



Berkley Common

# TOWN of BERKLEY HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

---

*Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District*

*Prepared by*

This document was created with funds provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, District Local Technical Assistance program. The funding allowed for the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) to assist the Town of Berkley with the completion of a Housing Needs Assessment.

***Town of Berkley  
Housing Needs Assessment Committee***

*Zoning Board of Appeals*

Robert Lyman  
James King

*Planning Board*

Daniel Burns  
Valerie V. Murray  
Steve Leary  
Byron Holmes  
Donna Leary  
Charlene Lolis, Secretary

*Building Department*

Paul Boucher

With technical support provided by Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District:

Greg Guimond, Program Manager  
Dr. Josefina L. Reynes, Data Specialist  
Sandy Conaty, Principal Comprehensive Planner  
Nancy Durfee, Comprehensive Planner

September 3, 2009

Cover photograph courtesy: [Aerialimage@comcast.net](mailto:Aerialimage@comcast.net)

Acknowledgements: The Berkley Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Building Department would like to acknowledge Ted Higginson (owner of Rezendes Real Estate) for his time, effort and contribution to the development of the Berkley Housing Needs Assessment report.

# TOWN of BERKLEY

## Housing Needs Assessment

### Table of Contents

|  | Page |
|--|------|
| I. Executive Summary                                   |      |
| A. Introduction.....                                   | 4    |
| i) Purpose.....  | 4    |
| ii) Planning Process.....                              | 6    |
| iii) Definition of Affordable Housing.....             | 7    |
| B. Summary of Housing Needs Assessment .....           | 8    |
| C. Housing Challenges .....                            | 12   |
| D. Recommendations/Conclusions.....                    | 14   |
| II. Housing Needs Assessment                           |      |
| A. Demographic Characteristics.....                    | 15   |
| B. Housing Characteristics.....                        | 23   |
| C. Housing Market Conditions.....                      | 29   |
| D. Cost Analysis of Existing Market Conditions.....    | 31   |
| E. Subsidized Housing Inventory.....                   | 35   |
| F. Gaps Between Existing Needs and Current Supply..... | 36   |
| G. Constraints to Producing Affordable Housing.....    | 37   |

# TOWN of BERKLEY

## Housing Needs Assessment

### I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*From 1980 to 2003, Massachusetts's home prices increased 463%, the highest percentage increase in the nation in that time period.<sup>2</sup>*

#### A. Introduction

Berkley is a small rural community situated along the Taunton and Assonet Rivers that has retained much of its 18th century landscape. Historically, and despite the notably stony soil, the town grew essentially as an agricultural community. The town also had some shipbuilding and a small pottery industry flourished for a time using the sufficient clay deposits that were found here. The Town has been described as a sleepy family-oriented community with one four-way stop sign and no post office of their own. Residents are now seeing that people who have grown up here are now moving back to their family homes.

People are attracted to the peaceful, rural character of Berkley and the easy access to interstate highways as access to jobs and shopping. With an interchange for Route 24 centrally located within its boundaries and the proximity of an interchange for Route 140, there is easy access to the job markets of Boston, Fall River, New Bedford, Newport, RI and Providence, RI. In addition to the interstate highways, bus service to Boston and Providence is less than twenty minutes away in Taunton. Commuter rail is also available in less than twenty minutes drive time in Middleborough/Lakeville. Residents are minutes away from the regional shopping corridor of Route 140 in Taunton. As one person so eloquently put it, Berkley is "God's country twenty minutes away".

The town consists of 12,131 total acres, with 3,494 acres of non-buildable land, water, of which 2321.3 acres are developed with 14.7% for residential use. Berkley is listed in the recent edition of the Massachusetts Audubon Society's study, Losing Ground, Beyond the Footprint, as the community with the fourth highest rate of development from 1999-2005 of the 351 Massachusetts communities. Over the past decade the Town has seen a lot of growth and town officials and residents are concerned about future growth and development of its large area of land that is currently undeveloped agricultural or vacant open space.

#### *Purpose*

The growth and development of the last decade is increasingly raising local concerns about the rate and type of growth that is occurring. To address these concerns, the town updated their zoning code in October 2007, incorporated an

Aquifer Protection Overlay District in April, 2009 and are beginning a Master Plan hoping to better direct new development to be more consistent with the character of the town and to meet local needs and priorities. Therefore, while there has been substantial recent growth, projections indicate that the town is likely to grow substantially in the future. The build-out projections indicate Berkley may grow by another 14,965 residents or another 5,164 housing units despite wetlands and other development constraints. These projections seem incomprehensible for such a rural community and further concerns of the town's ability to meet the housing needs of all its residents.

In July 2009, the Town of Berkley's Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Building Department in coordination prepared a vision statement as well as housing goals for inclusion into the Berkley's Master Plan and the Housing Needs Assessment for the Housing Production Plan. The vision statement is:

These directives have been established to better serve and protect the residents of Berkley by guiding the growth and prosperity of this town in a positive manner, to help maintain the peace and tranquility of our land beautiful, in a harmonious manner with each citizen and the natural resources of this serene setting, in the tradition of our forefathers as this town was founded to become one town, in this original Commonwealth of the thirteen colonies, of one nation, under God and to protect the individual freedoms and liberties that the citizens of Berkley have come to enjoy.

It is intended that with this guide to progress, certain goals can be achieved and maintained such that as follows:

- 1) Berkley will be able to meet all federal and state policies and procedures for minimum housing requirements and have more authority at the local level for housing standards and lot sizes to keep population growth at a sustainable rate to maintain proper schools and public services including adequate emergency personnel such as fire, police, ambulance and roadway staff and for the development of public water and sewer systems.
- 2) Berkley will be able to establish upland conservation areas in concert with development for the protection of habitat, migration corridors, aquifers, old growth trees and peaceful enjoyment.
- 3) To provide opportunities for development in desirable formats for specified areas of town.

- 4) For the establishment of historic districts, parks and scenic routes as desired.
- 5) To maintain the rural atmosphere of a small town.
- 6) To encourage the development of elderly housing as needed.
- 7) To allow for the development of buildings for churches, veteran facilities, medical centers, club meeting halls and other nonprofit organizations in the proper zoning areas.
- 8) To ease the impact of development on traffic where possible with efficient roadway and access to roadway design.
- 9) To promote smart growth and green development.

### *Planning Process*

A Comprehensive Housing Needs Assessment is based on 760 CMR 56.03(4)(b) which, requires a housing production plan establish a strategic plan for municipal action with regards to housing, based on a comprehensive housing needs assessment that examines:

- 1.) the most recent available census data of the municipality's demographics and housing stock, together with a projection of future population and housing needs, taking into account regional growth factors, that covers the entire time period of the plan;
- 2.) development constraints and limitations on its current and future needs, and the municipality's plans to mitigate those constraints; and
- 3.) the capacity of the municipality's infrastructure to accommodate the current population and anticipated future growth, including plans for enlargement or expansion of existing infrastructure systems to ensure that both current and future needs are met.

This Housing Needs Assessment was undertaken to assess the housing needs and priorities for a Housing Production Plan and as the basis of the Housing component of a Master Plan. It was completed with the assistance of Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development (SRPEDD) with funds provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, District Local Technical Assistance program. A community group was formed for this purpose and consisted of the Planning Board and representatives of the Zoning Board of

Appeals, the Berkley Council on Aging, the Building Department, and a real estate agent.

### *Definition of Affordable Housing*

There are a number of definitions of affordable housing as federal and state programs offer various criteria. For example, the federal government identifies units as affordable if gross rent (including costs of utilities borne by the tenant) is no more than 30% of a household's net or adjusted income (with small deduction per dependent, for child care, extraordinary medical expenses, etc.) or if the carrying costs of purchasing a home (mortgage, property taxes and insurance) is not more than 30% of adjusted gross income. If households are paying more than these thresholds, they are described as experiencing housing affordability problems, and if they are paying 50% or more they have a severe housing affordability problem or cost burden.

Affordable housing can also be identified by percentages of median income for the area, and most housing subsidy programs are targeted to particular income ranges depending on program goals. Extremely low-income housing is directed to those earning at or below 30% of area median income as defined by the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (\$22,850 for a family of three for the Taunton-Mansfield-Norton, MA HUD Metro FMR Area) and very low-income generally refers to the range between 51% and 80% of area median income (AMI) (\$59,550 for a family of three at the 80% level), and moderate-income from 81% to 100% and sometimes 120% of median income. These income levels are summarized in the table below.

**Table I-1 Targeted Income Levels for Affordable Housing**

| <i>#of Persons in Household</i>                               | 30% of Median Income | 50% of Median Income | 80% of Median Income |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>1</b>  | 17,800               | 29,600               | 46,300               |
| <b>2</b>  | 20,300               | 33,850               | 52,950               |
| <b>3</b>  | 22,850               | 38,050               | 59,550               |
| <b>4</b>  | 25,400               | 42,300               | 66,150               |
| <b>5</b>  | 27,450               | 45,700               | 71,450               |
| <b>6</b>  | 29,450               | 49,050               | 76,750               |
| <b>7</b>  | 31,500               | 52,450               | 82,050               |
| <b>8+</b>   | 33,550               | 55,850               | 87,350               |
| 2009 Median Household Income for the Taunton Area HUD= 84,600 |                      |                      |                      |

In assessing a community's progress toward the 10% of affordable housing threshold, the state counts a housing unit as affordable if it is subsidized by state or federal programs that support low and moderate income households at or below 80% of AMI under Chapter 774 of the Acts of 1969, which established the Massachusetts Comprehensive Permit Law (Massachusetts General Laws

Chapter 40B) Most state supported housing assistance programs are targeted to households earning at or below 80% of AMI as well as other income thresholds. The Chapter 40B definition of affordable is as follows:

FIGURE I-1. WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

Must be part of a “subsidized” development built by a public agency, non-profit, or limited dividend corporation;  
At least 25% of the units in the development must be income restricted to households with incomes at or below the 80% of area median income and have rents or sale prices restricted to affordable levels;  
Restrictions must run at least 15 years for rehabilitation, 30 years for new construction and in perpetuity for new homeownership;  
Development must be subjected to a regulatory agreement and monitored by a public agency or non-profit organization;  
Project sponsors must meet affirmative marketing requirements.

**B. Summary of Housing Needs Assessment**

The Housing Needs Assessment provides an overview of the current housing situation in the Town of Berkley, the context within which a responsive set of strategies can be developed to address housing needs and meet any production goals set forth by the community. Table I-2 summarizes the demographic and housing characteristics in Berkley and compares this information to that of Bristol County, and the state.

□ *Population and Housing Growth*

From 1980 to 2000, Berkley’s population increased by 3,018 residents involving a growth rate that more than doubled the population over this period – 110.5% population growth 1980 – 2000.

