

City of Biddeford

Mayor's Affordable Housing Task Force

July 26, 2022 5:30 PM Biddeford Council Chambers & Zoom

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://biddeford.zoom.us/j/91984566865?pwd=Si9wemJNOXUxK0ZHZms3ejBkdWxMdz09>

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Webinar ID: 919 8456 6865

Status: In Person at City Hall Council Chambers and via Zoom

1. Call to Order

2. Discussion

2.1. Survey Results

[Survey Responses - Live in Biddeford.pdf](#)

[Analysis of Monthly Rent Affordability Questions.xlsx](#)

[Developer Survey Results Report.pdf](#)

[Social Media Comments on Housing Survey.pdf](#)

[Our Biddeford Posts.pdf](#)

[Survey Results - Want to Live in Biddeford.pdf](#)

[072622 Housing Task Force Presentation.pdf](#)

2.2. Review targeted resources goals

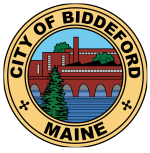
[6.24.22.cover.pdf](#)

[7.26.22.cover.memo.pdf](#)

2.3. Review Next Meetings/Steps

2.4. Discuss establishing percentage goal of affordable rental units

3. Adjourn

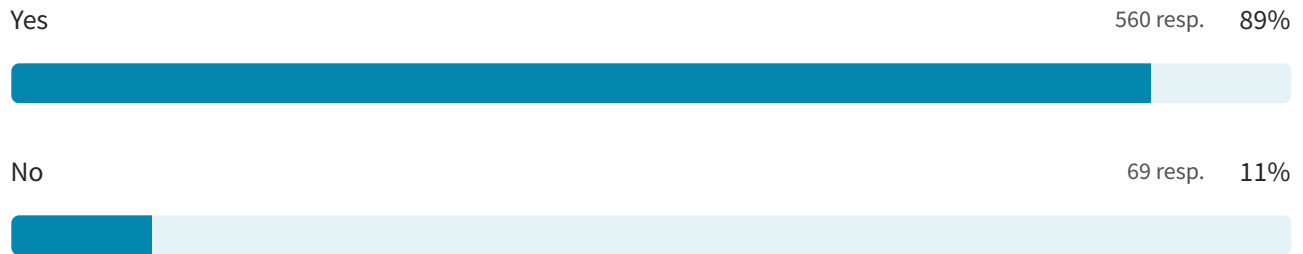


Affordable Housing Survey

629 responses

Do you live in Biddeford?

629 out of 629 answered



Which of the following applies to you?

560 out of 629 answered

I rent my home 331 resp. 59.1%



I own my home 209 resp. 37.3%



I am unhoused 20 resp. 3.6%



If you rent, would you like to own?

331 out of 629 answered

Yes, I would like to own. 252 resp. 76.1%



No, I would not like to own. 79 resp. 23.9%



Is your housing cost affordable?

540 out of 629 answered

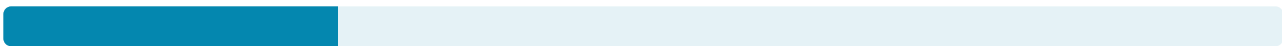
No 212 resp. 39.3%



Yes 187 resp. 34.6%



Somewhat 141 resp. 26.1%



Are you happy with your current housing?

