

# BROOKLINE, NH MASTER PLAN - HOUSING -



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## SECTION 1 – Introduction

The provision of adequate housing is a primary need in every community. This chapter looks at current housing capacity and demand as well as future housing needs and placement. Section 2 begins with an overview of housing characteristics and Section 3 explores demographics as they relate to housing. Sections 4 and 5 examine affordability, local housing needs, and the impact of housing on Brookline. Section 6 provides strategies to meet Brookline’s housing needs. Finally, Section 7 provides references on funding programs for housing.

### Data Sources, Limitations, and Units of Analysis

The information in this chapter is based primarily on the 2020 US Census, American Community Survey data, and the 2023 Nashua Regional Housing Needs Assessment as included in its Regional Plan in conjunction with other local and state studies, estimates and reports. Wherever possible more recent data from other sources have been utilized; however, alternative up-to-date data or estimates are often only available for larger geographical units, such as the county, statistical areas, or the state.

*Note: From 2010 forward, the long form questionnaire has not been utilized for the Decennial census. Instead, the American Community Survey (ACS) has replaced the long form and is administered on an annual basis rather than every ten years. But the ACS is distributed to a much smaller sample of households which can cause higher volatility in data leading to an inaccurate picture especially for smaller communities. Because of this, the margin of error was included in data tables that exclusively rely on one set of ACS data.*

## SECTION 2 – Housing Characteristics

### Housing Units

The most prevalent housing type in Brookline is detached single-family housing (Table 2-1). A total of 589 building permits were issued in Brookline from 2000-2022 (Table 2-2). Of the total building permits issued, 582 of these permits were for single family homes. Building permits generally declined from 2000 to 2011 but began steadily increasing again from 2011 to the present.

**TABLE 2-1: Brookline Housing Units by Type**

Housing Type	Numeric	Margin of Error	% of Community
1-Unit, Detached	1,691	+/-107	95.9%
1-Unit, Attached	18	+/-20	1.0%
2 Units	32	+/-36	1.8%
3-4 Units	0	+/-17	0.0%
5+ Units	0	+/-51	0.0%
Mobile Home	12	+/-17	0.7%
Boat, RV, Van, etc.	10	+/-16	0.6%

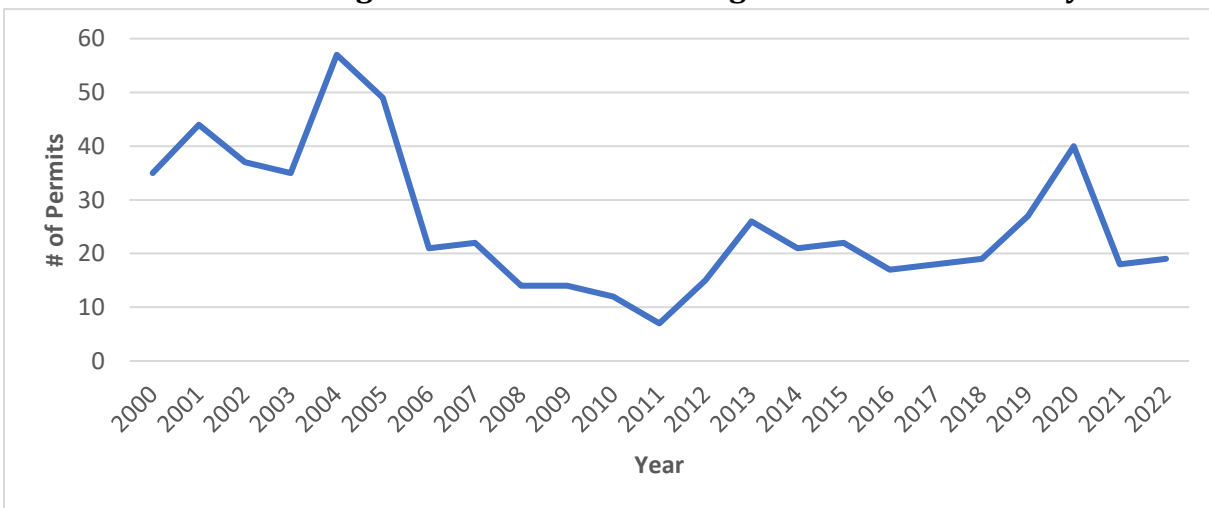
Source: American Community Survey 5 Year-Estimates, 2022 (Table DP04)

**TABLE 2-2: Total Building Permits by Housing Type in Brookline**

Year	Single-Family	Multi-Family	Mobile Home
2022	19	0	0
2021	18	0	0
2020	40	0	0
2019	27	0	0
2018	19	0	0
2017	18	0	0
2016	17	0	0
2015	22	0	0
2014	21	0	0
2013	26	0	0
2012	15	0	0
2011	7	0	0
2010	12	0	0
2009	14	0	0
2008	15	0	-1
2007	22	0	0
2006	21	0	0
2005	49	0	0
2004	55	2	0
2003	35	0	0
2002	31	6	0
2001	44	0	0
2000	35	0	0

Source: Town of Brookline Annual Reports

**FIGURE 2-1: Building Permits for New Housing Issued in Brookline by Year**



Source: Town of Brookline Annual Reports

## Age of Housing Stock

Brookline’s housing stock is relatively new. Most homes in Brookline (70.4%) have been built since 1980. The 1990s saw the largest growth in homes: 31.3% of Brookline’s housing units were built in this decade.