Population projections estimate that by 2020 Berkley’s population will be up to 8,469, representing a 47.31% rate of growth and that at buildout the population will be above 12,000.

In regard to housing growth, between 1990 and 2000 the number of units increased by 474, a 33.6% rate of growth, and since then about another 314 units have been added to the housing stock. Buildout projections prepared by SRPEDD suggest that at buildout Berkley may have about another 1,900

units added to the housing stock based on current zoning.<sup>1</sup> [2207 – 314 (2001-2008)]

□ Level of Ownership

Out of 1,885 total housing units in 2000, Berkley had 1,843 occupied units, of which 1,752 or 93.0% were owner-occupied while the remaining 91 units or 4.7% were rental units. These figures represent a considerably higher level of owner-occupancy than that for Plymouth County as a whole with 67.3% and for the Boston region with 61.7% owner-occupancy.

□ Housing Types

The 2000 census indicated that 1,774 units or 94.1% of all units were single-family detached homes, much higher than the 53.7% level for the County and the 52.4% level for the state as a whole. Berkley has a slightly larger supply of mobile homes than Bristol County, representing 2.8% of the housing stock in 2000 compared to 1.5% for the County and 0.9% for the state. While mobile homes tend to be quite affordable, averaging about \$130,000 in Berkley, they cannot be counted as part of the Subsidized Housing Inventory because they are not considered permanent housing.

□ Age of Population

In comparison to Bristol County and the state in general, Berkley's population tends to on average be a bit younger, with a median age of 34.7 years as opposed to 38.2 years for the county and 36.5 years for the state. Nevertheless, the town has a greater proportion of school-age children with 33.0% of the population less than 19 years of age versus 25.7% and 23.6% for the county and state, respectively. However, the town has a slightly smaller number of those aged 20 to 34 who are forming new families and entering the labor market, 18.0% of all households in Berkley but 19.4% for the county and 21% for the state

*The escalating costs of homeownership are likely creating barriers for this age group, making it increasingly more likely that those who were raised in Berkley will be less able to raise their own families locally.*

Berkley also had a somewhat higher percentage of those 35 to 44 years of age who are entering the prime of their earning potential and better able to afford the higher cost of housing, 22.0 % as opposed to 15.4% for the county and 16.7% for the state. Berkley also has a equal percentage of those 45 to 54 years of age who are entering the prime of their earning potential and

---

<sup>1</sup> These build-out projections that were prepared by the state in the end of 1999 and updated by SRPEDD in 2005, identified undeveloped land without wetlands, floodplains and other restrictions, and estimate future growth potential and infrastructure needs based on existing zoning.

better able to afford the higher cost of housing, 14.0 % for the town, 14.0 % for the county and 13.8% for the state. The town also had a significantly lower portion of seniors 65 years of age or older at 6.5% versus 13.6 % for the county and 13.5% for the state.

#### □ Types of Housing

Berkley also has a significantly lower proportion of non-family households, 15.0% versus 32.4% for the county and 36% for the state. A non-family householder is a householder living alone or with non-relatives. This correlates to the relatively higher number of children in Berkley and the somewhat higher average household size of 3.11 persons as opposed to 3.08 persons in Bristol County and 2.51 persons in the state.

In the decade from 1990 to 2000, *Berkley shows itself as a family-oriented community*. The school age children age group grew by 300% and the 45 to 54 years old population grew by 469%. By 2000, Berkley was a family community: 85% of the households were families, while 74% of the households were married-couple families. Over half of the households included individuals less than 19 years of age (51.3 %).

Fifteen percent of the households were nonfamily households, either the householder living alone (10.8 %) or householder 65 years and older (3.9%).

#### □ Income Levels

Median income levels per the 2000 census were fairly comparable to those of the county or state, \$66,295 in Berkley as opposed to \$54,070 and \$50,502 for the county and state, respectively. Additionally, the percentage of those earning less than \$25,000 annually was significantly less in Berkley, 6.6%, while it was 24.3% for the county and 24.6% for the state. Berkley did have a somewhat lower proportion of residents living in poverty, 2.5%, while the percentage for the county was 10.2% and state was 9.0%. There were also lower proportions of Berkley residents earning more than \$100,000, 18.1% as opposed to 21.5% for the county and 17.7% for the state.

#### □ Housing Market Conditions

The 2000 median sales price of one-family homes provides a comparison of the Berkley housing market to that of Bristol County and the state, with relatively similar market values -- \$235,154 for Berkley, \$323,900 for the county and \$185,700 for the state. Since that time housing prices have nearly doubled as the median sales price of one-family homes as of the end of 2008 was \$333,500. To afford this price a household would have to earn about \$123,792, significantly higher than adjusted median income levels of about \$62,900. Escalating housing prices are also reflected in increased property taxes, which in combination with rising energy bills and insurance costs; cause a serious financial strain on long-term residents, particularly those with fixed incomes.

□ Supply of Affordable Housing

Recent sales data from the Multiple Listing Service for single-family homes indicated few if any single-family homes listed for under \$200,000 with the exception of mobile homes that would be affordable to low- and moderate-income households. Additionally, the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development's most recent data on the Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory states that Berkley had 1,870 year-round housing units, of which 15 were counted as affordable, representing 0.8 % of the year-round housing stock. Assuming future housing growth, the 10% state goal under Chapter 40B is a moving target and ultimately the required minimum number of year-round units will increase over time.

□ Supply of Workforce "affordable" Housing

Workforce housing may be defined as housing affordable to households with incomes that are 80 % – 120 % of the median household income. Of the 1,885 total households counted in 2000, approximately 28% had household incomes within the 80% - 120% of Berkley's median income. In 2000, the median sales price was \$285,154 which is above the \$132,590 to 198,885 price range that would be affordable to this income group. The following shows that there are some sizable differences from the region and the state:

|                | <u>Berkley</u> | <u>Bristol County</u> | <u>State</u> |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Median income  | \$66,295       | \$54,070              | \$50,502     |
| 80% of median  | \$53,036       | \$43,256              | \$40,402     |
| 120% of median | \$79,554       | \$64,884              | \$60,602     |

**Table I-1 Summary of Key Demographic and Housing Characteristics Town of Berkley, Bristol County and the State, 2000**

| <b>Characteristics:</b>                | <b>Berkley</b> | <b>Bristol County</b> | <b>Massachusetts</b> |
|--|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Household Characteristics, 2000</b> |                |                       |                      |
| Total Population                       | 5,749          | 543,146               | 6,349,097            |
| % less than 19 years                   | 33.0%          | 25.7%                 | 23.6%                |
| % 20 to 34 years                       | 18.0%          | 19.4%                 | 21.0%                |
| % 35 to 44 years                       | 22.0%          | 15.4%                 |                      |
| % 45 to 54 years                       | 14.0%          | 14.0%                 | 13.8%                |
| % 55 to 64 years                       | 7.0%           | 11.0%                 |                      |
| % 65 years or more                     | 6.5            | 13.6%                 | 13.5%                |
| Median age                             | 34.7 years     | 38.2 years            | 36.5 years           |
| % of Non-family households             | 15.0%          | 32.40%                | 36%                  |
| Average household size                 | 3.11 persons   | 3.08 persons          | 2.51 persons         |
| Median income                          | 66,295         | 54,070                | 50,502               |
| Individuals in poverty                 | 2.50%          | 10.20%                | 9.0%                 |
| % earning less than \$25,000           | 6.60%          | 24.30%                | 24.6%                |
| % earning more than 100,000            | 18.10%         | 21.50%                | 17.7%                |
| <b>Housing Characteristics</b>         |                |                       |                      |
| % Occupied housing                     | 97.80%         | 88.4%                 | 93.2%                |
| % Owner-occupied                       | 95.10%         | 67.3%                 | 61.7%                |
| % Renter-occupied                      | 4.90%          | 36.2%                 | 38.3%                |
| % Seasonal or Occasional use           |                |                       | 3.6%                 |
| % in single-family detached structures | 94.11%         | 53.7%                 | 52.4%                |
| % Mobile homes                         | 2.76%          | 1.5%                  |                      |
| Median sale price                      | 285,154        | 323,900               | 185,700              |
| Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000       |                |                       |                      |

This data confirms that Berkley is a place that has attracted families who typically have been able to purchase their own homes. This information also shows some sizable differences from and similarities with the region overall and the state.

### C. Housing Challenges

Though the Town of Berkley recognizes the need to identify areas within the community that would support a variety of housing choices to current residents it is also aware of the many constraints involved.

□ Zoning

Zoning By-law ordinances are enacted by communities to control the use of land including the patterns of housing development. Like most communities Berkley's Zoning By-law incorporates one and one-half (1 ½) acre or two (2) acre lot size with a minimum of two hundred feet (200') frontage for residential uses. Most likely this type of zoning was put in place to preserve the town's ability to maintain farming, and accommodate septic systems in compliance with Title V requirements, this could potentially constrain the construction of affordable housing and promote sprawl.

□ Infrastructure and Environmental Concerns

The Town of Berkley has a wealth of natural and biological resources including aquifers, rivers, streams, natural habitats, wetlands, cranberry bogs, farm field and soils of significance identified by the state. Most residents are aware of the town's treasures and would like to see them preserved.

Berkley also has extremely limited municipally supplied water and no public sewer services, while most of the community is reliant on wells and septic systems, controlling the density of development. While regulations to development due to wetlands, aquifers, priority and estimated habitat, septic systems and private well siting are important they pose challenges to the amount of buildable land, limiting the amount of development allowed, while increasing cost and time.

□ Transportation

To accommodate new development, SRPEDD build-out projections anticipate that another 44 miles of roadway will be created. It is important that the town evaluates and selects appropriate measures to relieve the impact of growth on traffic. Presently there are two major roadways that service the Town of Berkley. Route 24 is the major thoroughfare that runs north to south throughout the town and Route 140 though not located within the town it is closely situated on the outskirts. Currently public transportation is limited and residents must rely on their automobiles, another burden for those with limited incomes.

□ School Enrollment

Those enrolled in school (nursery through graduate school) totaled 1,648 or 28.7% of the town's population. Those enrolled in nursery school through high school totaled 1,446, or 25.1% of those enrolled in school. These figures represent a significant increase in school enrollment from 1990, when there were 1,082 students enrolled in local schools. Though it is difficult to place an exact cost associated with educating an individual student, it was found to be within the range of

\$6,826 per student for the Berkley Public Schools K-8 and \$7,561 with transportation. The Somerset High School Tuition rate for 2009-2010 is \$7,788 per student without any special need requirements, and \$8,564 with transportation. The price for the 2008-2009 was a slightly higher rate per student (\$7,862 per student).