560 out of 629 answered

Yes 338 resp. 60.4%

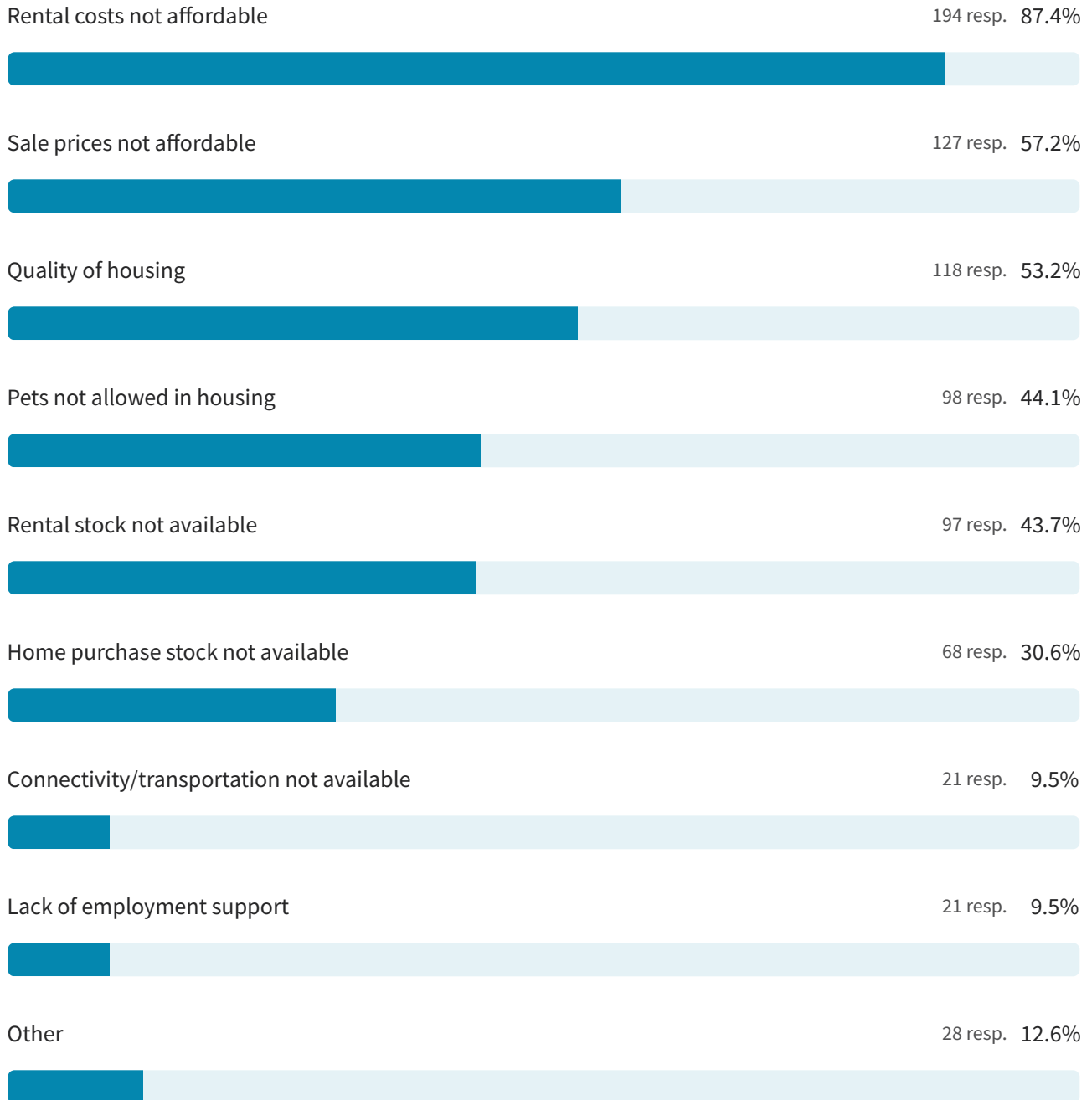


No 222 resp. 39.6%



What is preventing you from living where you want?

222 out of 629 answered



New court house will severely reduce property value and taxes will remain the same

What is preventing you from living where you want? (Response: Other)

Notable responses include: security deposits too high, neighborhood safety/quality concerns, tax rates, and the cost of home repairs.

- New court house will severely reduce property value and taxes will remain the same
- Can afford to buy with current market would need to make \$35 an hour for a loan with good credit to afford a decent House on a single parent income
- Deposits are too large to save for while trying to simply pay to survive
- First, last and security required for an already overpriced rent is impossible
- Public Housing discriminates and landlords play favorites and then deny they do it. My family has had to be separated because of other tenants' opinions. More places should allow guests to have their pets over, and the max times someone should spend the night during one month is 4, not 2. This is going to breed depression and anxiety due to isolation in our youth. This is not fair and I'm outraged. My medication isn't even working because of how Biddeford housing is towards tenants. My partner has been waiting for 3 months now to get into my lease, and it keeps being avoided. It has driven him to be homeless and put my daughter at risk of homelessness. Housing should be ashamed of itself and needs to look at tenants as ACTUAL families with ACTUAL issues. We aren't just someone to earn money from and I'm tired of feeling like that's all I am.
- Neighbors in community are trashy and destructive
- Mortgage rates are quickly rising. Priced out of Biddeford with 90k income
- No parking
- Rent increases every year whether we make more money or not. Nothing in the apartment has changed in the 10 years I've lived here.
- Money savings
- There have been arrests and a near death due to fentanyl on my street, in the last two months. Last summer, when I moved in, there was a drive-by shooting in front of my house. I live on Foss St. across from the police station.
- Taxes
- Taxes too high
- Bad, bad neighborhood. Main St
- Divorce/single parent
- Cost of living in general is outrageous. I literally can barely buy groceries each paycheck let alone purchase things like clothes and house essentials. I also make a decent hourly wage, the cost of living is disgustingly high
- Rent keeps going up and we are expected to maintain and repair normal wear and tear without reimbursement
- Neighborhood
- Landlords' expectations. Rental history etc
- Houses are not affordable, no options for buying a mobile home or lots to rent for a manufactured home. My family is living in overcrowded conditions because I cannot afford to rent a 3 bedroom
- Taxes
- The city of Biddeford will not let build on my own property in the country due to some stupid technicality, unless I have 100,000 to make my road wider?! Why! It's a tiny home I want to put there and still they refuse. My own property. Not cool. When people can't afford housing they find alternatives and the city just says no. They only care about getting the most money. Money money money.... All the new apartments are outrageously priced. If you think people in Biddeford can afford 1400 for a studio you're out of your mind. Just because Biddeford is getting nice all of a sudden, means we all have to pay more? Gross.
- Traffic, noise, litter
- Taxes too high. Unsustainable

- The rent keeps going up despite the building basically being a complete slum tenement, which is infuriating.
- Cost of necessary home repairs
- In law living with us an unable to move out.
- Too expensive to move and buy

Can afford to buy with current market would need to make \$35 and hour for a loan with good credit to afford a decent House on a single parent income



In the past year, did you experience a financial hardship?

560 out of 629 answered

No 307 resp. 54.8%



Yes 253 resp. 45.2%



In the past year, have you been forced to make a tough budgeting decision?

560 out of 629 answered

Yes 355 resp. 63.4%



No 205 resp. 36.6%



Do you feel that there is opportunity in Biddeford to improve your financial situation?

558 out of 629 answered

No 208 resp. 37.3%



Somewhat 195 resp. 34.9%



Yes 155 resp. 27.8%



Are you currently behind on rent?