**TABLE 2-3: Age of Housing Stock in Brookline, 2022**

Year Built	Total Housing Units		Margin of Error
	#	%	
Pre 1939	165	9.4	+/-65
1940-1949	33	1.9	+/-38
1950-1959	59	3.3	+/-64
1960-1969	81	4.6	+/-49
1970-1979	185	10.5	+/-79
1980-1989	282	16.0	+/-74
1990-1999	551	31.3	+/-121
2000-2009	282	16.0	+/-92
2010-2019	116	6.6	+/-53
2020 or later	9	0.5	+/-15
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,763</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>+/-92</b>

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates 2022 (Table DP04)

## Occupancy

Housing tenure refers to whether a housing unit is owned or rented by occupants. Of the 1,763 housing units in Brookline, about 97% are occupied. About 4.3% of the occupied housing is occupied by renters. The overall vacancy rate is only about 3%, which is in line with current housing trends in southern New Hampshire where the housing market is very tight with minimal availability.

**TABLE 2-4: Housing Tenure, 2022**

	Numeric	Margin of Error	Percent
Occupied Housing Units	1,705	+/-94	96.7%
Vacant Housing Units	58	+/-63	3.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,763</b>	<b>+/-92</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates 2022 (Table DP04)

**TABLE 2-5: Status of Occupied Units, 2022**

	Numeric	Margin of Error	Percent
Occupied Paying Mortgage	1,090	+/-155	67.6%
Occupied Without a Mortgage	522	+/-145	32.4%
Occupied Paying Rent	93	+/-55	5.5%

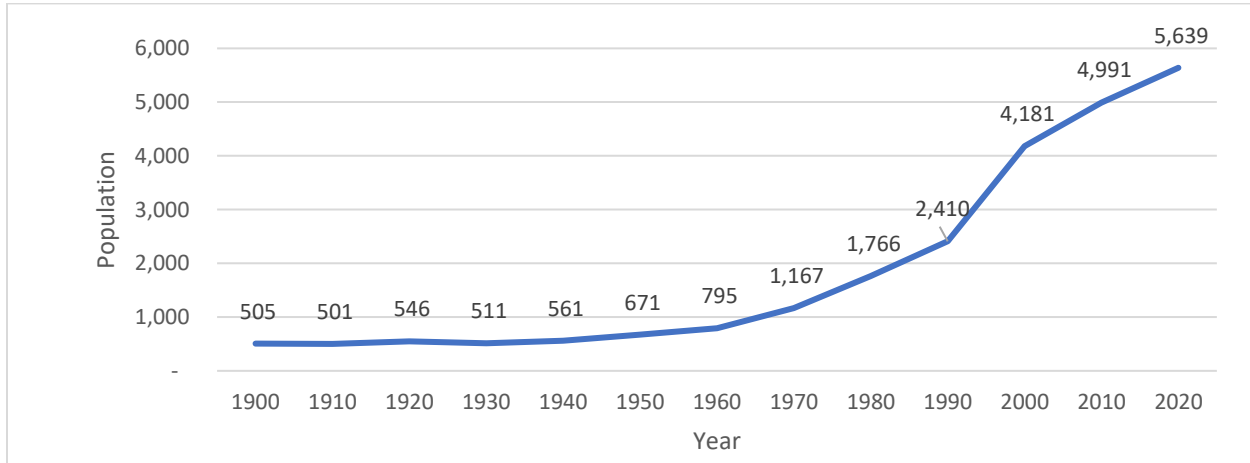
Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates 2022 (Table DP04)

## SECTION 3—Housing and Demographics

### Population

Brookline’s population trends are illustrated in Figure 3-1. During the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Brookline had a small population with little change. By 1960, a dramatic growth trend had started and has mostly continued until the present. The largest increase was between 1990 and 2000, when the total population nearly doubled. The most recent US Census estimates the town population at 5,639 in 2020.

**FIGURE 3-1: Brookline Population by Decade**



Source: US Census Bureau, Decennial Census 1900-2020

Examining the age profile of community population provides insight into future changes in local population and the future needs of the Town. Brookline’s age distributions for 2020 are depicted in Table 3-1 along with the NRPC region and the State. The percentage of Brookline’s population aged 0-19, about 31 percent, is greater than the Nashua region or State, about 23 and 21 percent, respectively. Conversely, the percentage of Brookline’s population over 65 is about 11 percent compared to about 16 percent for the NRPC region and about 19 percent for the State. These comparisons indicate that the percentage of school age children in Brookline is slightly higher than the region or state, while the senior citizen category is less than that for the region and the State.