Availability of Subsidy Funds

The availability of subsidized funding for affordable housing is increasingly difficult to obtain. Affordable housing preservation and production as well as rental have suffered budget cuts over the past few years making it extremely difficult to compete for and obtain funding that maybe less available. Berkley has not passed the Community Preservation Act that could help provide an important funding mechanism for affordable housing, and preservation of open space preservation and historical sites.

Community Perceptions

Affordable housing conjures images of potential plunge in property values, increased crime, and neglect. On the other, with increase real estate prices, there exists a need to provide affordable housing. Many professionals, college aged children, and elderly of resident's and their family members may not be able to afford to live or remain in the community.

It will be necessary to engage the community in discussion on affordable housing and present information related to the issue to dispel myths and to help solidify local support. These outreach efforts are imperative to supplying the community with much needed affordable housing for the future.

## **D. Recommendations/Conclusions**

Based on Housing Needs Assessment, there are a number of key indicators that suggest there are significant local needs for affordable housing. The Town is addressing a number of unsatisfied housing needs, including those for:

- 1) *Elderly people of limited means and those interested in downsizing from larger homes;***
- 2) *Young people who grew up in Berkley and are now returning as renters or first-time homebuyers;***
- 3) *People who work for the Town; would like to live in this community, but can't afford to do so;***
- 4) *People with close family ties to current Berkley homeowners, such as parents who would like to be close to their children;***

- 5) ***Adding to the housing stock in a way that is compatible with the fabric, architecture, natural resources, and services of existing neighborhoods;***
- 6) ***Balance growth with protecting the character and natural resources of the community.***

## **II. HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

### **A. Demographic Characteristics**

#### *1. Populations Growth*

Table II-1 presents US Census population data from 1980 through 2000 for the Town of Berkley and its neighbors. Berkley's total population was 5,749 according to the US Census, an increase of 1,512 or 26.3% since the 1990 census population count. Berkley is the least populated area compared to its neighbors though its population growth rate from 1990 to 2000 was the highest. During this time period Freetown experienced a decline in population of -50 or -0.6% a rather stark difference.

**Table II-1 Population Growth**

| <b>Municipality</b> | <b>1980</b>  | <b>1990</b>  | <b>2000</b>  | <b>% of Change</b> |                  |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------|
|                     |              |              |              | <b>1980-1990</b>   | <b>1990-2000</b> |
| Berkley             | <b>2,731</b> | <b>4,237</b> | <b>5,749</b> | <b>55.1%</b>       | <b>35.7%</b>     |
| Dighton             | 5,352        | 5,631        | 6,175        | 5.21%              | 9.7%             |
| Somerset            | 18,813       | 17,655       | 18,234       | -6.2%              | 3.3%             |
| Freetown            | 7,058        | 8,522        | 8,472        | 20.7%              | -0.6%            |
| Lakeville           | 5,931        | 7,785        | 7,821        | 31.3%              | 0.5%             |
| Taunton             | 45,001       | 49,832       | 55,976       | 10.7%              | 12.3%            |

*\*Source: SRPEDD*

Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District (SRPEDD) have prepared population projections for towns in their districts. Table II-2 shows population growth estimated for Berkley and its four neighbors and the Town of Somerset (due to consideration of the need for a Regional High School) for 2000, 2010, 2020, and 2030. Berkley's population is estimated to grow 23.7% from 5,749 in 2000 to 2010, and 19.1% from 7,109 in 2010 to 2020. Its 2020 population is estimated to grow 16.1% from 8,469 by 2030. Lakeville is projected to grow by 50% over the last 10 years and then taper off by 2030 to 14.1%. While

both Dighton and Freetown are projected to grow at a similar rate over the next twenty-years.

**Table II-2 Projected Growth**

| Municipality | 2000         | 2010         | 2020         | 2030         | 2000-2010    | % of Change  |              |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|              |              |              |              |              |              | 2010-2020    | 2020-2030    |
| Berkley      | <b>5,749</b> | <b>7,109</b> | <b>8,469</b> | <b>9,829</b> | <b>23.7%</b> | <b>19.1%</b> | <b>16.1%</b> |
| Dighton      | 6,175        | 7,195        | 8,215        | 9,235        | 16.5%        | 14.2%        | 12.4%        |
| Freetown     | 8,472        | 9,642        | 10,812       | 11,982       | 13.8%        | 12.1%        | 10.8%        |
| Lakeville    | 7,821        | 11,741       | 13,661       | 15,581       | 50.1%        | 16.4%        | 14.1%        |
| Taunton      | 55,976       | 60,616       | 65,256       | 69,896       | 8.3%         | 7.7%         | 7.1%         |
| Somerset     | 18,234       | 19,078       | 19,926       | 20,779       | 4.6%         | 4.4%         | 4.3%         |

\*Source: SRPEDD

SRPEDD also updated the 2005 Buildout Analysis in 2007 as presented in Table II-3.

**Table II-3 Berkley Buildout Analysis**

| <b>BUILD-OUT IMPACTS SUMMARY</b>                             |            |
|--|------------|
| Total area (acres)   | 12,131     |
| Buildable Land (acres)                                       | 8,637      |
| No constraints   |            |
| Single partial constraints                                   |            |
| Multiple partial constraints                                 |            |
| Non-Buildable Land, Water (acres)                            | 3,494      |
| New Residential Lots   | 1,913      |
| New Dwelling Units   | 5,164      |
| New Residential Subdivision Roads (miles)                    | 44         |
| New Commercial/Industrial Floor Area (sq. feet)              | 20,208,035 |
| Additional Residential Water Use (gallons/day)               | 1,133,114  |
| Additional Commercial/Industrial Water Use (gallons/day) [3] | 1,515,603  |
| Additional Municipal Solid Waste, Recycled (tons)            | 2,237      |
| Additional Municipal Solid Waste, Non-Recycled (tons)        | 5,514      |
| Additional Residents   | 14,965     |
| Additional Students  | 2,910      |

\*Source SRPEDD

2. *Sex and Age Distribution*

The Town of Berkley's population, sex, and age characteristics are displayed in Table II-4. Females and males were virtually equal shares of the total population of 5,749 at close to 50% in 2000. This has remained constant from 1990 to 2000.

**Table II-4 Population, Sex, and Age Characteristics  
Town of Berkley, 1990 & 2000**

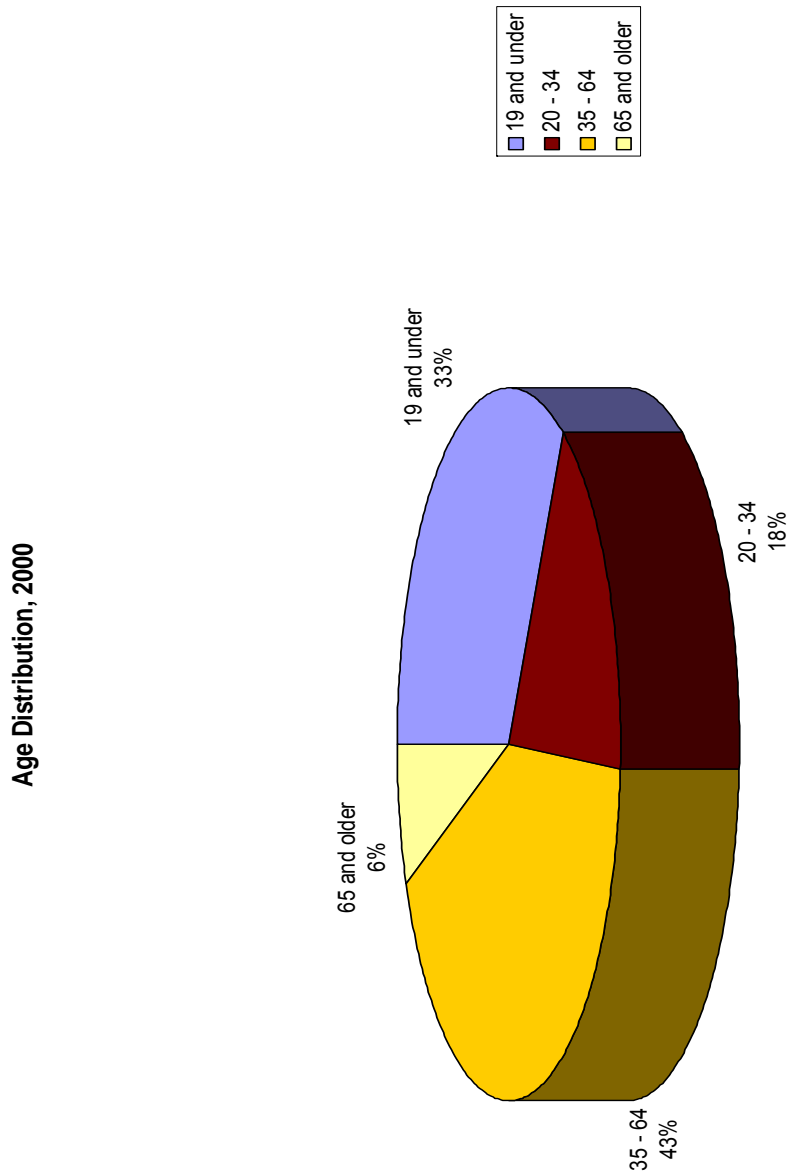
|                           | 1990  | %     |                           | 2000  | %     | Percent Change<br>1990 - 2000 |
|---------------------------|-------|-------|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Total Population</b>   | 4,237 |       |                           | 5,749 |       | 35.7                          |
| <b>Sex</b>                |       |       |                           |       |       |                               |
| <b>Male</b>               | 2,104 | 49.7% |                           | 2,855 | 49.7% | 35.7                          |
| <b>Female</b>             | 2,133 | 50.3% |                           | 2,894 | 50.3% | 35.7                          |
| <b>Age</b>                |       |       |                           |       |       |                               |
| <b>Under 5 years</b>      | 397   | 9.4%  | <i>Under 5 years</i>      | 449   | 7.8%  | 13.1                          |
| <b>5 to 19 years</b>      | 357   | 8.4%  | <b>5 to 19 years</b>      | 1,427 | 24.7% | <b>300.0</b>                  |
| <b>20 to 24 years</b>     | 181   | 4.3%  | <i>20 to 24 years</i>     | 219   | 3.8%  | 21.0                          |
| <b>25 to 44 years</b>     | 1,653 | 39.0% | <i>25 to 44 years</i>     | 2,068 | 36.0% | 25.0                          |
| <b>45 to 54 years</b>     | 143   | 3.4%  | <b>45 to 54 years</b>     | 813   | 14.1% | <b>468.5</b>                  |
| <b>55 to 59 years</b>     | 143   | 3.4%  | <i>55 to 59 years</i>     | 246   | 4.3%  | 72.0                          |
| <b>60 to 64 years</b>     | 134   | 3.2%  | <i>60 to 64 years</i>     | 154   | 2.7%  | 14.9                          |
| <b>65 to 74 years</b>     | 157   | 3.7%  | <i>65 to 74 years</i>     | 231   | 4.0%  | 47.1                          |
| <b>75 to 84 years</b>     | 73    | 1.7%  | <i>75 to 84 years</i>     | 111   | 1.9%  | 52.1                          |
| <b>85 + years</b>         | 20    | 0.5%  | <i>85 + years</i>         | 31    | 0.5%  | 55.0                          |
| <b>Under 19 years</b>     | 754   | 17.8% | <i>Under 19 years</i>     | 1646  | 28.6% | 118.3                         |
| <b>65 years and older</b> | 250   | 5.9%  | <i>65 years and older</i> | 373   | 6.5%  | 49.2                          |

Source: U.S. Census, 1990 and 2000

Changes from 1990 to 2000, if they continue to occur, demonstrate a couple of trends. First, there was a significant increase in children ages 5 to 19 years of age from 357 in 1990 to 1,427 in 2000, approximately a 300 % increase. Those over 65 increased as well, from 250 in 1990 to 373 in 2000, a 21.0% increase. The over 85 population increased slightly from 20 in 1990 to 31 in 2000. The population of younger adults entering the workforce and forming their own families, age 20 to 44 years of age remained fairly stable in Berkley from 1990 to 2000 comprising about 25% while the more established 45 to 54 age group increased by 469 %. This age group, being more established in the workforce, is more able to own a home and support a family. See Figure II-1 for the age distribution in Berkley.