538 out of 629 answered

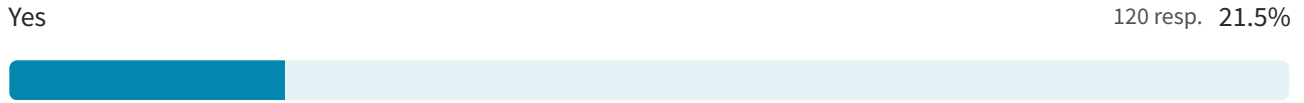
Yes 36 resp. 6.7%



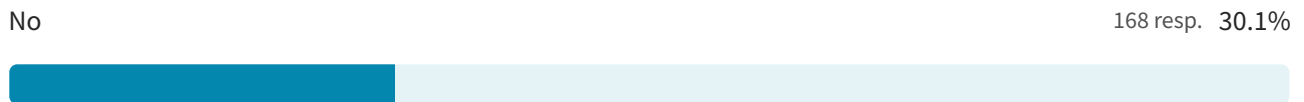
No 502 resp. 93.3%



Have you lost your housing within the past year or do you expect to lose your existing housing within the next year?
558 out of 629 answered



Do you know anyone who needed to leave their housing in Biddeford within the past year due to affordability?
558 out of 629 answered



What was your reason for having to leave your housing?

Nearly all responses reference building being sold and rent increasing, or generally facing significant jumps in rent.

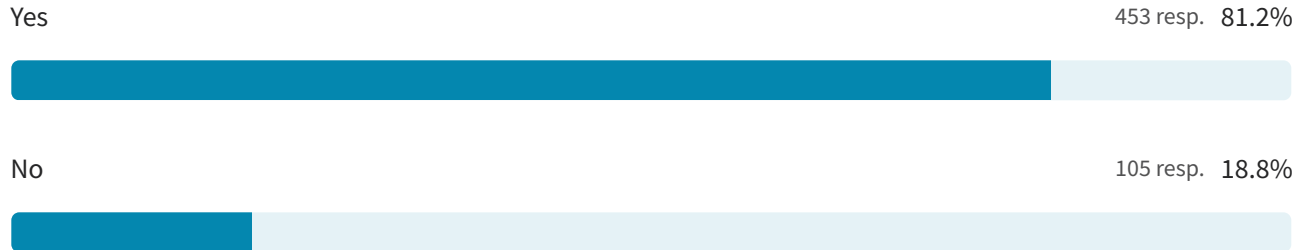
- Rent increase
- I didn't, but almost, due to difficulty paying rent.
- Rent going up
- New Landlord-bought it and is evicting everyone
- Increase in Rent. 700 SqFt One Bed \$1625/mo increasing to \$2175/mo
- Rent went up too much
- They sold the property
- Apartment building for sale.
- Landlord decided to sell house
- 60% rent increase
- Property owners are selling in this fools market
- \$\$\$ cost
- Couldn't afford it
- not enough money
- Can't afford rent
- Rent use to be \$725 and jumped to \$1050 with 60 day notice
- He went up a 125.00 on our rent its scary he goes up and up were gonna end up homeless with u kids
- Living with evil person had to leave
- Large rent increase
- Couldn't afford it
- Biddeford's poor and corrupt leadership
- They sold the house we were renting
- Rent increase
- Horrible management. Ongoing construction on building
- Won't be able to afford it going forward
- I have not left yet, but need too. My voucher is at risk, my neighbors dont like me and complain every time I have a person over even if we are completely silent the whole time. Its driving myself to isolate and its taking a toll on my mental health.
- Can't afford to live on my own as a full time CNA with a child not receiving child support
- Couldn't afford it.
- Suddenly divorced, ex-wife threw me out work nowhere to go
- Sale of house
- Homeless population growing in area of living. Rent going up.
- I'm still here but it will be due to rent increase in one yr it has been a total of 400.00 now that is uncalled for
- New guy bought apartment building and is evicting everyone
- Either building will sell or an increase in rent.
- Building is for sale
- Rent increase
- Winter rental price increases.
- Landlord is selling so my family must leave. It is nearly impossible to find a new place.
- Winter rental
- Haven't yet but being laid off due to high price of living. Potentially moving back to Midwest.
- Been here 24 years and with new owner, rent has gone up twice since April. If it goes any higher, I will have to move. Higher rent, but no work being done to leaks.

- It was no longer available
- Rent Increase
- Haven't left yet, but worried rent will go up or they sell. My rental is disgusting, nothing got done as promised
- Sold and asked to leave. Then rent nearly doubled.
- Owner sold building and new owner did not want renters
- Rent too high to live alone
- Rent increases
- Can't afford
- Sale of rental buildings, cannot afford another rent increase
- Too expensive to keep with rising cost
- Rent is too high
- Raise rent
- Too expensive
- Owner told us that he was doubling our rent and pay own heat
- Eviction bc I couldn't pay
- Owner remodeling to a 4-unit building
- House was sold
- Rent increase
- RENT INCREASES
- Owner decided to sell last home (that I occupied for 6 years, never late or behind on rent), was given 30 days to find new home.
- Landlord bought last year and now wants to upgrade the apartments for more money or in his word market price. I lived here in this unit for 5 years. Now I can't find a place to go im a single mom with 2 minor children. I thought being a good tenant would be good enough.
- rent was doubled
- Separation
- Apartment building was sold and I had to move
- Unable to make full rent each month and bills.
- New owner wants to double rent
- Renovations to building, hike in rent during Covid
- I haven't left yet, I expect my rent to be increased and my landlord to not offer me a chance to stay
- Raising the rent
- Unaffordable
- Cost out of my budget being single mother of 3 special needs children
- Rental increase
- I think our building will be sold
- I anticipate having to lose our housing due to the substantial increase in property taxes driving our mortgage payment up several hundred dollars a month.
- Rent increase of more than 20%
- Rent increase
- Rent increases. Too expensive
- I'm going to lose my apartment because my rent is going from 1300 to 1650 for a 2 bedroom with no utilities included
- landlord wanted to rent apartment for more money
- Roommates got evicted
- Affordability and job situations. Came down sick with covid and job wasn't understanding.
- My landlord is raising the rent and making us pay for heat despite our lease not being up. If we don't agree to this, he will evict us when our lease is up.
- Huge rental increase

