics

Size of Units by Rooms—Median 4.9 Rooms

Based on the 2000 Census, the median number of rooms in a Seabrook dwelling unit was 4.9 rooms, exactly the same median number of rooms as in the 1990 Census. By comparison Rockingham County had a median number of rooms in 1990 of 5.6 rooms. By 2000 this number had increased slightly to 5.7 rooms which is 14% larger than a typical Seabrook dwelling. In 1990 it was a slightly smaller percentage difference—12%. The relatively smaller size can be attributed to the larger percentage of apartment complexes and mobile parks in Seabrook than in the rest of Rockingham County.

Household Size—Less Than 2.5 per Unit

The 2000 Master Plan noted the decrease in the size of families or households within Seabrook and the rest of Rockingham County from 1970 to 1990. In 1970 the town's median household size was 3.07 individuals and in 1990 this figure had decrease to 2.32 individuals. Similarly, Rockingham County's median household size decreased from 3.12 in 1970 to 2.72 in 1990 slightly higher than Seabrook. In 2000, Seabrook's median household size had remained the same as 1990 while Rockingham County decreased to 2.63 as shown in **Table 1-14**. Seabrook's relatively smaller household size compared to the county can be attributed to the relatively higher number of physically smaller dwelling units—apartments and manufacture homes—that were built during the 1970's and 1980's. Even though there was no change in size from 1990 to 2000 Seabrook's household size is still less than Rockingham County and the state.

These figures also mirror the reduction in household size in the state and the nation. These reductions are attributed to the increase in the following types of households:

- Individuals/families over 65 years of age,
- Singles, not married with no children,
- Single parents/unmarried people with children, and
- Startups, young couples who are buying first homes.

Table 1-14: Comparison of Household Size—1980-2000

Year	Seabrook	Rockingham Cty.	New Hampshire
1980	2.35	2.79	2.65
1990	2.32	2.72	2.62
2000	2.32	2.63	2.53
% Change: 1970 to 2000	-1%	-6%	-5%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census and 2000 Master Plan

Median and Family Income—Seabrook Lags Behind Surrounding Communities

In 1990 Seabrook's median household income lagged behind the rest of the region. At \$28,237 it was 33% lower than both Rockingham County as a whole and the area towns, both of which averaged about \$41,500. By the 2000 Census median household income in Seabrook had risen significantly by 52% to \$42,874, the largest percentage increase in the area as shown in **Table 15**.

However, Seabrook's median household income was still 36% lower than Rockingham County which rose to \$58,150 and it was lower than all of the other surrounding towns. **Table 1-15** provides a comparison of median household incomes for 1990 and 2000 for Seabrook and the surrounding communities and the county.

Table 1-15: Comparison of Median Household Income

Location	1990 Median HH Income	2000 Median HH Income	Increase	% Increase
Seabrook	\$28,237	\$42,874	\$14,610	52
Amesbury	\$37,889	\$51,906	\$14,017	37
Hampton	\$40,929	\$54,419	\$13,490	33
Hampton Falls	\$55,682	\$76,348	\$20,666	37
Kensington	\$44,773	\$67,344	\$22,571	50
Salisbury	\$35,679	\$49,310	\$13,631	38
South Hampton	\$47,813	\$63,750	\$15,937	33
Rockingham Cty.	\$41,881	\$58,150	\$16,269	39
New Hampshire	\$36,329	\$49,467	\$13,138	36

Source: 2000 U.S. Census and 2000 Master Plan

Housing Affordability

The New Hampshire Housing and Finance Authority reports negative growth in housing in a survey from 1990 to 2000 for householders under the age of 35 by negative 28.2%, and renters under the age of 35 by negative 13.9%. People who are 35 years of age and younger, among others, simply do not earn a sufficient wage even in 'two-income' households to afford the high housing prices that have been present in Seabrook and surrounding areas. In contrast, people making \$100,000 per year and above were the fastest growing segment of New Hampshire's population growing by almost 50% from 1990 to 2000. This trend continued until 2006 when the housing market began a downturn and the economy slowed down. (NHHFA)

Much of Seabrook's housing environment is a product of market conditions that exist in the state and especially the Seacoast. Housing costs in Rockingham County rose sharply in the last five years as a result of low interest rates for home buyers, strong job growth and a significant population growth in the region.