Figure II-1: Age Distribution

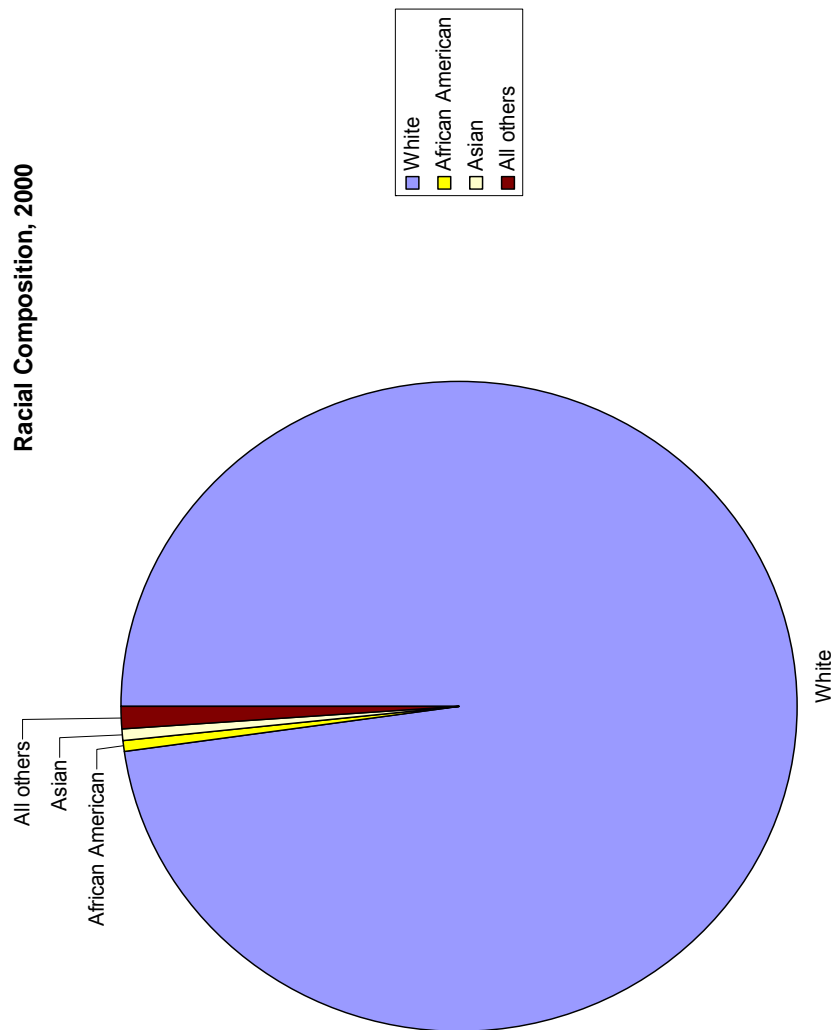
Source: U.S. Census 2000



3. Race

Berkley is not racially diverse. In 2000 Berkley's racial composition was 97.8% White, 0.6% African American, 0.4% Asian, and 1.2% all other races. (See Figure II-2) Racial diversity has not changed since 1990. *Source: U.S. Census 2000*

Figure II-2: Racial Composition



4. *Household Composition*

Town of Berkley had a total of 1,843 households in 2000; about 85% in family households and 15% in non-family households. The average household size was 3.11 persons and average family size was 3.35 persons. Households with children under 18 made up 51.3% of the total households with individuals age 65 and over comprising 14.9% of total households

**Table II-5 Town of Berkley Household Composition 2000**

|   | Number | Percent |
|---|--------|---------|
| <b>Total Households</b>                             | 1,843  | 100.0%  |
| Family Households                                   | 1,567  | 85.0%   |
| Family Households with own children under 18        | 868    | 47.1%   |
| Married-couple family                               | 1,361  | 73.8%   |
| Married-couple family with own children under 18    | 755    | 41.0%   |
| Female Head of Household                            | 139    | 7.5%    |
| Female Head of Household with own children under 18 | 74     | 4.0%    |
| Non-family Households                               | 276    | 15.0%   |
| Householder living alone                            | 199    | 10.8%   |
| Householder 65 years and older                      | 71     | 3.9%    |
| Households with individuals under 18 year           | 946    | 51.3%   |
| Households with individuals 65 years and older      | 275    | 14.9%   |
| Average household size                              | 3.11   |         |
| Average family size                                 | 3.35   |         |

Source: US Census, 2000

Source: U.S. Census 2000

As shown in Table II-6, the number of households in Berkley grew over 33.6% from 1990 to 2000 revealing the highest rate of growth of neighboring communities. For example the Town of Lakeville saw a high rate of growth by 16.7%, followed by Dighton at 14.3%.

**Table II-6 Total Households 1990-2000**

|                | 1990         | 2000         | Difference | % of Change   | Annual Rate of Growth |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Berkley</b> | <b>1,411</b> | <b>1,885</b> | <b>474</b> | <b>33.60%</b> | <b>3.36%</b>          |
| Dighton        | 1,994        | 2,280        | 286        | 14.30%        | 1.43%                 |
| Freetown       | 2,906        | 3,029        | 123        | 4.20%         | 0.42%                 |
| Lakeville      | 3,138        | 3,662        | 524        | 16.70%        | 1.67%                 |
| Taunton        | 20,281       | 22,908       | 2,627      | 13.00%        | 1.30%                 |

5. *Income Distribution*

The median household income in Berkley in 2000 was \$66,295, up from \$43,008 in 1990.

**Table II-7 Household Income Distribution  
1990 - 2000**

|                                   | 1990   |         | 2000   |         | 1990<br>to<br>2000 |
|-----------------------------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------------------|
|                                   | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | %<br>Change        |
| <b>Households</b>                 | 1,348  | 100%    | 1,848  | 100%    | 37.1%              |
| Less than 10,000                  | 94     | 7%      | 69     | 3.7%    | -26.6%             |
| 10,000 to 14,999                  | 52     | 3.9%    | 49     | 2.7%    | -5.8%              |
| 15,000 to 24,999                  | 99     | 7.3%    | 127    | 6.9%    | 28.3%              |
| 25,000 to 34,999                  | 241    | 17.9%   | 72     | 3.9%    | -70.1%             |
| 35,000 to 49,999                  | 315    | 23.4%   | 278    | 15.0%   | -                  |
| 50,000 to 74,999                  | 372    | 27.6%   | 518    | 28.0%   | 39.25%             |
| 75,000 to 99,999                  | 128    | 9.0%    | 436    | 23.6%   | 240.6%             |
| 100,000 to 149,999                | 36     | 2.7%    | 260    | 14.1%   | 622.2%             |
| 150,000 or more                   | 11     | 0.8%    | 39     | 2.1%    | 254.5%             |
| Median household income (dollars) | 43,008 | (X)     | 66,295 | (X)     | 54.1               |

**\*Source: US Census Bureau**

*(X) Not applicable*

Between 1990 and 2000 there were decreases in the numbers of households income ranges for those earning between \$10,000 to \$25,000 and \$35,000 to \$50,000. Households earning more than \$75,000 increased by nearly 40% in the ten year period between 1990 and 2000. The data reveals a change in higher levels income distribution within the Town of Berkley than even within the ten years prior.

Despite increasing household wealth, there still remains a population living in Berkley with very limited financial means. Of the 1,885 total households counted in 2000, approximately 13% earned under \$25,000. Public agencies define this income range as very low-income levels, within 50% of the area median income. Based on HUD income information, 25.3% of Berkley households (or about 478 households) would have likely qualified for housing assistance as their incomes were at or below 80% of the area median income defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

6. *Employment*

The 2000 census indicates that 33.1% of Berkley's workers were involved in management, professional or related occupations. The remaining majority were employed in education, sales, office, and service occupations including manufacturing and retail: Education (18.0%), Sales and Office (24.8%). Service (13.0%), Manufacturing (17.0%), and Retail Trade (12.5%). While 75.9% were private wage and salary workers, another 16.6% were government workers, and 7.5% were self-employed. Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining captured 2.4% of the industrial workforce

7. *Poverty Status*

Table II-8 shows 1999 poverty data for Berkley.

**Table II-8 Poverty Status in 1999  
Berkley, MA**

|   | # Below Poverty Level | % Below Poverty Level |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Families</b>                               | 11                    | 0.7%                  |
| With related children under 18 years          | 5                     | 0.05%                 |
| With related children under 5 years           | 0                     | 0%                    |
| <b>Families with female head of household</b> | 0                     | 0%                    |
| With related children under 18 years          | 0                     | 0%                    |
| With related children under 5 years           | 0                     | 0%                    |
| <b>Individuals</b>                            | 145                   | 2.5%                  |
| 18 years and over                             | 122                   | 3%                    |
| 65 years and older                            | 28                    | 7.6%                  |
| Related children under 18 years               | 10                    | 0.6%                  |
| Related children 5 to 17 years                | 10                    | 0.8%                  |
| Unrelated individuals 15 years and over       | 114                   | 24.8%                 |
| *Source: US Census 2000                       |                       |                       |

Table II-8 shows poverty status for Berkley and its neighboring communities. Interestingly, Berkley has no statistics for Female householders with No Husband Present under the poverty level. Typically this category has the highest poverty levels.