**TABLE 3-1: Age Distribution of Brookline Population, 2020**

Age	Brookline	% Total	NRPC Region	% Total	New Hampshire	% Total
0-19	1,729	30.6	49,825	23.3	292,702	21.2
20-24	274	4.9	12,007	5.6	86,990	6.3
25-34	500	8.8	27,383	12.8	170,156	12.3
35-44	758	13.4	26,117	12.2	158,972	11.5
45-54	887	15.7	31,927	14.9	181,315	13.2
55-64	888	15.8	31,974	14.9	221,440	16.0
65+	603	10.7	34,650	16.2	265,954	19.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,639</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>217,543</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,377,529</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: US Census Bureau, 2020 Decennial Census (Table DP1)

## Population Projections

The New Hampshire Office of Planning and Development’s (NH OPD) population projections for the region are presented in Table 3-2 and depicted for Brookline in Figure 3-2. The projections combine census data with birth and death data from the Department of State/Division of Vital Records Administration and other sources. It is then used to develop survival and fertility rates and age-specific migration rates. The births and deaths span the decade, with rates specific to New Hampshire.

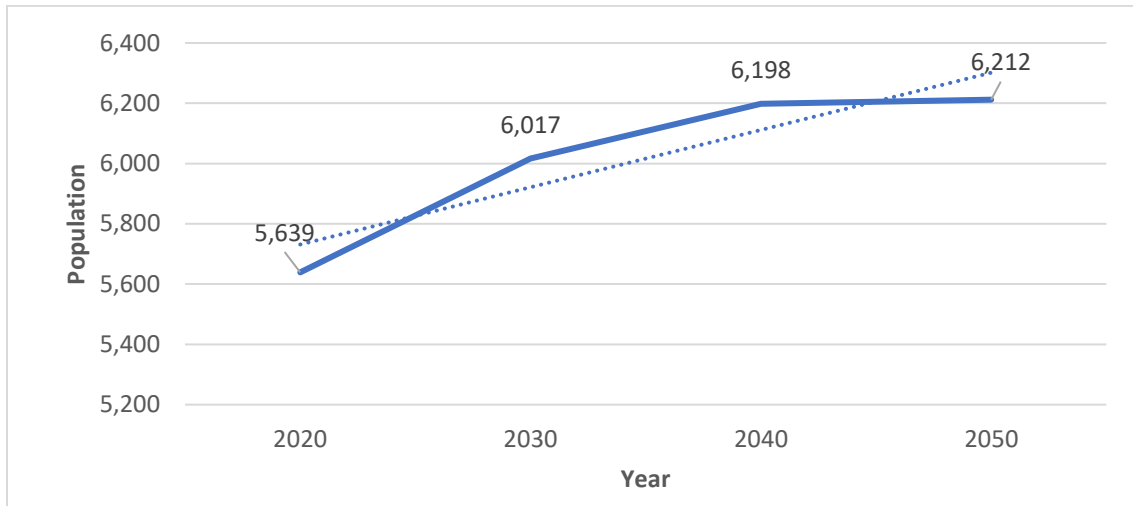
Brookline’s population is expected to continue to grow approximately 10.2% percent over the next 30 years. If projections hold true, this may mean the addition of 573 persons by 2050; however, the actual rate of growth in any community is unpredictable and due to forces beyond most local control. Keeping this in mind, it can be expected that Brookline will likely grow at a slower rate than other municipalities in the NRPC region as the predicted growth rate is the lowest for the region.

**TABLE 3-2: Population Projections, 2020-2050**

Municipality	2020 Census	Population Projection			Population Change	
		2030	2040	2050	2020-2030	2020-2050
Amherst	11,753	12,625	13,043	13,075	7.4%	11.3%
<b>Brookline</b>	<b>5,639</b>	<b>6,017</b>	<b>6,198</b>	<b>6,212</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>10.2%</b>
Hollis	8,342	8,940	9,227	9,249	7.2%	10.9%
Hudson	25,394	27,313	28,232	28,302	7.6%	11.5%
Litchfield	8,478	9,119	9,426	9,449	7.6%	11.5%
Lyndeborough	1,702	1,831	1,892	1,897	7.6%	11.5%
Mason	1,448	1,557	1,610	1,614	7.6%	11.5%
Merrimack	26,632	28,581	29,514	29,585	7.3%	11.1%
Milford	16,131	17,286	17,840	17,881	7.2%	10.9%
Mont Vernon	2,584	2,779	2,873	2,880	7.6%	11.5%
Nashua	91,322	98,159	101,435	101,683	7.5%	11.5%
Pelham	14,222	15,233	15,717	15,754	7.1%	10.8%
Wilton	3,896	4,190	4,331	4,342	7.6%	11.5%
<b>NRPC Total</b>	<b>217,543</b>	<b>233,630</b>	<b>241,339</b>	<b>241,922</b>	<b>7.4%</b>	<b>11.2%</b>