Housing is considered to be affordable when a person can afford to pay 30% of his/her monthly income toward rent or a mortgage payment. This amount would allow sufficient income to pay for other living expenses such as food, transportation, medical costs, utilities, etc. and still have some money left over for entertainment, etc. Thus, a person with an annual income of \$30,000 could afford a house worth approximately \$90,000 or paying \$833 dollars per month in rent. If the cost of housing is above this level, the housing may be considered not affordable. Persons important to many communities such as young teachers, police, fire fighters, and others who provide basic services to the community may be have low relative

incomes such as the example above and cannot afford to live in the community where they work.

Affordability Based on 2000 US Census—Many Unable to Afford Median Priced Home

In Table 1-16, 2000 income levels are compared to affordable housing prices based upon the above ratio of affordability. The last column indicates whether a home is affordable based on the median affordable price. Of the 3,413 households in the 2000 census, a little more than 2,024 or almost 60 percent could not afford a median affordable priced home of \$173,943.

Table 1-16: Housing Affordability, 2000

Income Level	Affordable Housing Price	Number of Households	Percent	Affordable?
< \$10,000	<\$30,000	275	8	No
\$10,000-\$14,999	\$30,000-\$44,997	202	6	No
\$15,000-\$24,999	\$45,000-\$74,997	350	10	No
\$25,000-\$34,999	\$75,000-\$104,997	502	15	No
\$35,000-\$49,999	\$105,000-\$149,997	695	20	No
\$50,000-\$74,999	\$150,000-\$224,997	817	24	Yes
\$75,000-\$99,999	\$225,000-\$299,997	331	10	Yes
\$100,000-\$149,999	\$300,000-\$449,997	194	6	Yes
\$150,000-\$199,999	\$450,000-\$599,997	33	1	Yes
\$200,000 or more	\$600,000 or more	14	1	Yes
Median Household Income	Median Affordable Price	Total Households		Median House Value
\$57,981	\$173,943	3,413		\$181,900

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Housing Cost Increases Are Increasing Faster than Incomes

More recent housing cost and median family income data to determine affordability can be obtained from two sources

- NH Housing Finance Authority's Purchase Price data base which is based on a limited sample and
- Information from the Multiple Listing Service (MLS).

New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority Home Purchase Price Data Indicates Rapidly Increasing Prices from 1995 through 2006

The New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority (NHHFA) maintains a data for home purchase price on an annual basis base by state, county and community. These numbers are recorded for both new and existing homes based on an annual sample that the NHHFA takes on home purchase prices in each community. Because in some years the sample size is relatively small the NHHFA does guarantee the validity of the sample. In spite of this qualification, as can be seen in **Table 1-17**, the purchase price of both existing homes and new homes increased dramatically from 1995 to 2006. For example, the median purchase price of an existing home increased by \$194,000 or 169% from its 1995 price of \$115,000 to 2006. Similarly from 2000 to 2006 the median purchase price also increased significantly—85%. By 2007 the median purchase price had begun to decline due to market conditions. This trend continued into 2008 and is expected to continue through 2009. Still, housing prices could be expected to rise again as the market returns.