8. *Disability Status*

Of the 2000 population age 5 to 20 years old, 83 or 5.5% had some disability. Moreover, of the population age 21 to 64, 488 or 14.3% claimed a disability, but

73.8% of this group was employed leaving nearly 25% who were unemployed, likely due to disability. In regard to the population 65 years of age or older, 160 or 43% claimed some type of disability. The levels of disability in the Town of Berkley were somewhat lower overall than the Boston region as a whole were 7.9% of those five to 20 years of age claimed a disability, 16.5% of those 21 to 64 claimed a disability (38.2% of whom were not employed), and more than one-third, 37.1% of those over 65 were disabled.

#### 9. *Residency in 1995*

Just under one-fourth of the population in Berkley (26.7% or 1,416 residents) moved to a new residence from 1995 to 2000. Of these, 17.9% came from within Bristol County, 8.8% came from a different county, with 7.5% coming from within Massachusetts and 1.7% coming from a different state or elsewhere, representing somewhat less mobility than the county as a whole, where 36.5% of all households moved during this same time period.

It is important to note that housing turnover drives up housing prices in an escalating real estate market, and typically the buyers are more affluent than the sellers, fueling demographic changes in the community over time. This suggests that it is useful to find ways to reduce housing turnover, to maintain the affordability in the existing housing stock to the greatest extent possible, and to help those who want to remain in town afford to do so.

#### 10. *Education Attainment*

In 2000 nearly all of the adults residing in Berkley (85.7% of those age 25 years and older) had a high school diploma or higher, and 20.8% had at least a Bachelors degree. These levels are comparable with the 2000 figures for at least college attainment of 19.9% for Bristol County and 33.2% for the State. These figures represent some improvement in overall educational attainment from 1990 of 75.2% with a high school diploma or higher and 14.1% with at least a college degree.

Those enrolled in school (nursery through graduate school) totaled 1,648 or 28.7% of the town's population. Those enrolled in nursery school through high school totaled 1,446, or 87.8% of those enrolled in school. These figures represent a fairly significant increase (+243) in school enrollment from 1990, when there were 903 students enrolled in local schools.

## **B. Housing Characteristics**

Table II-9 shows 1990 and 2000 US Census data for Berkley's housing stock. In 2000, Berkley had 1,885 housing units, predominantly single family detached structures (94.1%). During the 1990's Berkley added 494 units to its housing stock, with a loss of 20 rental units. Owner occupied housing units comprised 93.0% of the occupied housing units and rental units were a relatively small

segment at only 5% of all occupied units. Less than 2.7% of Berkley's housing stock was in multi-family dwellings.

**Table II-9 Housing Characteristics  
1990 - 2000**

|   | 1990   | 2000  | Difference | % Growth | Annual Growth |
|---|--------|-------|------------|----------|---------------|
| <b>Total Housing Units</b>                      | 1,411  | 1,885 | 474        | 33.6%    | 3.36%         |
| <b>Total Occupied Housing Units</b>             | 1,352  | 1,843 | 491        | 36.3%    | 3.63%         |
| <b>Occupied Ownership Units</b>                 | 1,241  | 1,752 | 511        | 41.2%    | 4.12%         |
| <i>% of Occupied HUs</i>                        | 88.00% | 93.0% |            |          |               |
| <i>Average Household size of Occupied Units</i> | 3.19   | 3.15  |            |          |               |
| <b>Occupied Rental Units</b>                    | 111    | 91    | -20        | -18.0%   | -1.8%         |
| <i>% of Occupied HUs</i>                        | 8.2%   | 4.7%  |            |          |               |
| <i>Average Household size of Occupied Units</i> | 2.51   | 2.35  |            |          |               |
| <b>Vacancy Rate</b>                             |        |       |            |          |               |
| Ownership Units                                 | 1.5    | 0.5   | -1         |          |               |
| Rental Units                                    | 4.3    | 4.2   | -0.1       |          |               |
| <b>Units in structure</b>                       |        |       |            |          |               |
| 1-Unit Detached                                 | 1,280  | 1,774 | 494        | 38.6%    | 3.86%         |
| <i>% of All HUs</i>                             | 90.70% | 94.1% |            |          |               |
| 1-Unit Attached                                 | 5      | 21    | 16         |          |               |
| <i>% of All HUs</i>                             | 0.40%  | 1.1%  |            |          |               |
| 2 to 4 Units                                    | 64     | 30    | -34        | -53.1%   | -5.31%        |
| <i>% of All HUs</i>                             | 4.5    | 1.6%  |            |          |               |
| 5 to 9 Units                                    | 0      | 0     | 0          | 0.0%     |               |
| <i>% of All HUs</i>                             | 0.0%   | 0.0%  |            |          |               |
| 10 or more Units                                | 0      | 0     | 0          | 0.0%     |               |
| <i>% of All HUs</i>                             | 0.0%   | 0.0%  |            |          |               |
| Mobile Home, Trailer or Other                   | 62     | 60    | -2         | -3.2%    | -0.32%        |
| <i>% of All HUs</i>                             | 4.40%  | 1.6%  |            |          |               |
| <b>Vacant Housing Units</b>                     | 59     | 42    | -17        | -28.8%   | -2.88%        |
| <i>% of All HUs</i>                             | 4.20%  | 2.2%  |            |          |               |

Source: US Census Bureau

The vacancy rate for ownership units was 0.5% in 2000, a decrease from 1.5% in 1990. The vacancy rate for rental units decreased from 4.3% in 1990 to 4.2% in 2000, however any vacancy level of less than 5% represents tight market conditions.

Table II-10 compares Berkley's housing characteristics to those of neighboring communities. Source: US Census Bureau

**Table II-10 Housing Units, Occupancy and Tenure  
1990 – 2000**

| <b>Berkley</b>                |               |                |               |                |                       |
|-------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------|
|                               | <b>1990</b>   |                | <b>2000</b>   |                | <b>Percent Change</b> |
|                               | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> |                       |
| <b>Total Housing Units</b>    | <b>1,411</b>  |                | <b>1,885</b>  |                | <b>33.6%</b>          |
| Occupied Housing Units        | 1,352         | 95.8%          | 1,843         | 97.8%          | 36.3%                 |
| Vacant Housing Units          | 59            | 4.2%           | 42            | 2.2%           | -28.8%                |
|                               |               | 100.0%         |               | 100.0%         |                       |
| <b>Occupied Housing Units</b> |               |                |               |                |                       |
| Owner Occupied                | 1,241         | 91.8%          | 1,752         | 95.1%          | 41.2%                 |
| Renter Occupied               | 111           | 8.2%           | 91            | 4.9%           | -18.0%                |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>1,352</b>  | <b>100.0%</b>  | <b>1,843</b>  | <b>100.0%</b>  | <b>36.3%</b>          |
| <b>Vacant Housing Units</b>   |               |                |               |                |                       |
| Season/Recreational Use       | 21            | 35.6%          | 15            | 35.7%          | -28.6%                |
| Unoccupied                    | 38            | 64.4%          | 27            | 64.3%          | -28.9%                |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>59</b>     | <b>100.0%</b>  | <b>42</b>     | <b>100.0%</b>  | <b>-28.8%</b>         |

| <b>Dighton</b>                |               |                |               |                |                       |
|-------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------|
|                               | <b>1990</b>   |                | <b>2000</b>   |                | <b>Percent Change</b> |
|                               | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> |                       |
| <b>Total Housing Units</b>    | <b>1,994</b>  |                | <b>2,280</b>  |                | <b>14.3%</b>          |
| Occupied Housing Units        | 1,927         | 96.6%          | 2,201         | 96.5%          | 14.2%                 |
| Vacant Housing Units          | 67            | 3.4%           | 79            | 3.5%           | 17.9%                 |
|                               |               | 100.0%         |               | 100.0%         |                       |
| <b>Occupied Housing Units</b> |               |                |               |                |                       |
| Owner Occupied                | 1,606         | 83.3%          | 1,849         | 84.0%          | 15.1%                 |
| Renter Occupied               | 321           | 16.7%          | 352           | 16.0%          | 9.7%                  |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>1,927</b>  | <b>100.0%</b>  | <b>2,201</b>  | <b>100.0%</b>  | <b>14.2%</b>          |
| <b>Vacant Housing Units</b>   |               |                |               |                |                       |
| Season/Recreational Use       | 12            | 17.9%          | 19            | 24.1%          | 58.3%                 |
| Unoccupied                    | 55            | 82.1%          | 60            | 75.9%          | 9.1%                  |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>67</b>     | <b>100.0%</b>  | <b>79</b>     | <b>100.0%</b>  | <b>17.9%</b>          |

**Table II-10 Housing Units, Occupancy and Tenure  
1990 – 2000  
(Continued)**

| <b>Fall River</b>             |               |                |               |                |                       |
|-------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------|
|                               | <b>1990</b>   |                | <b>2000</b>   |                | <b>Percent Change</b> |
|                               | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> |                       |
| <b>Total Housing Units</b>    | <b>40,375</b> |                | <b>41,857</b> |                | 3.7%                  |
| Occupied Housing Units        | 34,303        | 85.0%          | 38,759        | 92.6%          | 13.0%                 |
| Vacant Housing Units          | 3,072         | 9.0%           | 3,098         | 7.4%           | 0.8%                  |
|                               |               | 100.0%         |               | 100.0%         |                       |
| <b>Occupied Housing Units</b> |               |                |               |                |                       |
| Owner Occupied                | 12,298        | 33.0%          | 13,521        | 34.9%          | 9.9%                  |
| Renter Occupied               | 25,005        | 67.0%          | 25,238        | 65.1%          | 0.9%                  |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>37,303</b> | 100.0%         | <b>38,759</b> | 100.0%         | 3.9%                  |
| <b>Vacant Housing Units</b>   |               |                |               |                |                       |
| Season/Recreational Use       | 62            | 2.0%           | 100           | 3.2%           | 61.3%                 |
| Unoccupied                    | 3,010         | 98.0%          | 2,998         | 96.8%          | -0.4%                 |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>3,072</b>  | 100.0%         | <b>3,098</b>  | 100.0%         | 0.8%                  |

| <b>Freetown</b>               |               |                |               |                |                       |
|-------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------|
|                               | <b>1990</b>   |                | <b>2000</b>   |                | <b>Percent Change</b> |
|                               | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> |                       |
| <b>Total Housing Units</b>    | <b>2,906</b>  |                | <b>3,029</b>  |                | 4.2%                  |
| Occupied Housing Units        | 2,722         | 93.7%          | 2,932         | 96.8%          | 7.7%                  |
| Vacant Housing Units          | 184           | 6.3%           | 97            | 3.2%           | -47.3%                |
|                               |               | 100.0%         |               | 100.0%         |                       |
| <b>Occupied Housing Units</b> |               |                |               |                |                       |
| Owner Occupied                | 2,437         | 89.5%          | 2,611         | 89.1%          | 7.1%                  |
| Renter Occupied               | 285           | 10.5%          | 321           | 10.9%          | 12.6%                 |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>2,722</b>  | 100.0%         | <b>2,932</b>  | 100.0%         | 7.7%                  |
| <b>Vacant Housing Units</b>   |               |                |               |                |                       |
| Season/Recreational Use       | 71            | 38.6%          | 38            | 39.2%          | -46.5%                |
| Unoccupied                    | 113           | 61.4%          | 59            | 60.8%          | -47.8%                |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>184</b>    | 100.0%         | <b>97</b>     | 100.0%         | -47.3%                |