- Rent increase over 400\$
- Won't renew lease August 31
- Too expensive
- Landlord wants to double the rent and pay for heat and hot water
- Have to move out of moms house (I'm 20)
- Cant afford
- Being sold
- The landlord decided to make our large apartment into two apartments because he's allowed to have 4 units in his building now
- I haven't yet but I heard he's going to raise rent again and who can afford that? I've paid 150,000 in rent in 10 years. I want to own my home, I want the city to let me build on my acres in the country of off little house of prayer drive
- Sale of building
- I'll be forced out due to rent increase, not sure where I'll go.
- Landlord wants to up the rent
- Rent increase...again
- landlord selling property
- Rent price
- I expect my rent increase coming in November is going to drive me out
- I was "renovicted" (forced to leave so owner could renovate)
- Renovation of building
- Can't afford it!!
- Rent costs
- Job loss + rent increase
- Landlord said he was selling place. Then he rented it out immediately after we moved for twice the rent we were paying
- Anticipate rent increase
- Owner is increasing rent for a 1-bedroom in the mill to \$2100
- Bad room mates, landlord, threat of eviction, increase of prices, lack of support
- My landlord says I need to sign a new lease before my current lease is up with a \$400/month rental increase AND paying for heat (which is not part of our current lease). If we don't agree to this (despite it being illegal), he will evict us.
- Massive rent increase beyond means
- Rising cost
- Rent increase from \$1,000 to \$2,000. And decrease in income of +\$1,400/month. Leaves income of \$3,000/month. We have to go to subsidized housing. We are on waiting lists.

Should the City encourage "alternative housing" options in Biddeford?

558 out of 629 answered



Do you have any other thoughts about housing affordability?

- We need a homeless shelter!!
- Allow subdivision of land held less than five years
- Rent control.
- My landlord is more than reasonable but he does say the city continually raising property taxes, and imposing extra fees on rental property only, will eventually have to be passed on to his tenants. I've been here in my apartment for over 2 years with no increase whatsoever, but I'm expecting an increase soon due to rising costs and added taxes and fee's by the city.
- Rent control is needed. Freeze on rent increases. Also, I am disabled and have been on sec 8 wait-list for 4 yrs. I live in constant fear of becoming homeless.
- Allowing accessory buildings on city lots as long as the front of the home looks the same, is a great idea. Extending the area for homeowners/landlords to add a unit or two to their properties up to the 5 points area would be very helpful. All of this needs to be done with complete oversight, though. Yes, we want more allowances for additional housing but losing the character of the neighborhoods would be a disaster. Additions need to be visually appealing along with being up to date in building codes. There is no reason Biddeford can't grow and be affordable with plenty of green spaces, too. That being said, I don't see Biddeford as being as affordable as it used to be. We have changed.
- Current subsidized housing within the city of Biddeford needs closer oversight to maximize housing of current units that are being underutilized. Example: Prospect Manor has 10 two bedroom units. Of those 10, only 3 of the units are currently at capacity, Meaning, one person is living in a 2 bedroom unit. Seven more people could be off of the streets or in affordable housing in just this one subsidized/HUD project. Mack Brothers is contracted through HUD/ Maine State Housing Authority to move people to one bedroom units, as they become available. Instead, they are using cost savings measures, to their benefit, and when a one bedroom opens up, they move a new person into the one bedroom unit. They could have housed 2 people from the public at large but choose to house 1 person because it saves them money to do it this way. Better oversight would prevent this happening at prospect manor and possibly countless other places within this sector of housing within the city.
- Let the market determine the housing costs. It's not the governments job, least of all the city. Things change and you can't live in the past.
- No one listens anyway
- Tax less
- Stop allowing such a small number of investors from away to purchase such a large percentage of property within the downtown city, allowing them to control the market and skyrocket rents for their own profit. It is driving us out and leaving no funds to be put back into the community.
- Friends, we're many years late in taking significant action here. DO SOMETHING. Pick something. Do that. Stop preparing and studying and cogitating. JUST. DO. SOMETHING. Are you wondering right now, "is Amy Clearwater writing this???" well, you're right. This is Amy, just popping in again to say WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR??????
- Require a percentage of new rentals and new homes to be affordable.
- You can't just continue to focus on business you need citizens and should be ppl who embody the motto of community spirit
- 4,400 people were homeless in the state of maine in january 2022 rents are unaffordable, inflation fuel cost through the roof more people will be out on the street , immigration needs to stop,& take care of our own !! Go and live on the street for a few months to see how it feels, then do it again in february.
- The availability of affordable rentals is non existent in our area. In the 3 months my rental cost increases by 47% of my gross pay, due to the sale of the building I lived at for 9 years, the rent increase was doubled at the time. New affordable is extremely limited.
- Was shocked for rent increase and now am suffering uncontrollable stress and anxiety
- Its really sad that houses are not affordable for the average family anymore.