*Source: NH Office of Planning and Development (State, County, and Municipal Population Projections: 2020-2050)*

**FIGURE 3-2: Brookline Population Projections 2020-2050**



Source: NH Office of Planning and Development (State, County, and Municipal Population Projections: 2020-2050)

### Households

Table 3-3 is a breakdown of the number of households in Brookline, the NRPC Region, and the State of New Hampshire. Between 2010 and 2020, Brookline saw the second highest growth in number of households in the NRPC region with a 12.8% change in total households. This is higher than both the state and the average for the NRPC Region.

**TABLE 3-3. Total Number of Households in the NRPC Region**

Municipality	2010 Census	2020 Census	% Change 2010-20
Amherst	4,063	4,305	6.0%
<b>Brookline</b>	<b>1,631</b>	<b>1,839</b>	<b>12.8%</b>
Hollis	2,811	3,055	8.7%
Hudson	8,900	9,625	8.2%
Litchfield	2,828	3,081	9.0%
Lyndeborough	643	684	6.4%
Mason	529	560	5.9%
Merrimack	9,503	10,214	7.5%
Milford	5,929	6,630	11.8%
Mont Vernon	838	945	12.8%
Nashua	35,044	38,243	9.1%
Pelham	4,357	5,047	15.8%
Wilton	1,418	1,549	9.2%
<b>NRPC Region</b>	<b>78,494</b>	<b>85,777</b>	<b>9.3%</b>
<b>New Hampshire</b>	<b>518,973</b>	<b>556,357</b>	<b>7.2%</b>

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census

Table 3-4 is a breakdown of the average household size in Brookline, the NRPC Region, and the State of New Hampshire. In 2022, the average household size in the NRPC region, was 2.77, up from the 2010 average household size of 2.62. While there is a national trend of smaller household sizes, New Hampshire and the NRPC region have both seen an average increase. Brookline currently has the highest average household size in the NRPC region and has continuously had a much higher average household size, due to the predominance of family households.

**TABLE 3-4. Average Household Size**

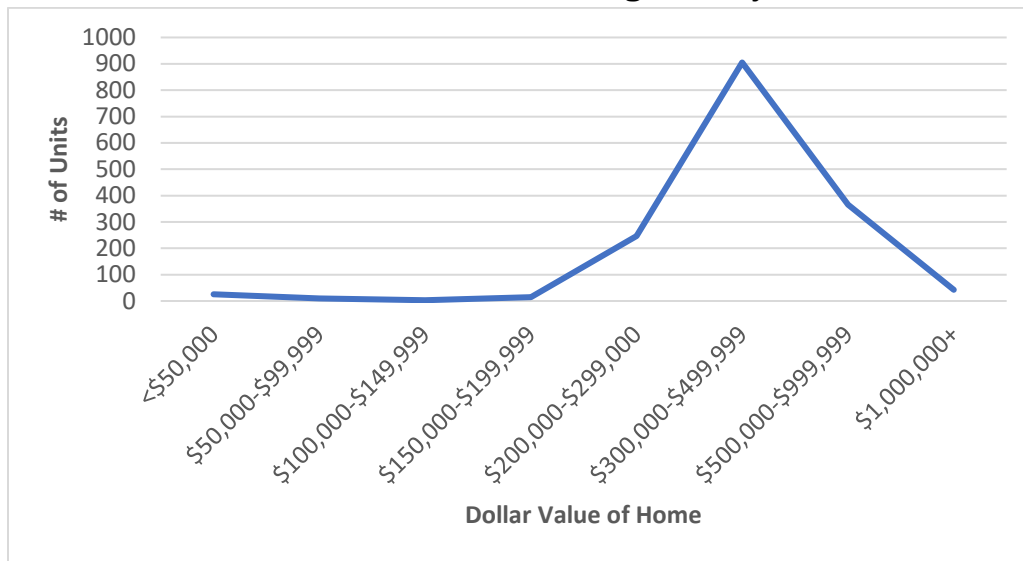
Municipality	Avg. # of Persons per HH 2010	Avg.# of Persons per HH 2022
Amherst	3.06	2.69
<b>Brookline</b>	<b>2.76</b>	<b>3.37</b>
Hollis	2.73	2.62
Hudson	2.73	2.72
Litchfield	2.92	2.93
Lyndeborough	2.62	2.57
Mason	2.61	2.64
Merrimack	2.67	2.73
Milford	2.53	2.62
Mont Vernon	2.87	3.04
Nashua	2.42	2.61
Pelham	2.96	3.00
Wilton	2.59	2.51
<b>NRPC Region</b>	<b>2.62</b>	<b>2.77</b>
<b>New Hampshire</b>	<b>2.54</b>	<b>2.60</b>