**Table II-10 Housing Units, Occupancy and Tenure  
1990 – 2000  
(Continued)**

| <b>Lakeville</b>              |               |                |               |                |                       |
|-------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------|
|                               | <b>1990</b>   |                | <b>2000</b>   |                | <b>Percent Change</b> |
|                               | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> |                       |
| <b>Total Housing Units</b>    | <b>3,138</b>  |                | <b>3,662</b>  |                | 16.7%                 |
| Occupied Housing Units        | 2,604         | 83.0%          | 3,292         | 89.9%          | 26.4%                 |
| Vacant Housing Units          | 534           | 17.0%          | 370           | 10.1%          | -30.7%                |
|                               |               | 100.0%         |               | 100.0%         |                       |
| <b>Occupied Housing Units</b> |               |                |               |                |                       |
| Owner Occupied                | 2,379         | 91.4%          | 2,978         | 90.5%          | 25.2%                 |
| Renter Occupied               | 225           | 8.6%           | 314           | 9.5%           | 39.6%                 |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>2,604</b>  | 100.0%         | <b>3,292</b>  | 100.0%         | 26.4%                 |
| <b>Vacant Housing Units</b>   |               |                |               |                |                       |
| Season/Recreational Use       | 407           | 76.2%          | 277           | 74.9%          | -31.9%                |
| Unoccupied                    | 127           | 23.8%          | 93            | 25.1%          | -26.8%                |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>534</b>    | 100.0%         | <b>370</b>    | 100.0%         | -30.7%                |

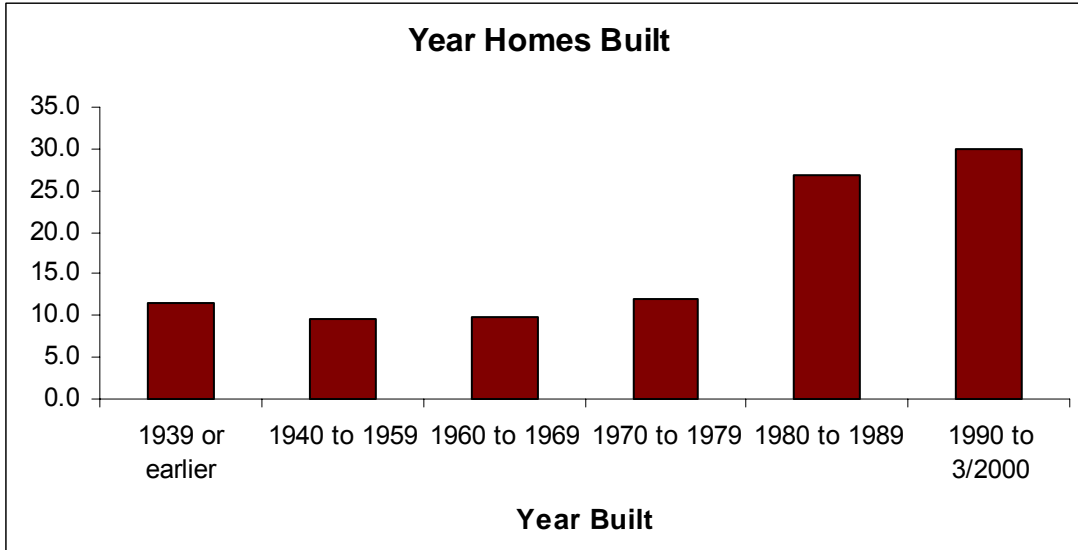
| <b>Taunton</b>                |               |                |               |                |                       |
|-------------------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|-----------------------|
|                               | <b>1990</b>   |                | <b>2000</b>   |                | <b>Percent Change</b> |
|                               | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percent</b> |                       |
| <b>Total Housing Units</b>    | <b>20,281</b> |                | <b>22,908</b> |                | 13.0%                 |
| Occupied Housing Units        | 18,849        | 92.9%          | 22,045        | 96.2%          | 17.0%                 |
| Vacant Housing Units          | 1,432         | 7.1%           | 863           | 3.8%           | -39.7%                |
|                               |               | 100.0%         |               | 100.0%         |                       |
| <b>Occupied Housing Units</b> |               |                |               |                |                       |
| Owner Occupied                | 10,884        | 57.7%          | 13,495        | 61.2%          | 24.0%                 |
| Renter Occupied               | 7,965         | 42.3%          | 8,550         | 38.8%          | 7.3%                  |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>18,849</b> | 100.0%         | <b>22,045</b> | 100.0%         | 17.0%                 |
| <b>Vacant Housing Units</b>   |               |                |               |                |                       |
| Season/Recreational Use       | 28            | 2.0%           | 34            | 3.9%           | 21.4%                 |
| Unoccupied                    | 1,404         | 98.0%          | 829           | 96.1%          | -41.0%                |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>1,432</b>  | 100.0%         | <b>863</b>    | 100.0%         | -39.7%                |

Source: US Census 1990 and 2000

The Figure II-3, below shows that the majority of the housing stock in Berkley (1,075 units) was built in the 1980's and 1990's, 508 and 567 units respectively. With 369 units built before 1969, (219 units built before 1939) Berkley has

relatively recent housing stock. With nearly 56.9% of Berkley's housing stock developed in the past 20 years.

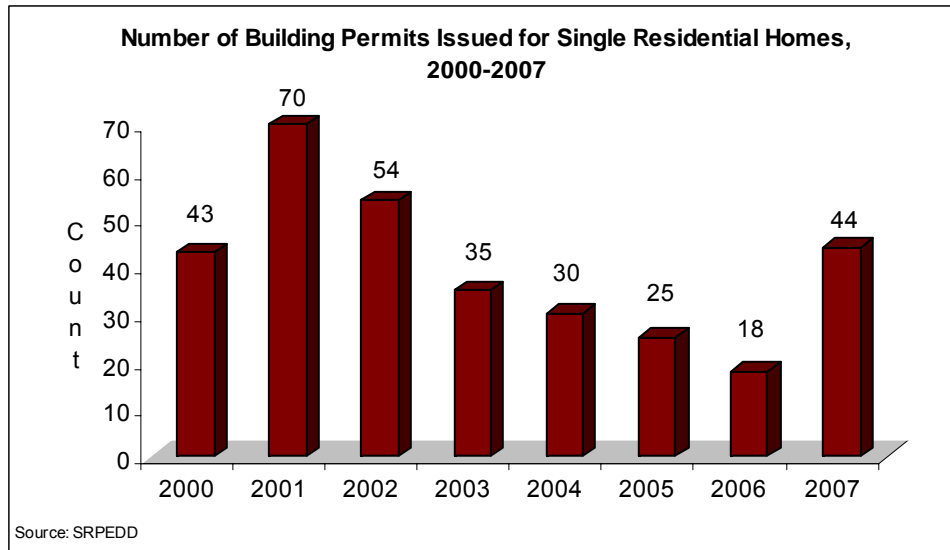
**Figure II-3 Town of Berkley, Year Homes Built**



Source: US Census, 2000

The figure below shows the number of residential building permits issued for the years from 2000 to 2007.

**Figure II-4 Single Family Building Permits, 2000-2007**



Source: SRPEDD

**Table II-11 Building Permits for New Construction  
2000-2007**

|  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Total   | Multi-year |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|---------|------------|
| <b>Single-Family Building Permits Issued</b> |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Permits | Average    |
|  | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |         |            |
| Berkley                                      | 43   | 70   | 49   | 34   | 32   | 25   | 18   | 18   | 289     | 36.1       |
| Dighton                                      | 26   | 25   | 49   | 58   | 38   | 35   | 39   | 31   | 301     | 37.6       |
| Freetown                                     | 48   | 43   | 63   | 63   | 54   | 32   | 26   | 19   | 348     | 43.5       |
| Lakeville                                    | 85   | 74   | 62   | 32   | 68   | 43   | 34   | 44   | 442     | 55.3       |
| Taunton                                      | 106  | 69   | 75   | 76   | 109  | 137  | 89   | 59   | 720     | 90         |
| Somerset                                     | 75   | 48   | 40   | 38   | 41   | 20   | 9    | 7    | 278     | 34.75      |
| <b>Multi-Family Building Permits Issued</b>  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      | Total   | Multi-year |
|  | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | Permits | Average    |
| Berkley                                      | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 8    | 0    | 8       | 1.0        |
| Dighton                                      | 0    | 1    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 2    | 3       | 0.4        |
| Freetown                                     | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0       | 0.0        |
| Lakeville                                    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0       | 0.0        |
| Taunton                                      | 22   | 14   | 10   | 12   | 7    | 22   | 38   | 24   | 149     | 18.6       |
| Somerset                                     | 0    | 14   | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 0    | 14      | 1.75       |

*Source: Data provided by Town/City Offices of Building Inspectors.*

Berkley issued 289 single-family permits for the eight-year period. Only 8 permits for multi-family units were issued. Berkley averaged 36 single-family permits per year. The neighboring communities Dighton (301 permits), Freetown (348 permits), Lakeville (442 permits), Taunton (720 permits) issued more permits between 2000 and 2008 than Berkley.

### **C. Housing Market Conditions**

#### *1. Home Ownership*

There are currently sixty single-family houses on the market for sale. Three are under agreement and scheduled to close. Eighteen homes have closed within the last six months. This equates to a one-year and nine-month inventory, which is considered high. Twenty-two percent (22%) of the homes sold in the last six months were bank owned or short sales.