Table 1-17. Median Purchase Price

Type	Median Purchase Price						% Increase 2000-2006
	1995	2000	2004	2006	2007	2008	
All Homes	\$120,000	\$195,800	\$345,000	\$340,650	\$299,900	\$264,000	74%
Existing	\$115,000	\$167,000	\$325,000	\$309,000	\$280,000	\$264,000	85%
New	\$173,500	\$246,900	\$389,900	\$354,275	\$320,000	\$280,000	44%

Source: NHHFA, 2009

NHHFA Income Data Indicates Increase in Income, but Much Less Than Housing Cost

NHHFA also tracks Median Area Income for each of the US Housing Urban Development’s (HUD) Fair Market Rent Areas (HMFA). Seabrook is within the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy HMFA, although Hampton, Hampton Falls, and Kensington are within the Portsmouth-Rochester HMFA which may be a more suitable measure of median income. **Table 1-18** below includes median income figures for both HMFA’s to provide a comparison of the two areas. To compare the change in income with the change in housing costs in **Table 1-17**, incomes change between 2000 and 2006 were calculated. Based on these data incomes rose slightly more in the Portsmouth-Rochester HMFA, but considering either figure the cost of housing went up significantly more than incomes during this period.

- Between 2000 and 2006 the median purchase price of all homes increased 74%.
- Between 2000 and 2006 median household income increased by only 31% in the Boston HMFA and 48% in the Portsmouth-Rochester HMFA

Similar to housing there was a slight drop in incomes after 2006.

Table 1-18: Median Household Income

Type	Median Household Income					% Increase 2000-06
	2000	2002	2004	2006	2008	
Boston HMFA	\$65,500	\$74,200	\$82,600	\$84,100	\$85,500	31%
Port-Roch HMFA	\$52,300	\$57,300	\$69,600	\$71,900	\$77,300	48%

Source: NHHFA, 2009

With respect to current housing availability based on the workforce housing definition in RSA 674: 58-61, according to the MLS, in 2008 there were a total of 53 sales of single family homes in Seabrook, of which 27 or 51% sold for less than \$264,000. In 2009, the MLS includes 77 single family homes listed in Seabrook, of which only 19 or 25% are listed below \$264,400, i.e., fewer homes available for workforce individuals.

MLS—Recent Residential Sales

While there is a slight difference in data results between the NHHFA data and the Multiple Listing Service, both have captured the recent trend of increased median housing prices through 2006 and then the decline in prices. In 2006 the median sales price of a house in the MLS data base was \$370,000 as shown in **Table 1-19** compared to \$345,500 (somewhat lower) in the NHHFA data base. Some of this discrepancy may be due to the fact that sales for beach housing are significantly higher than for the rest of Seabrook that may slightly skew the prices higher when looking at the median.

Mobile/manufactured homes are not included in this comparison but there were 32 sales with a high price of \$159,900, a median of \$65,500 and a low of \$27,500. In 2008 the MLS noted a median price of \$264,400 while the NHHFA was \$264,000, although this is based on a very small sample size.

Again mobile homes/manufactured housing are not included in this comparison, but there were 17 sales with a high of \$159,269, a median of \$65,000 and a low of \$35,000.

Table 1-19: House Sales in Seabrook

Year	Number of Sales	Median Price	High	Low
2005	147	\$334,900	\$975,000	\$170,000
2006	110	\$370,000	\$2,300,000	\$239,000
2007	119	\$308,500	\$1,225,000	\$157,000
2008	71	\$264,000	\$2,550,000	\$81,000
2009	166 listed	\$339,900	\$1,250,000	\$89,900

Source: Multiple Listing Service, 2009, courtesy of Fortin Realty

Additional housing data was prepared by the Steering Committee and is found in Appendix 1A of this chapter.

Affordability Based on RSA 674: 58-61

As noted earlier, the State of New Hampshire has enacted a Workforce Housing Statute that now requires municipalities to provide reasonable and realistic opportunities for the development of workforce to be located in a majority, but not necessarily all, of the land area that is zoned to permit residential uses within the municipality.

The workforce housing law in New Hampshire specifically defines workforce housing as follows:

1. Housing which is intended for sale and is affordable to a household with an income of no more than 100 percent of the median income for a 4-person household for the metropolitan area (Boston-Cambridge-Quincy) in which the housing is located as published annually by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
2. Rental housing which is affordable to a household with an income of no more than 60 percent of the median income for a 3-person household for the metropolitan area or county (Boston-Cambridge-Quincy) in which the housing is located as published annually by HUD.