- Costs are high bc there isn't enough supply. Let people build. Change zoning. Would like to buy/own property but there is hardly anything on the market so I'm stuck renting contributing to a tight rental market and rising costs.
- When new landlords purchase a building it should be monitored. For example my new landlord doubled the rent and does not pay attention to the building. My previous landlord asked for half and was here every week checking in things. The building is now falling apart and the new landlord is looking to make a 200k profit off of his neglecting. The state needs to monitor these situations better. I know my building is not up to code.
- I think Credit is over rated when it comes to a persons ability to pay rent. Personally I never missed a rent payment Priority 1. but on paper credit sucks cant qualify for a decent place. 1st, month last month and security should be illegal in some cases that could be 6 thousand dollars how does that help anyone.
- I like the way Biddeford is becoming. People who have problems with affordable housing should get roommates and seek housing in Sanford instead.
- Stop building luxury apartments. Build affordable housing.
- Stop the short term rentals and landlord price gouging.
- Allow for more development and less restrictions
- Incentives for landlords to keep rentals costs lower would be great. Handing out money to assist with rental/mortgage costs would not. Please dont provide assistance. - please provide actual solutions and help lower rents. People need to still be accountable and work without relying on handouts. its not sustainable long term.
- I wiah I wasn't homeless
- Homestead Limit for the next 2 years. Mainers are being forced out because out of state money is buying up all the property. Protect Mainers and force all new home purchases to only be direct homesteads for the next 2 years.
- Owner mortgage/interest rate assistance for first time qualified buyers. Assistance for new landlords willing to owner occupy multiple units with market rate rents. Real assistance with interest rates/down payments and ongoing support in the form of education maybe an advisory board that meets with them every quarter.
- Rent control, building more rental units, allowing local buyers and renters first, allowing more zoning for homes that can be starter homes and not McMansions.
- better rental and property management control. by not allowing property management companies from out of state to increase apartment rentals higher then someone could afford and better screening of said out of stae property management companies, to make sure they keep the properties in good condition. and if they evict tentants then they should give them 60 to 90 days to move. because finding or putting your name into housing takes a very long time and some people are living in local motels because it takes forever to get a place you can afford.
- Promote infill downtown and create the foundation for future walkable neighborhoods with local commercial districts outside of downtown. Also focus on mixed income developments instead of massive public housing complexes. Less well off residents should be integrated into the community, not concentrated into isolated complexes.
- Parking in downtown rentals is really difficult. Sometimes just unloading groceries or laundry is an unbelievably frustrating task. The parking garage helped in snow bans but I'm lucky enough to live within walking distance of the garage.
- I am fearful all affordable homes will be bought and flipped for rental, like we see happening in other cities. We want to stay in Biddeford and love living here, and don't want to be pushed out. Our landlord has many buildings with rents that are actually reasonable, giving us a chance to save for our down payment. We are grateful to have landed where we did when moving to Biddeford 4 years ago.
- make affordable housing , put a cap on rents to the landlords
- Get your heads out of your ass's you hands out of the peoples pockets and actually do something for the for the people
- I would like lower rents

- Limit the number of apt buildings that turn into unaffordable condos (like Portland has not done!)
- Landlords are greedy Im so scared all the time
- Landlord should have a cap of how much they can raise rent in 1 year 400 is outrages increase with no work done to the unit.
- Make shit cheaper
- To ensure local landlords are truly not connecting to set their rent prices in accordance to one another
- Biddeford is overwhelmed with low level job opportunities. Bring in better employment opportunities and the housing market begins to look more appealing.
- It seems like tax breaks etc...go only to the landlords...?
- Rents are too high , uNE should pay taxes-enough with the beautify the city
- Biddeford needs to find ways to keep long term Biddeford residents in there homes. Offer new multi unit buyers incentives not to evict tenants from buildings they have recently purchased.
- Place limits on out of state buyers and developers from purchasing homes, multiunit property before local residents have a chance. Many locals have been forced out of the housing market because development companies are over bidding by so much and they can't compete. There should be some sort of waiting period before these corporations are able to snatch up property. Educate people on Maine State housing authority and opportunities available. There are programs out there that can help people with fair to good credit purchase a home without having to put 20% down.
- Many apartments are not maintained or even up to code- many slum lords in Biddeford and they charge high rent. I know someone paying 1500 for a 3 bedroom but apartment in not heated upstairs, not insulated, not up to code and if tenants ask to have anything fixed they threaten to evict them. There are many situation s like this in Biddeford.
- Limit rent charges. Stop letting landlords evict without reason other then to charge more
- MAke housing affordable and available to people that live here. It's not complicated and you didn't need a survey on fb to figure it out.
- Rent control
- Mandated affordable housing for all new construction, help with down payments is a great idea, regulations to ensure that actual Biddeford residents have the ability to buy housing not people from out of state or hedge funds
- A cap on rent increases would be extremely helpful. I consider my current situation to be affordable but I'm terrified my rent will be increased at the end of my lease in a couple months.
- We need more affordable housing for EVERYONE such as families, young professionals, and elderly . It seems most of the affordable housing developments that have been discussed and/or established in recent years have labeled 55+ or something to that effect. There's plenty of that, however there is not nearly enough affordable housing for younger people and families.
- I live near Champions, right next to the railroad tracks, behind Dunkin' Donuts in Biddeford. I have seen more, and more folks walking down the railroad tracks with pieces of furniture, tents, shopping carts full of items. Many of them carry grocery bags. These people are living in the woods. Why do people have to live in the woods!?!? I see building, after building vacant. Why can't (Biddeford) take some of this money and fix these vacant buildings up to an affordable rooming house for a family living?
- Well when I talked to a council member about attacking out of state buyers he was all for it. My wife and I have been actively looking to buy a house but we were over bid every time by an out of state buyer. They were offering cash. To be honest I no longer really want to live in Maine due to all the sales to put of state buyers. We can't even afford to buy a house for the first time in a place we loved to call home. The housing is absolutely ridiculous and I feel Biddeford has done nothing but encourage this.
- Apartment complexes
- I have lived in this city for over 10 years. My rent here has doubled in the same apartment that I have been living in for almost 9 years. Yet no improvements have been done. I feel I am being pushed out of a city I have called home for that long. It's absolutely disgusting.