Table II-12 lists the current market conditions of the Town of Berkley and surrounding communities:

**Table II-12 Summary of Sales Data, 2009**

| <b>Town</b>      | <b>Active</b> | <b>Sold (6 months)</b> | <b>Inventory Time</b> | <b>Average Sales Price</b> |
|------------------|---------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>Berkley</b>   | <b>60</b>     | <b>18</b>              | <b>1.75 years</b>     | <b>267,000</b>             |
| <b>Freetown</b>  | 77            | 20                     | 2 years               | 267,000                    |
| <b>Raynham</b>   | 83            | 50                     | 10 months             | 318,000                    |
| <b>Dighton</b>   | 66            | 19                     | 1.75 years            | 294,000                    |
| <b>Somerset</b>  | 66            | 64                     | 6 months              | 242,000                    |
| <b>Swansea</b>   | 109           | 38                     | 1.5 years             | 247,000                    |
| <b>Westport</b>  | 133           | 34                     | 2 years               | 428,000                    |
| <b>Dartmouth</b> | 66            | 19                     | 1.5 years             | 303,000                    |

*\*Source: Rezendes Real Estate*

Some of the reason the inventory is high because of a lot of “To be built” homes are being offered for sale in Berkley. In addition, six listings are actually condominiums.

**Table II-13 Median Sale Price of One-family Homes, 2000-2008**

| <b>Community</b> | <b>2000</b>    | <b>2001</b>    | <b>2002</b>    | <b>2003</b>    | <b>2004</b>    | <b>2005</b>    | <b>2006</b>    | <b>2007</b>    | <b>2008</b>    |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Berkley</b>   | <b>174,500</b> | <b>172,000</b> | <b>258,713</b> | <b>286,450</b> | <b>292,500</b> | <b>275,000</b> | <b>349,750</b> | <b>349,000</b> | <b>289,000</b> |
| <b>Dighton</b>   | 186,520        | 215,000        | 250,000        | 279,000        | 303,400        | 333,200        | 335,625        | 337,500        | 277,500        |
| <b>Freetown</b>  | 174,900        | 207,450        | 232,000        | 274,000        | 310,000        | 351,750        | 329,000        | 332,000        | 282,000        |
| <b>Lakeville</b> | 211,650        | 221,500        | 269,750        | 309,900        | 347,500        | 359,500        | 345,000        | 366,500        | 366,500        |
| <b>Taunton</b>   | 172,400        | 188,000        | 226,250        | 260,000        | 289,900        | 305,900        | 300,000        | 277,000        | 249,000        |
| <b>Somerset</b>  | 150,000        | 168,000        | 196,250        | 249,000        | 270,000        | 290,000        | 285,000        | 275,000        | 245,000        |

#### *Condominium Sales*

Condominiums are new to the Town of Berkley. They are currently being sold in two locations. One is the sixteen unit project on North Main Street called “Berkley Commons”. The other is a 40B subdivision called “River Bend Estates”. It was approved for 68 units. The first phase of eighteen units is being developed.

The current price range is between \$215,000.00 and \$349,000.00, with an average price of \$290,000.00 and median price of \$315,000. While only twenty-two percent (22%) of the homes currently on the market are condominiums. Over 40% of the homes currently under agreement are condominiums. There are currently two condominiums under agreement and three homes.

## 2. Rental Housing

The 2000 census indicated that there were 91 occupied rental units in Berkley, down from 111 in 1990. The 2000 median gross rent was \$858, 56.9% higher than the 1990 median rent of \$488. In fact it has nearly doubled in ten years. Rental units still remain a small segment of Berkley's housing market, 4.9% smaller than that for Bristol County and the state at 36.2% and 38.3% respectively. Currently there are an above average number of renters who have lost their home; while other homeowners who do not want to occupy their homes have rented it because they feel their home will eventually bounce back to its previous value.

Data on the costs of rental units for 1990 through 2000 is included in Table II-14. Like housing values for homeownership units, rental values tend to be underestimated in the census data and actual market rents are typically much higher. Rentals have ranged from approximately \$1,200.00 to \$1,800.00 per month. One home recently rented for \$1,800.00. ***There has been over a 50% increase in rental cost from 1990 to 2000.***

**Table II-14 Rental Cost 1990 – 2000**

| Gross Rent      | Number | 1990   |       | 2000   |       |
|-----------------|--------|--------|-------|--------|-------|
|                 |        | Number | %     | Number | %     |
| Under \$499     | 55     |        | 60.4% | 0      | 0.0%  |
| \$500 to \$749  | 33     |        | 36.3% | 11     | 15.3% |
| \$750 to \$999  | 1      |        | 1.0%  | 21     | 29.2% |
| \$1,000 or more | 2      |        | 2.2%  | 22     | 30.6% |
| No cash rent    |        |        |       | 18     | 25.0% |
| Total renters   | 91     |        |       | 72     |       |
| Median rent     | 488    |        | (X)   | 858    | (X)   |

Source: US Census Bureau  
(X) Not applicable

## D. Cost Analysis of Existing Market Conditions

As housing prices rise and fall, the affordability gap fluctuates, defined as the gap between the cost of housing and the proportion of income that is reasonable to pay for housing, typically defined as 30% or more of gross income. To afford the median sales price of a single family home in Berkley \$185,500, in 2000 a household would have to earn approximately \$66,816 annually.

A current misnomer regarding the borrowing power being difficult to obtain given the economic conditions may not necessarily be true. If a buyer has good credit and has three and one half percent (3.5%) to put down they can easily obtain a Federal Housing Administration (FHA) loan. Often the closing costs can be added on top of the purchase price. Now in many instances, the eight thousand

dollars (\$8,000.00) federal tax credit being offered can be applied towards the down payment under MassHousing first mortgage loans. The key to buying a home in this market is having good credit. Home values and interest rates have dropped considerably. The affordability of buying a home has improved over the past year. (Rezendes Real Estate, 2009) **The borrowing power is based on the average adjusted median household income of \$66,295, as revealed below and the affordable value of \$165,738 and a home/value income ratio of 4.3.**

**Table II-15 Housing Affordability Gap  
(Median Household Income)**

|         | Medium Household Income | Medium Home Value | Affordable Value* | Home/Value to Income** |
|---------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Berkley | 66,295                  | 285,154           | 165,738           | 4.3                    |

*Source: US Census Bureau*

*\*Affordable Value (2.5 x Income)*

*\*\*Ratio: Home/Value to Income*

Should the market recover and more homes come on the market with sales tags of more than \$300,000, fewer existing longer-term residents will be able to afford them. However, it is important to recognize that those who have owned their homes for some time are likely to have gained significant assets, through the rise in value of their land, despite limited incomes.

**Table II-16 Town of Berkley Housing Burdens, 1990 – 2000**

|  | 1990  | 2000    | Change | % Change |
|--|-------|---------|--------|----------|
| Owned Housing with Mortgage              | 825   | 1,323   | 498    | 60.4%    |
| Monthly Cost of Mortgage (Median)        | \$940 | \$1,255 | \$315  | 33.5%    |
| Owner Costs as >=35% of Household Income | 157   | 219     | 62     | 39.5%    |
| Renter Occupied Units                    | 111   | 72      | -39    | -35.1%   |
| Renter Gross Monthly Rent (Median)       | \$308 | \$858   | \$550  | 178.6%   |
| Gross Rent as >=35% of Household Income  | 9     | 33      | 24     | 266.7%   |

*Source: US Census Bureau*

This data suggests that in the year 2000, 219 households or about 16.5% of all Berkley households were living in housing that by common definition was unaffordable.

On the other hand, in a special report by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), referred to as the CHAS report, that identifies cost burdens by household type and whether they are renters or owners, indicating a high level of cost burdens in Berkley. The data is summarized in Table III-17 and indicated the following:

**There were 80 renter households and 1,862 owner households with cost burdens.**

**There were 162 total households who earned at the extremely low-income end of the range of: at or below 30% of median income, another 89 households earning between 30% and 50% of area median income, this is referred to as very-low income by HUD, and another 164 households who earned between 50% and 80% of area median income.**

**Of the 80 renters, 35 were spending more than 30% of their incomes on housing expenses, and 40 of all renters spent more than 80% of their income.**

**Of the elderly renters all were experiencing housing affordability problems, and 83% of elderly owners were having the same experience.**

**Table II-17 Type of Households by Income Category and Cost Burden\* 2000**

| Type of Household       | Household Income <=30% MFI/ with cost burdens | Household Income <=50% MFI/ with cost burdens | Household Income > 50% to <80%/ with cost burdens | Household Income >80%/ with cost burdens | Total/# with cost burdens |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|--|---------------------------|
| Elderly Renters         | 15/100%                                       | 15/100%                                       | 10/0%   | 30/0%                                    | 30%                       |
| Small Family Renters    | 10/100%                                       | 10/100%                                       | 10/100%   | 10/0%                                    | 30%                       |
| Large Family Renters    | 0/0   | 0/0   | 0/NA  | 0/NA                                     | 0%                        |
| Other Renters           | 10/100%                                       | 10/100%                                       | 0/NA  | 0/NA                                     | 20%                       |
| <b>Total Renters</b>    | 35  | 35  | 20  | 40                                       | 80%                       |
| Elderly Owners          | 83/83%  | 114/58%                                       | 4/0%  | 39/10%                                   | 240%                      |
| Small Family Owners     | 14/100%                                       | 62/100%                                       | 105/14%   | 993/8%                                   | 1174%                     |
| Large Family Owners     | 0/NA  | 29/NA   | 35/71%  | 194/2%                                   | 258%                      |
| Other Owners            | 30/50%  | 60/50%  | NA  | 100/15%                                  | 190%                      |
| <b>Total Owners</b>     | 127   | 265   | 144   | 1326                                     | 1862%                     |
| <b>Total Households</b> | 162   | 300   | 164   | 1366                                     | 1942%                     |

Source: US Dept of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

MFI indicated median family income.

\* Cost burdens indicate that households are spending more than 30% of their income on housing. The CHAS data also provides data on those spending more than 50% of earnings on housing.

## E. Subsidized Housing Inventory

### 1. Current Inventory

The Department of Housing and Community Development counts fifteen units in Berkley that meet affordability requirements under Chapter 40B and are eligible for inclusion in the Subsidized Housing Inventory. Chapter 40B mandates that the town should have 10% of its year-round housing stock as affordable housing which would total 187 units out of its 1,870 year-round housing units (2000 US Census). With a current inventory of eight (0.8%) affordable units, Berkley currently has a deficit of 172 affordable units.

Berkley is not alone in being challenged by the 10% state threshold as most communities in Massachusetts have not surpassed the 10% level; however, Berkley is lagging behind its neighbors as indicated below:

**Table II-18 Level of Affordable Housing**

| Town      | # of Year-round Units | # of Affordable Units | % of Affordable Units |
|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Berkley   | 1,870                 | 15                    | 0.8%                  |
| Dighton   | 2,261                 | 110                   | 4.9%                  |
| Freetown  | 2,991                 | 111                   | 3.7%                  |
| Lakeville | 3,385                 | 287                   | 8.5%                  |
| Taunton   | 22,874                | 1,838                 | 8.0%                  |

Source: Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development  
Date: September 9, 2008

Only the community of Lakeville has been able to produce a percentage large enough to begin to meet the affordable units to meet the state target of 10% of its year round housing stock. Berkley has made the least amount of progress in creating units that are affordable within their community.