*American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates 2010, 5-Year Estimates 2022 (Table DP04)*

### Owner-Occupied Housing

Most housing units in Brookline (about 97%) are owner-occupied. Table 3-5 depicts the purchase price trends of primary homes in Brookline (new and existing). Along with most other communities in both the NRPC region and the State, Brookline has seen significant increases in purchase price from 2,000 to the present. From 2010 to 2023, the average sales price of a home in the NRPC region increased by \$211,000. In Brookline, the average sales price of a home increased about 35% from 2015 to 2020, and then about 44% from 2020 to 2023. The general value of housing in Brookline is high, where most housing units are valued at \$300,000 or higher. In 2023, the median purchase price was \$590,000, which is \$140,000 higher than the NRPC region and \$173,600 more than the State.

**FIGURE 3-3: Brookline Housing Units by Value**



Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates 2022 (Table DP04)

**TABLE 3-5: Median Purchase Price of Primary Homes in Brookline**

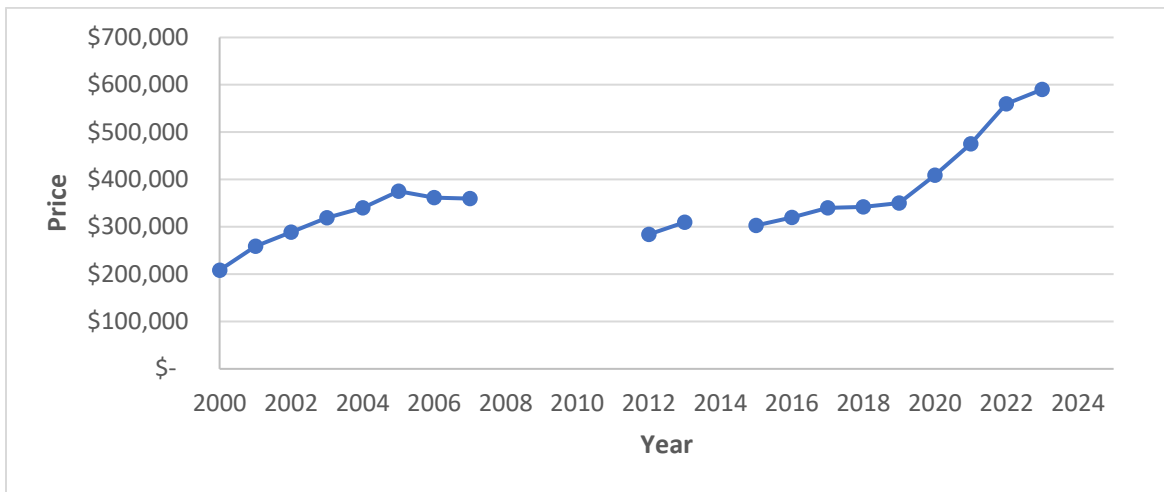
Community	2010	2015	2020	2023*	% Change 2010 to 2015	% Change 2015 to 2020	% Change 2020 to 2023
Amherst	\$310,000	\$311,200	\$416,500	\$560,000	0.4	33.8	34.5
Brookline	N/A	\$303,100	\$408,700	\$590,000	-	34.8	44.4
Hollis	\$421,000	\$417,200	\$487,500	\$715,000	-0.9	16.9	46.7
Hudson	\$245,000	\$258,200	\$330,000	\$464,000	5.4	27.8	40.6
Litchfield	\$255,000	\$275,000	\$375,000	\$543,500	7.8	36.4	44.9
Lyndeborough	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	-	-
Mason	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	-	-
Merrimack	\$225,000	\$225,000	\$320,000	\$400,000	0.0	42.2	25.0
Milford	\$203,412	\$220,500	\$320,000	\$430,000	8.4	45.1	34.4
Mont Vernon	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$650,000	-	-	-
Nashua	\$219,900	\$221,000	\$316,000	\$412,000	0.5	43.0	30.4
Pelham	\$267,500	\$320,000	\$431,300	\$550,000	19.6	34.8	27.5
Wilton	N/A	\$198,500	\$325,000	\$346,000	-	63.7	6.5
<b>NRPC Region</b>	<b>\$239,000</b>	<b>\$243,500</b>	<b>\$340,000</b>	<b>\$450,000</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>39.6</b>	<b>32.4</b>
<b>New Hampshire</b>	<b>\$215,000</b>	<b>\$221,000</b>	<b>\$302,300</b>	<b>\$416,400</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>36.8</b>	<b>37.7</b>

Source: 1990-2014 – NH Dept. of Revenue, PA-34 Dataset, Compiled by Real Data Corp. Filtered and analyzed by New Hampshire Housing. 2015-2022 – The Warren Group. Filtered and analyzed by New Hampshire Housing.