The further states that "Housing developments that exclude minor children from more than 20 percent of the units, or in which more than 50 percent of the dwelling units have fewer than two bedrooms, shall not constitute workforce housing for the purposes of this subdivision."

As noted in **Table 18**, in 2008, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) median family income for a family of four for the Boston-Cambridge-Quincy HMFA was \$85,800. The average family in this region making a five percent down payment would be able to afford a home with a selling price of approximately \$258,000. In the Portsmouth-Rochester HMFA the median family income was \$77,300. A family of four with this level of income would be able to afford a home selling at or below \$236,000.

Regional Housing Needs Assessment

The Rockingham Regional Planning Commission has conducted regional housing needs assessments in 1989, 1994 and again in 2004 in accordance with NH RSA 36:47 II. In 2008 the Needs Assessment was updated again to account for the definitions and thresholds for rental and owner affordability that are consistent with the new workforce housing law, NH RSA 674: 58-61. In its assessment of the Rockingham Region, the commission determined that, especially with new home construction, the

majority of homes in the three HUD Fair Market Rent Areas HMFA's comprising the region are not affordable under the requirements of the new law.

In addition, housing need is particularly critical for the elderly segment of the population which is expected to grow rapidly over the next two decades. If the rule of thumb for housing cost is 30% of income, there is evidence that almost 40% of the regional population 65 and over is overpaying for owner occupied housing while approximately 45% of elderly renters are overpaying. Similarly, younger homeowners are overpaying particularly for rental housing.

Over the years the RPC has employed several models to determine regional housing needs. For the most recent assessment an employment based model was used—the Constant Employment Share approach. This choice was made based on the fact that housing demand is the result of job creation and economic activity. Based on this model it is expected that almost 90,000 total housing units will be required to accommodate residents in the Rockingham region or an increase of about 10,700 units from 2006 to 2015 or approximately 1200 units annually. This estimate is approximately 15% lower than the estimate in the 2004 housing needs study primarily due to a lowered projection for employment and population growth in the region.

Assuming that Seabrook has approximately 5% of the housing stock in the region and that ratio stays constant, Seabrook could be expected to accommodate approximately 60 units per year.

Summary and Observations

- Much of Seabrook's housing stock was constructed between 1970 and 2000. Fully 30% of the current stock was built from 1970 to 1980.
- Although most of Seabrook's housing stock is single family (40%) there is a significant amount of multi-family and manufactured homes. Numerous mobile home parks and apartment complexes were built in the 1970's.
- Although an update of Regional Housing Needs Study conducted by the Rockingham Regional Planning Commission found that Seabrook is currently in compliance with regional housing objectives, it will need to add over 200 "workforce" units by 2015 to meet its regional housing needs.
- The town should consider future housing needs, such as adopting ordinances that will provide greater opportunity for workforce housing.
- Seabrook's median family income lags behind the surrounding communities while the cost of housing from 2000 to 2006 increased at faster rate than incomes.
- Even with the current balance of housing in Seabrook, there is an affordability gap in whereby almost half the current population cannot afford a home at the median price point or greater of a single-family home.
- Even though the current economic recession is driving down the price of housing, Seabrook should be concerned with the issue of housing affordability into the future.
- The requirements of recent state legislation will need to be considered with respect to providing reasonable and realistic opportunity for workforce housing. Seabrook will need to address this situation with changes to its land use regulations.

Action Plan

Vision Goals for Population and Housing

- **Strive to integrate Seabrook's geographic neighborhoods.**
- **Provide housing choice opportunity for age and income diversity.**

Objective H-1: Provide housing opportunities for a variety of owned and rental units that will be affordable to a broad range of age and income groups while preserving as much open space as possible.