The Town's affordable units have been produced through several different entities including the following:

**Table II-19 Department of Housing and Community Development  
Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory, (July, 2009)**

| <i>Project Name</i>        | <i>Address</i>          | <i>Type</i> | <i>Total SHI Units</i> | <i>Affordability Expires</i> | <i>Subsidizing Agency</i> |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Thomas Road</i>         | 36 Thomas Road          | Rental      | 4                      | 2030                         | <i>EOHHS</i>              |
| <i>River Bend Estates</i>  | Berkley Street          | Ownership   | 6                      | 2034                         | <i>MassHousing</i>        |
| <i>Jack Henry Estates</i>  | Off Church Street       | Ownership   | 4                      | Perpetuity                   | <i>MassHousing</i>        |
| <i>Parson's Walk</i>       | Parson's Walk           | Ownership   | 8/9                    | -                            | -                         |
| <i>Field Stone Landing</i> | 42 <sup>nd</sup> Street | Ownership   | 4                      | -                            | -                         |

*\*This data is derived from information provided by the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and subject to change as new information is obtained and use restrictions expire.*

***Town of Berkley Housing Authority***

Currently the Town of Berkley does not have a Housing Authority position; though there is interest in this position as a shared resource with neighboring communities.

***State Agencies***

Currently the State of Massachusetts does not have any public housing units located in the Town of Berkley nor is there any rental assistance available to residents.

**F. Gaps Between Existing Housing Needs and Current Supply**

As the affordable housing data and research have shown in Section II of this document, significant gaps remain between what current residents can afford and the housing that is available. In fact the current homeownership market is outside the means of those earning median to low- and moderate – income households.

The Build-out Analysis that was recently updated by SRPEDD projected that the Town of Berkley could support an additional 5,164 units of housing based on current zoning. Projections therefore indicate that in order to meet the 10% state standard, the estimated population growth would require at least an additional 516 units or so of affordable housing. It would seem like an extremely challenging goal to reach

Based on the Housing Needs Assessment, the Town is addressing a number of unsatisfied housing needs, including those for:

- 1) ***Elderly people of limited means and those interested in downsizing from larger homes;***
- 2) ***Young people who grew up in Berkley and are now returning as renters or first-time homebuyers;***
- 3) ***People who work for the Town; would like to live in this community, but can't afford to do so;***
- 4) ***People with close family ties to current Berkley homeowners, such as parents who would like to be close to their children;***
- 5) ***Adding to the housing stock in a way that is compatible with the fabric, architecture, natural resources, and services of existing neighborhoods;***
- 6) ***Balance growth with protecting the character and natural resources of the community.***

## **G. Constraints to Producing Affordable Housing**

It will be a challenge for the Town of Berkley to create enough housing units to meet the 10% state goal or local needs, particularly in light of current constraints to new development including the following:

### *1. Zoning*

Zoning By-law ordinances are enacted by communities to control the use of land including the patterns of housing development. Berkley's zoning by-law divides the town into two (2) zoning districts. These are Residential (R) and General Business (GB). There are two (2) overlay districts, including the Special Business Overlay (SBO) and the Aquifer Protection District. The current zoning by-laws incorporate one and one-half (1 ½) acre or two (2) acre lot sizes with a minimum of two hundred feet (200') frontage in the Residential District. This type of zoning was put in place to promote the general welfare by protecting the health and safety of its inhabitants while preserving the town's ability to maintain its agricultural heritage. Since Berkley does not have municipal water or sewer services, these lot sizes are also in place to accommodate septic systems and wells in compliance with Title V requirements. While the current zoning does allow for multi-family structures by special permit, it also requires the lot area to be equivalent to one and one-half (1 ½) acres per dwelling unit and may not exceed four (4) dwelling units per building.

These zoning factors could potentially be a barrier to the construction of affordable housing and they do promote sprawl. Other components of the

Zoning By-laws that may be a barrier to the development of affordable housing include:

- Rate of Development

The purpose of this bylaw is to regulate the timing of development in residential subdivision and street lots (ANR/Form A) by limiting the number of building permits to be issued to 10 dwelling units during any 12 month period to a parcel or parcels that are contiguous and in the same ownership. A special permit may be issued if a development of greater than 10 units provides for a “salient housing need”. While traffic conditions and the economic feasibility of the expansion of public services are cited as objectives, a third objective is “to preserve the unique rural character and natural resources of the Town.”

- Accessory Apartments

As adopted, the Town of Berkley’s Accessory Apartment bylaw does not hinder the creation of rental apartments that would help meet the need for affordable rents for younger adults, single persons, or elderly householders. However, neither does it promote the creation of affordable units that would qualify for Local Action Unit approval and be applied towards the town’s 10% of affordable units to meet local need.

Accessory apartment units that may qualify for Local Action Units through the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) cannot be rented to family members and can only be rented to households with income less than 80% of the area median income, cannot be restricted to residents of Berkley, and cannot conflict with fair housing laws. Language that defines the requirements for qualification as Local Action Units under Chapter 40B can be added to the existing bylaw. These changes would then enable the Accessory Apartment bylaw to create units that can be applied to the 10% of units meeting the affordable housing local need.

## 2. *Infrastructure*

Except for a few homes tied into the City of Taunton’s water supply, Berkley has no public water system. All supplies of potable water for residents and businesses rely on groundwater. Some water for agricultural is from surface water resources. The town has been experiencing rapid growth over the past 10 years which has the potential to tax the water supply. Residents living near the Taunton and Assonet Rivers fear the infiltration of brackish water into the aquifers when demand exceeds supply. The Town of Berkley recently adopted an Aquifer Protection bylaw to protect a portion of their medium and high-yield aquifer. Alternatives to explore installation of municipal wells should coincide with

a review of capacity to service a growing region since so many communities are relying on a limited resource.

Similar to the water supply; Berkley has no public sewer service except a few homes tied into the Taunton wastewater treatment facility. Though the majority of homes and businesses rely on private septic systems; if the town were to approve denser residential development to achieve Inventoried Affordable living units as defined by the Commonwealth Department of housing and Communities Development the current sanitary issues may require a shared system.

The Town of Berkley is interested the development of a United States Postal Service Office in their community. Currently they are included in the City of Taunton's Postal Service Office. The Town of Berkley would also like to see the development of a post office to strengthen the Berkley Commons civic services offered to the community.

### 3. *Environmental Concerns*

Berkley has maintained their rich natural resources including not only water, but also fertile soil, wetlands, fisheries, forestry, biodiversity and habitats. The Town of Berkley is concerned with the rate of development over the past decade and beyond. Without proper planning and new development controls, unplanned growth will impact wildlife habitats and natural resources that the community treasures. The Nature Conservancy has identified some of these wildlife habitats as "globally rare".

### 4. *Transportation*

As of 2008, there were approximately sixty (60) miles of town roads in Berkley. This includes: 3.14 miles of unaccepted roads, 1.45 miles of state park or forest roads, 5.05 miles of MassHighway roads, and 51.0 miles of town-accepted roads. To accommodate new development, SRPEDD build-out projections anticipate that another 44 miles of roadway will be created. It is important that the Town evaluates and selects appropriate measures to relieve the impact of growth on traffic.

Presently the town is served by one major highway, Route 24 that runs north and south from Route 128/93 in Randolph to Route 195 in Fall River. Route 140 has an interchange located in Taunton at Route 79 near the village of Myricks. Commuter rail service is available within a 20-minute drive from Berkley to the Middleborough/Lakeville station. GATRA, The Greater Attleboro Taunton Transportation Authority, operates a Dial-a-Ride bus service to Berkley residents. Currently public transportation is limited and residents must rely on their automobiles, another burden for those with limited incomes.

Many of the roadways in town could be considered for the Scenic Road Program offering developers a blueprint on how the community would like to grow.

**5. Schools**

Currently the Town of Berkley high school aged students attend schools in neighboring communities such as: Somerset High School, Bristol County Agricultural High School, Bristol-Plymouth Technical High School, Bridgewater-Raynham Regional, Taunton High School, private, or home schools. Berkley has one elementary school and a separate middle school located near the town center. The existing school buildings will not accommodate the fast-growing population and the Town of Berkley is currently in negotiations with the Town of Somerset to potentially regionalize the High School.

Those enrolled in school (nursery through graduate school) totaled 1,648 or 28.7% of the town’s population. Those enrolled in nursery school through high school totaled 1,446, or 25.1% of those enrolled in school. These figures represent a significant increase in school enrollment from 1990, when there were 1,082 students enrolled in local schools. Though it is difficult to place an exact cost associated with educating an individual student, it was found to be within the range of \$6,826 per student for the Berkley Public Schools K-8 and \$7,561 with transportation. The Somerset High School Tuition rate for 2009-2010 is \$7,788 per student without any special need requirements, and \$8,564 with transportation. The price for the 2008-2009 was a slightly higher rate per student (\$7,862 per student).

Enrollment figures for each of the elementary schools and alternative high school options offered to the residents in Town of Berkley are listed below:

**Table II-20 Town of Berkley School Enrollment**

| <b>School</b>   | <b>Enrollment</b> |
|---|-------------------|
| <b><i>Berkley Community School</i></b>                        | 512               |
| <b><i>Berkley Middle School</i></b>                           | 408               |
| <b><i>Somerset High School</i></b>                            | 235               |
| <b><i>Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical High School</i></b> | 130               |
| <b><i>Bristol County Agricultural High School</i></b>         | 23                |
| <b><i>Coyle Cassidy</i></b>                                   | 58                |
| <b><i>Bridgewater-Raynham Regional High School</i></b>        | 7                 |
| <b><i>Taunton High School</i></b>                             | 6                 |
| <b><i>Bishop Connolly High School</i></b>                     | 2                 |
| <b><i>Bishop Stang High School</i></b>                        | 2                 |

6. *Affordability of Subsidy Funds*

The availability of subsidized funding for affordable housing is increasingly difficult to obtain. Affordable housing preservation and production as well as rentals have suffered budget cuts over the past few years making it extremely difficult to compete for and obtain funding that maybe less available. Unfortunately Berkley has not passed the Community Preservation Act that could help provide an important funding mechanism for affordable housing, and preservation of open space and historical sites.

7. *Community Perceptions*

Affordable housing conjures images of potential plunge in property values, increased crime, and neglect. On the other, with increased real estate prices, there exists a need to provide affordable housing. Many professionals, college aged children, and elderly residents and their family members may not be able to afford to live or remain in the community. The Town of Berkley has a deep concern as to how the community should approach affordable housing initiatives.

It will be necessary to engage the community in discussion on affordable housing and present information related to the issue to dispel myths to help solidify local support. These outreach efforts would be necessary to supplying the community with affordable housing for the future.