- So many living on assistance doesn't allow for those of us to try and find something affordable. Anything even remotely close to reasonable pricing has a waitlist because of all the section 8 families
- Rent control and landlord accountability
- Adding affordable units to all the new developments. Housing police and firefighters, teachers and nurses at an affordable rate
- There are either low-income houses or regular houses, nothing for the middle class. My wife and I make \$100k and can't afford a house and it's getting too much to rent. Need something in the middle that makes sense to purchase. Look into what they are doing in Wells with High Pines Village
- The rental cost is outrageous especially for those who make minimum wage and there 2 bedroom apartment is 1,500 and heat is not including and the have a family to support it is ridiculous. Buyers are taking advantage of renters and shouldn't be that way, should be fair and equal when comes to renting. I understand may buyers have trouble renting because renters do not pay on time o there's damages to the apartments but there should be laws for that too. Mainers should be able to buy a home where they call home the price is crazy only people out of Maine are buying home and not giving Mainers the chance to purchase their dream home.
- The lease terms on public housing need to be re-evaluated. 30 days within a 12 month period for one individual to spend the night with a resident is ridiculous, 60 days or so would make plenty of sense. Restrictions on dogs also need to be re-evaluated. People in public housing deserve to live like families, needing it to be a service animal is elitist.
- I think rent should go by income past a certain age. Most of our senior citizen renters are being forced out of their homes due to rent increases. Rent should NOT be able to be increased by more than 5% a year.. not the 150% most of us are dealing with. We are being priced out, so they can rent our spaces for 300 times what we are paying. What about the long term residents who have to pull their kids from the school systems and away from their friends because their apartments are being bought an sold so often the rent never stops going up? There are some shady and serious issues that need to be addressed here.
- Affordable housing should have more screening and limitations on dwellers. It is EXTREMELY unsafe for children. My section 8 neighbors are constantly committing vandalism of the property by throwing down trash from the upper levels into the parking lot (including glass and large items, such as couches, washers/dryers, and dressers). They do things like graffiti cars in the parking lot with derogatory slurs (such as "f****p" and "n****r") and swastikas. I have to carry my child through the parking lot over this trash and broken glass. Not to mention the constant noise disturbances. They blast music all hours of the day and night and scream vulgarities and about drugs. They all lack even just basic respect for others. I, a hardworking, respectful, and moralistic citizen, am being driven away from the city of Biddeford. I am buying a house elsewhere and will never return to this slum of a city.
- The landlords in our town are not taking care of their buildings. There's porches about to fall off buildings, rats and roaches infest buildings and no one does anything. And the rent keeps going up even though the quality and safeness has gotten worse not better. People need to be held accountable. People who don't take care of the buildings they own need to lose their buildings. Low income housing needs to be a priority. We need more homeless shelters and supports in place for individuals and families that have no where to stay.
- Rent caps, rent control, hold landlords accountable for state of buildings, banning investment buyers, 1st time home buy programs for those with poor credit
- We want to move
- This is an issue that needs to be understood from the top down. I am a single income with a great paying job but because the "market" rents are so high I am paying more than I should for rent which is limiting my ability to save for a down payment. I have never personally felt a pinch financially but I know that is not true for most. Rents and apartment for a middle market like myself need to be developed more. There are also many in situations like myself that may be looking for more affordable rents but also don't want to be taking those away from people that need it more. Analysis should be done to look at zoning regulations in regards to density and where there are double lots or vacant lots around downtown. The current bonus for adding a unit when keeping it affordable is a

good start. It is also crucial to understand what any of these programs or future programs are doing to create real equity and you is gaining that equity.

- Stop short term rentals (under 3 months) in residential districts and neighborhoods. Make homes (under 4 units) only eligible for purchase by individuals and not hedge funds, corporations and banks. Stop property tax hike, 20% increase on multi family homes is only going to drive rents higher
- Co Op living in mills
- Due to the rapidly ballooning costs for renters, it would appear to make sense to attract more developers to build more rental units. I understand that space is limited, but even building on the periphery of the city would be greatly helpful. I wonder if a partnership between UNE and Biddeford could be established near their campus to build some affordable housing for renters and students alike? Looking into zoning may be beneficial as well, to allow for higher units.
- Housing is no longer affordable for a single person. Home ownership feels impossible to achieve no matter how hard I work or try to save.
- Put a cap on how much a landlord can increase rent per year. Between last year and this year my rent has been raised by 300 a month-with absolutely no improvements done to the building.
- If you live in a building with more then 10 units they should be able to get aset price for cable like some buildings do in bidd. I know some places charge 40 for cable there is 15 apts unit that would help alot of your older people out
- Make the big apartment complex's lower rent
- Create a homeless shelter for the homeless. They can't be living in basements of apartments or in the alley ways and getting away with it. Also create homes for married couples who don't have kids but have pets.
- My son just moved to Minnesota because housing is too expensive here
- tiny, self sustaining affordable permanent housing options instead of rental assistance that's a stop gap and will lead back to homelessness in 6 months to 10 years. you could remodel an RV into a tiny home that's more efficient on probably . 15 acres of land with a life expectancy of 30 years,self finance for 1/10 th of the cost of ongoing rental assistance at hotels etc. quickly, especially if you join forces with other towns like Arundel. do micro condos. same concepts. 400 SQ ft sleeps up to 6.
- I think there should be a percentage on the amount of rent changed. This is Biddeford not California I live in a very old building an by next yr they will have apartment at 1750 a month when 4 years ago we was paying 859.00
- There are greedy landlords
- Landlords need to be liable for the building. If they're going to boost rates by 60% within a 3 year period and haven't touched the tenants apartment, why is the tenant paying so much more for normal wear and tear? Our rent has gone up over \$400 this year alone and our landlords don't even perform standard maintenance.
- We have the youngest city in the state. A single parent or person cannot sustain a place to live working a full time jobs making \$20 an hour full time on their own. It's impossible! If that person takes home \$2400 a month after taxes it barely covers rent. Let alone having to buy groceries, phone, utilities, car, gas, and insurance on top of the rent. There needs to be more career opportunities for the people to afford the cost of living.
- Don't build cheap units. There are already far too many people in need of help.
- I purchased a duplex in 2009 and sold it in 2019 to buy my current home. I bought my current home at \$209k. The market currently estimates I could sell it for \$318k. I couldn't possibly have purchased it for \$318k and won't sell because there is nothing on the market I could afford on my budget. I know many people who are in my same income bracket who can't possibly compete with cash offers that waive inspections, etc. We're going to lose talented individuals who contribute to the community if we can't find a solution for more affordable rentals and homes to buy.
- Taxes/utilities can cripple homeowners of multi units and single family homes.
- We need more affordable housing built for families
- Less talk and more action
- Build more more more.