Actions

Action H 1.1: Continue to permit manufactured housing on single lots throughout town. (*Master Plan, 2000*)

Action H 1.2: Continue to permit manufactured housing on single lots throughout town. (*Master Plan, 2000*)

Open Space Development (instead of cluster) focuses on the protection of open space that is preserved and also used for recreational activities, etc. Open Space Development has the benefit of:

- *Allowing development to accommodate growth, preserve open space and important natural resources; residents can enjoy the recreational opportunities and views provided by the preserved open space;*
- *Providing a buffer to protect water bodies and other natural areas, lowering the impact that development has on fragile natural features;*
- *Easy to administer.*
- *Not taking development potential away from the developer;*
- *Permanently protecting a substantial proportion of every development tract;*
- *Does not require public expenditures to conserve open space;*
- *Reducing the costs of construction and building shorter roads;*
- *Local governments save on snowplowing and on periodic road re-surfacing; and*
- *Potentially lower home purchase cost because of these cost savings.*
- *Reducing the amount of impervious surface created, thus reducing runoff to local water bodies, such as rivers and streams.*
- *Encouraging more walking, reducing carbon footprint and providing a healthy lifestyle.*

Elements of a Model Open Space Development Ordinance

- Authority—Reference state law for Innovative Zoning—RSA 674:21
- Statement of Purpose
- Objective(s)
- Include "Definition Section" including a clear definition of the Open Space Development (OSD), Designated Open Space and Common (usable) Open Space.
- Define where applicable in town—by zone or other designator. Establish a minimum land area for a cluster of the equivalent of say five (5) single lots, 10 acres. Consider making it mandatory if it exceeds certain size.
- Permitted uses—limit the number--e.g., agriculture, timber-cutting and residential.
- Define uses allowed in the Common Open Space.
- Define Development Density
- Dimensional Standards, e.g. minimum lot size; frontage on town or state road be at least X feet, e.g., 100-150 feet.
- Allow for alternative lot sizing
- Prohibit further subdivision of the parcel that has been approved for OSD.
- Adopt design guidelines such as:
 - a. Development consistent with goals and policies of the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Lot layout guidelines to take advantage of the site including using appropriate soils; minimizing impact to scenic vistas; using existing woodlands to absorb impact of buildings; and solar heating opportunities; thus may vary lot sizes or lots may be irregular in shape. c. Lots, streets, parking areas designed to minimize alteration of natural features. d. Large buffer from existing roadway and surrounding uses; e.g. 100 feet. (Buffer should have appropriate screen of vegetation or topography to minimize visual impact. Buffer should be specifically defined in the Definitions Section of the ordinance.) e. Provide trails and green space connections within development and connecting to adjacent developments. |
|--|

Action H 1.3: Amend Zoning Ordinance to provided for a modest density bonus in exchange for the setting aside of a prescribed percentage of new dwelling units for low and moderate income families and/or open space. (*Master Plan, 2000, amended*)

Action H 1.4: Encourage opportunity for multi-family housing by amending the Zoning Ordinance and Map to provide for:

- A. Village District(s) along the Route 1 Corridor, such as near the current Town Hall (Smithtown) area. Such a district could provide:
 - Multi-family residential as one of the permitted uses,
 - Greater density coverage than currently allowed,
 - More flexibility with dimensional standards such as setbacks, side yards and height, and
 - Landscape and architectural consistency, through appropriate design guidelines.

Action H 1.5: Explore the establishment of a Housing Commission to study and recommend housing programs and ordinances.

Objective H-2: Work cooperatively with regional and non-profit entities to encourage greater variety of housing types.

Actions

Action H 2.1: Work with such resource agencies as the Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC), the Workforce Housing Coalition of the Greater Seacoast and the NH Housing Finance Authority to determine the level of need for affordable and workforce housing in Seabrook as well as approaches to accommodate a broad range of housing opportunities.

Action H 2.2: Work with the RPC on the update of the five-year Regional Housing Needs Assessments.