Note: Calculations based on a sample size of less than 50 are highly volatile and not considered valid (N/A)

\*2023 is a partial dataset, containing data from just January through September

**FIGURE 3-4: Brookline Median Home Purchase Price, 2000-2023**



Source: 1990-2014 – NH Dept. of Revenue, PA-34 Dataset, Compiled by Real Data Corp. Filtered and analyzed by New Hampshire Housing. 2015-2022 – The Warren Group. Filtered and analyzed by New Hampshire Housing.

Note: Calculations based on a sample size of less than 50 are highly volatile and not considered valid, showing up as gaps in the line graph.

\*2023 is a partial dataset, containing data from just January through September

### Renter-Occupied Housing

Approximately 73 (4.3%) housing units in Brookline are renter-occupied. Table 3-6 shows the gross rents in Brookline. According to the 2022 American Community Survey, the median rent in Brookline is \$2,368. Most renters pay between \$1,500 and \$3,000 in rent.

**TABLE 3-6: Gross Rents in Brookline**

Rent Amount	# of Units	Margin of Error	Percent
Less Than \$500	0	+/-17	0.0%
\$500 to \$999	9	+/-14	12.3%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	0	+/-17	0.0%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	15	+/-21	20.5%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	17	+/-20	23.3%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	21	+/-30	28.8%
\$3,000 or More	11	+/-19	15.1%
No Rent Paid	20	+/-22	27.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>+/-49</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates 2022 (Table DP04)

## SECTION 4 – Housing Affordability

### Median Household Income

The standard of living in New Hampshire is high. Brookline embodies the Nashua Region and the Southern Tier overall with some of the highest levels of income and well-being in the State of New Hampshire. Table 4-1 shows median household income for individual municipalities, the NRPC region, and the State of New Hampshire. The median household income in Brookline is the highest in the NRPC region and is higher than both Hillsborough County and the State.

**TABLE 4-1: Median Household Income in the NRPC Region, 2020**

Community	All Households	Owners	Renters
Amherst	\$136,006	\$145,021	\$51,104
<b>Brookline</b>	<b>\$142,033</b>	<b>\$144,737</b>	<b>\$65,536</b>
Hollis	\$131,745	\$138,034	\$55,875
Hudson	\$110,227	\$116,771	\$40,893
Litchfield	\$112,386	\$119,858	\$70,833
Lyndeborough	\$98,125	\$101,000	\$68,125
Mason	\$102,647	\$106,042	\$75,536
Merrimack	\$108,422	\$112,403	\$52,350
Milford	\$74,285	\$103,365	\$48,048
Mont Vernon	\$125,551	\$126,581	\$72,000
Nashua	\$73,785	\$98,689	\$50,025
Pelham	\$108,223	\$117,014	\$35,045
Wilton	\$76,462	\$92,404	\$27,222
<b>Hillsborough Co.</b>	<b>\$82,099</b>	<b>\$106,773</b>	<b>\$48,056</b>
<b>New Hampshire</b>	<b>\$77,923</b>	<b>\$94,989</b>	<b>\$45,468</b>

Source: American Community Survey, 5-year estimates 2016-2020 (Table S25119)

**Table 4-2: Percent of Households in each Income Bracket, 2020**

Income Range	Brookline	NRPC Region	New Hampshire
<b>Less than \$25,000</b>	1.8	5.2	13.4
\$25,000 to \$34,999	0.0	4.4	7.5
\$35,000 to \$49,999	5.9	6.6	10.2
\$50,000 to \$74,999	11.0	14.1	17.1
\$75,000 to \$99,999	7.1	12.1	14.1
\$100,000 to \$149,999	28.7	25.8	18.9
\$150,000 or more	45.5	31.9	18.9

Source: 2024 NRPC Regional Housing Needs Assessment, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates 2016-2020 (Table S25118)

Poverty is not unique to our urban or rural communities. Regardless of location, poverty limits available housing choices to only the most affordable homes. In the NRPC region, just over five percent of households fall below the poverty level. Table 4-3 presents the 2022 US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) dollar income figures in the Nashua HMFA classified as having *low* or *very low* family incomes according to the number of persons per household. *Low* family incomes are 80 percent of the area median family income in the Nashua HMFA. Very low-income figures represent 50 percent of the area’s median family income in the region. In recent years, the New Hampshire income gap has been widening, with people in the lowest income brackets earning disproportionately less than people in the upper brackets.