- Put a cap on rent. Inflation is definitely a factor for housing costs, however, people are getting greedy and people are becoming homeless because of it. We need help.
- The tenants rights are pretty bare bones and the lack of regulations on landlords is pretty concerning.
- The City doesn't have the resources to solve this problem alone. The City can certainly make minor contributions, but its main role should be to research and coordinate resources that have far deeper pockets Encourage people below the City's median age (and certainly below the State's median age) to come and live in Biddeford.
- Biddeford is the new hot city, and I am worried about how expensive housing will become. I see us heading in the direction of Portland. The average person is going to be out priced, and the only people able to afford housing will be the wealthy and out of staters.
- Would love to see assistance to help native Biddeford residents be competitive against private equity firms and inflated home values from companies trying to upcharge / flip. Instead; I think we should use tax advances to incentive ownership for down payments and renovation of older properties. We could also give tax incentives for landlords that keep rent reasonable/stable as they are rising much faster than inflation and taxes even. Providing incentives for landlords to sell out to residents rather than the market for expensive values would help Biddeford residents build equity and share wealth fairly. We need to protect against equity taking away opportunities from residents, couples, and families.
- Down payments are a huge barrier to buying a home. Most families don't have enough in savings. I think helping get couples and families into actual houses will encourage individual growth and self sustainability. People feel pride in something they own. I know I want to own a house and have a garden, dog, etc. i can't have either of those right now where I'm renting :-)
- Keep the rentals being developed in the mills at a cost most people can afford. Keep them as rentals and not individually owned.
- Affordable apartments should actually be affordable for younger people who want to live in Biddeford and continue enriching the revitalization and not catering to those more fortunate as there is a large population of people who don't have 60k a year jobs who want to live here
- Do something fast. The prices are out of control and there's very little available to rent or buy. Change some commercial property into housing.
- No
- More rent caps and/or limitations on rent increases, as well as standards like ensuring each unit contains a washer (clothes) would go a long way to helping people afford rent and save for a home while not wasting money on expensive services like laundromats. Affordable long term parking options for residents in town will also help save for housing. Street parking is often not viable/available/fraught with (understandable, but hard on residents) rules that can lead to unexpected tows and bills. Finally, ensuring that the financial growth of Biddeford does not result in existing residents being forced out due to rising costs from improvement/increased inability to buy homes.
- I have lived in the same house in Biddeford for over 50 years, and frankly, I would not be able to continue living here were I not married to a nurse. I live in Ward 1 and my property taxes have caused my mortgage to explode. I understand that Ward 1 is an easy target because all the "rich" from Mass / CT / NY have bought up all the coastal properties, but there are still us older 'original' inhabitants that don't pull down half a million a year. I don't know if the city is legally allowed to do such things, but if there can be a tiered property tax system where the rich 'away' fat cats that own the 'investment' properties along the coast pay one rate, while those of us living in our primary residence, miles from the ocean pay a more reasonable rate.
- Funnel money into builders and let them start building up cities housing. This creates jobs for builders and helps stabilize the housing market with more inventory. Potentially subsidize material costs so builders can make more dwellings.
- Put a limit on how much a landlord can raise rent per year. Most now are buying and not doing a lease so they can raise rent to whatever they want. Several coworkers are having to move out of Biddeford and taking jobs elsewhere. My rent went from \$600 to \$750 to \$1000 since April.