**TABLE 4-3: Very Low & Low Median Income Thresholds by Family Size, Nashua HMFA, 2022**

Income Level	1 Person	2 Person	3 Person	4 Person	5 Person	6 Person	7 Person	8 Person
Low Income (80% AMI)	\$68,544	\$78,336	\$88,128	\$97,920	\$105,754	\$113,587	\$121,421	\$129,254
Very Low Income (50% AMI)	\$42,840	\$48,960	\$55,080	\$61,200	\$66,096	\$70,992	\$75,888	\$80,784

Source: New Hampshire Housing and Finance Authority – HUD Median Family Incomes (April 18, 2022)

AMI = Area Median Income

\*Communities in Nashua HMFA—Amherst, Brookline, Greenville, Hollis, Hudson, Litchfield, Mason, Merrimack, Milford, Mont Vernon, Nashua, New Ipswich, Pelham, Wilton

## Housing Costs vs. Income

It is considered a healthy market when residents are putting 30% of their income toward housing. When residents are paying more than 30% of their income on housing it is reflective of an unaffordable housing market. In Brookline, most renters are paying below 30% of their income on rental costs. However, there are still about 34% of renters paying more than 30% of their income on rent. For owner-occupied units with a mortgage, again most owners are paying less than 30% of their income on housing costs. Only about 12% of owners are paying 30% or more of their income on housing-related costs. This suggests that the housing market in Brookline is relatively affordable. It is also important to remember that Brookline has the highest median household income in the NRPC region, so this is not as inclusive of lower-income households.

**TABLE 4-4. Gross Monthly Rent as a Percentage of Household Income**

% of Household Income	# of Households	Margin of Error	Percent
<b>Less Than 15.0%</b>	0	+/-17	0.0%
15.0 to 19.9%	12	+/-18	16.4%
20.0 to 24.9%	0	+/-17	0.0%
25.0 to 29.9%	36	+/-35	49.3%
30.0 to 34.9%	0	+/-17	0.0%
35% or more	25	+/-26	34.2%
Not Computed	20	+/-22	27.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>+/-49</b>	<b>100%</b>

**TABLE 4-5. Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income (Units With a Mortgage)**

% of Household Income	# of Households	Margin of Error	Percent
<b>Less Than 20%</b>	618	+/-116	56.7%
20.0 to 24.9 %	218	+/-88	20.0%
25.0 to 29.9%	120	+/-60	11.0%
30.0 to 34.9%	24	+/-24	2.2%
35% or More	110	+/-52	10.1%
Not Computed	0	+/-17	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,090</b>	<b>+/-155</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates 2022 (Table DP04)

## Housing Needs

There are very low vacancy rates in Brookline, for both those looking to rent or to purchase. There is a general need for more housing units in general.

The main housing type in Brookline is owner-occupied single-family units. Very little new development has occurred within the past decade except for single-family dwellings. Other types of housing may represent alternative forms of shelter for people of low incomes or for people who have unique housing needs such as the elderly, young adults, small families, single parent households, and recent immigrants.

Duplexes, condominiums, multifamily apartments, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU or in-law apartments), assisted living facilities, motels, extended stay facilities, and nursing homes are examples of non-traditional housing demonstrated in communities provide inexpensive alternatives to the stand-alone single-family home. A diversity of housing opportunities may also provide the required flexibility for people who newly locate in the community or temporarily reside there in case of a change in job or living situation.

## SECTION 5 – Housing and its Impact on Brookline

### Housing and its Relationship to Land Use

Residential land use is the most common land use in Brookline. Most of the residential uses in Town are single-family homes on approximately two acres of land. Multi-family units and manufactured housing represent a minor component of the Town's land use pattern and are scattered throughout the Town. The only manufactured housing district is located on Petersen Road. Lot B-65 near the Route 13/Old Milford Road intersection contains a significant number of multi-family houses.

A build-out analysis is a helpful tool that can be utilized in land use planning. This type of analysis determines how much land is available in a municipality for development, what type of development, and how much development there will ultimately be based on current land use regulations. The last buildout analysis for Brookline was conducted in 2005 (see Section 5 of the Land Use Chapter for results). However, a quick analysis was completed in March of 2024 revealing that there are currently approximately a thousand potentially creatable lots available in Brookline to develop as single-family housing. This analysis focused on vacant lots and did not identify unbuildable land due to wetlands or steep slopes and did not include unbuildable land.

### Local Housing Related Ordinances

#### **Brookline Zoning & Land Use Ordinance - 620.00 Workforce Housing**

Last updated in 2022, this ordinance provides an option for including workforce housing as a permitted use in the Residential-Agricultural District, consistent with the requirements of NH RSA 674:58-61. Single family, duplex, multi-family, and manufactured housing can qualify as workforce housing. The Workforce Housing option is intended to provide opportunity for the development of affordable workforce housing; ensure the continued availability of a diverse supply of home ownership and rental opportunities; meet the goal of providing safe, affordable housing opportunities as set forth in the Town's Master Plan; address the regional need for workforce housing as documented in the Nashua Regional Planning Commission's most recent Needs Assessment; and be consistent with the planning goals in the Town of Brookline.

#### **Brookline Zoning & Land Use Ordinance - 700.00 Manufactured Housing**

Manufactured housing has the potential to provide more affordable housing options. Contrary to the 'mobile homes' of earlier eras that were designed to be movable, contemporary manufactured housing is larger, meets uniform building code requirements, and generally is a much higher quality physical building stock.

This ordinance states that no trailer or manufactured house shall be occupied or maintained as a living unit except in an approved Manufactured Housing District. The Planning Board may approve the location and designation of Manufactured Housing Districts within the Residential-Agricultural District and shall allow the placement of manufactured housing on individual lots within Manufactured Housing Districts intended for occupancy as permanent single dwelling units. Any area approved as a Manufactured Housing District must satisfy additional conditions in addition to conforming to the Zoning Ordinance.

This ordinance was last updated in 2011 and could be updated and used as a tool to promote diverse and affordable housing options in town.

**Brookline Zoning & Land Use Ordinance - 2000.00 Accessory Dwelling Units**

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) provide expanded housing opportunities and flexibility for homeowners. ADUs maintain the aesthetics and residential use compatible with existing homes in the neighborhood. In Brookline, ADUs are permitted in the Residential/Agricultural district by special exception granted by the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Applicants for special exception must demonstrate several different requirements to the ZBA, including that the ADU is secondary and accessory to a principal single family dwelling unit or accessory building, that the secondary unit does not alter the character or appearance of the principal dwelling unit as a single-family residence, and that the gross living area of an ADU is not less than 350 ft<sup>2</sup> or greater than 1,000 ft<sup>2</sup>. Only one ADU is allowed per principal dwelling unit and/or lot.

This ordinance was last updated in 2018 and has potential to be updated to provide for even more flexibility with newer concepts like detached ADUs and streamlined processes for ADU approval.

**Brookline Zoning & Land Use Ordinance - 2200.00 Housing for Older Persons Developments**

Housing for older persons, as defined in NH RSA 354-A:15, can provide affordable living situations for people with fixed incomes, accessibility to people with disabilities, and social contact for a group that can experience isolation. Such housing must be well sited and designed to meet the special needs of this age group. Housing for Older Person Developments may be located as an overlay zone wherever the conditions described in the sitting requirement standards can be met. Housing for Older Person Developments shall be reviewed under the site plan regulations of the Town as well as the regulations of this ordinance. The intent of this ordinance is to foster development of housing for older persons while detailing local planning standards and promoting consistency with land use policies in the Brookline Master Plan, zoning ordinances, and subdivision and site plan regulations. Brookline first adopted this ordinance in 2003 and it was last updated in 2023.

## SECTION 6 – Conclusions and Strategies to Meet Brookline’s Housing Needs

### Conclusions and Findings

According to the 2023 Town-wide Master Plan Survey, the following themes emerged:

- Respondents agree that single-family housing is important to Brookline. Open Space Developments and ADUs are also considered very or somewhat important. Respondents overall do not think tiny houses, buildings with 3+ units, or manufactured housing is important to Brookline.
- More than one third of respondents are concerned with water supply, natural environment, quality of education, and demand on public infrastructure. Between one quarter and one third of respondents are concerned with school facilities, population, housing, and town character.
- Almost 70% of respondents said taxes would prevent them from staying in Brookline. A decline in school quality (41%) and housing costs (29%) were the second and third most common answers.
- Respondents had mixed feelings about senior housing, rental housing, and assisted living for seniors, with many respondents saying they were somewhat important or not important. More than half of respondents said supported housing was not important for Brookline.

While residents strongly favor single-family housing, there is a need for more affordable and diverse housing options. However, balancing the need for additional housing with the preservation of open space and conservation is also of high importance.

### Goals

Housing goals have been developed to support the future vision of Brookline. Below each goal are recommendations to help achieve that specific goal.

#### **Goal - Promote open space and conservation efforts.**

- Recommendation – Promote housing options that would increase density rather than sprawl into remaining open spaces.
  - Allow the conversion and/or renovation of large houses into more than one unit in more areas in town.
  - Revise the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) ordinance and remove potential barriers. For example, allow ADUs by right if they are attached.

#### **Goal - Encourage diversity in housing stock.**

- Recommendation – Consider amending the current zoning ordinance to allow for multifamily housing of three or more units.
- Revise the Manufactured Housing Ordinance to build developments in the Brookline Spirit. Changes to the Ordinance could attract Manufactured Housing Developments that built a sense of community and support the other goals in the Master Plan such as conserving open space. There are manufactured housing parks that build a sense of community with smart community

design that increases the value of the homes and community. Brookline currently only has one mobile home park with just four homes.

- Recommendation – Consider reducing lot size requirements for duplexes with shared utilities.
- Recommendation – Consider allowing group homes up to a certain size in town.
- Recommendation – Consider including residential design/architectural guidelines in Brookline’s general design guidelines to maintain Brookline’s rural character.

**Goal – Work with the Brookline Historical Society to preserve historic homes.**

- Recommendation – Create an inventory of historic homes in Brookline.

**Goal – Establish a Housing Issues Committee**