- The biggest issue is there is not enough housing so renters can charge whatever they want. If there was more housing available people would have to compete
- I have been waiting for 7 years for a handicap apartment
- Labor for rental assistance, rent by care of place lived.
- Open R1 zoning to Multifamily 3+ units. Incentivize people to build more houses in Biddeford.
- I will never get approved for an apartment due to low wages and poor credit history.
- The housing costs are far too high in Biddeford. We love this community but are looking to buy and will be priced out of Biddeford sadly. Even the rent costs are getting too high. Affordable housing options are needed.
- PLEASE regulate airbnbs & companies (not individual landlords) buying property to turn into rentals!!! They are destroying housing for everyone! Airbnb (super important because of all of the well deserved great press we have been getting recently): <https://slate.com/business/2021/10/airbnb-housing-shortage-luxury-vacation-rental-galveston-texas.html> companies: <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/23/us/corporate-real-estate-investors-housing-market.html>
- Taxes are too high. I have a small condo and pay \$4000!
- Something desperately needs to be done - landlords are upping rent prices to the point where I cannot save for a home anymore. I have seen my neighbors evicted from their homes due to not being able to afford rising rent prices set by new landlords.
- I make a good salary and I can barely afford rent on my own I can't imagine the people making an average salary being able to afford rent
- A lot of landlords require a renter to make 3 times the rent a month for salary to be considered. At 2000 a month rent you'd have to make over 70k a year. A mortgage is cheaper at that point
- Due to the sale of the apartment building I lived in for 9 years, I was forced to rent a smaller apartment for twice rental cost, increasing my rent budget 46%.
- Housing prices are way too high
- Landlords shouldn't be allowed to raise rent without changing anything about the buildings. Most of these buildings are expensive and falling apart. It's nothing but greed.
- Rent needs to lower and units need to be fixed
- Stop letting landlords raise rents beyond what the current tenants have the ability to afford
- The city needs to bring in development, and needs to do it quickly. I understand the cultural significance of the mills, however, in order to better serve the needs of Biddeford residents, the unoccupied portions of the mill should be brought down and replaced by new housing developments. Additionally, it would be great to see more development done near UNE. There is plenty of open land near the school, so it would be beneficial to work with the college to bring more off-campus apartments there. We have seen an increasing amount of college students moving into rentals within the city, pushing up prices, so it would be beneficial to build more housing near the school for them to primarily live in.
- Rent caps
- Encourage the building of affordable rental units, less luxury units. The luxury units drive up the average prices, which in turn price out the people that have lived here
- My son has been trying to find an affordable 3 bedroom apartment for 5 years. He is a single father of 4, single bread winner, no \$ help from Mom. He saved and worked so hard to get his credit score up to buy a home and there is nothing under \$180,000 that is worth the money. It is SO frustrating and devastating. He and his kids deserve an affordable and safe home or apartment.
- I would build an accessory building if I could keep it in my name without having to put in the name of my children
- I was able to afford to buy a home here last year--great! Needed to do this because renting was unaffordable and was lucky I had good credit and just enough to squeak a down payment in. The condition of the house and the work it's taken me to clean up the neglect of the previous owner(s), not great. It would be awesome, if in addition to helping people with down payment to buy an affordable house, there was money that followed to help them improve the house back up to code/standard. I am lucky because I have been (mostly) able to devote time and energy to do repairs myself and fix this

up, but most people understandable cannot. If a developer gets a hand on a house to flip it--no longer affordable.

- Fix up some of the apartment buildings that are sitting empty and need to be remodeled in order to live in.
- Cap the raising of housing affordability for families to afford their own home, cap the rents because it's high
- You can help keep rent lower by not increasing the sewage fee by a higher percentage for multi units. Percentages work by the amount you use. It makes no sense to increase the percentage more for a multi unit than a single family .
- We need a law set in place to prevent how much a landlord can raise the rent within a certain amount of time. Many people are buying buildings then hiking the rent up by hundreds, many of whom are from out of state and don't care about the effects on the tenants
- Can we please stop the people who are buying up our property at 50k over asking as an Airbnb investment?? Some of us are trying to live literally just live and we can't afford a place in our own hometown
- There are many rentals in downtown Biddeford that are taking advantage of soaring prices, but aren't up to code (I know from experience from renting several in the past 2 decades). I think it would be helpful to grant credits on existing neighborhoods with outdated buildings to help revitalize existing structures. Shiny new neighborhoods won't help current poverty-stricken families.
- Stop letting Massachusetts residents/companies buy our houses and rent Massachusetts prices and live in Massachusetts never take care of the property and let it go to shit, slowly losing our community to run down buildings. We our losing our community to sleeping in the Biddeford park and ride. Go there some morning you should deeply concerned how many are sleeping in their cars because they cannot afford a home. Do better, Do better!
- Housing availability shortage is dire in the area yet we continue to allow illegals to infiltrate the area which we are funding and take up housing that locals should be availed to as priority
- Blue collar employees cannot afford the to rent here. Blue collar employees are important to our economy
- More accessible housing for people using wheelchairs (it's impossible to find, we're constantly looking)! Also, esp with the college, affordable/alternative housing or financial assistance for young adults in trade school, higher education, or entering the workforce in the area.
- I see way too many folks struggling to find then be able to pay the ungodly high rents (ex: \$2200 for a 4-bedroom 3rd floor apt w/nothing included)
- Townhomes that are not detached should be considered, like there are in the midAtlantic. Similar to apartment living but more space for families.
- I will be leaving next month. My rent is increasing.
- I'm a social worker and I've never had so many clients experience homelessness until now. Kids are living in hotels or camp grounds. Biddeford is becoming gentrified. Something needs to be done. Middle class families can't even afford to live here.
- Make limitations for out of state individuals buying our rental properties. Say only 20% of our available rental properties can be purchased from out of state buyers. Or maybe out of state buyers pay higher taxes which then go to helping Biddeford citizens afford to rent. Or capping the allowed amount a landlord can charge for rent per amount of space being rented.
- Stop charging 2000 or more for a 1-2 bedroom that's insane
- Young people don't have a chance. My daughter is renting a house for \$2300. That is ridiculous. They are trying to save to buy a house out of Biddeford because the taxes are to high and can't afford house in our town. One daughter already moved to Poland and I have another child gonna buy a house an hour out of Biddeford.
- Stop out of staters from buying up Maine properties.
- We do not need more rents in Biddeford!
- Incentives to Developers who will build actual affordable housing

- Way too many people becoming homeless because their lease wasn't renewed and they can not find housing anywhere. And few places that pop up are expecting a \$1800+ month rent. I work multiple jobs and make a fair amount of money and wouldn't be able to make that work. Thank goodness I bought a house when I did!
- Financial assistance for first time house buyers. Some student loan forgiveness. Help with down payment.
- Work hard and be self sufficient and not a burden to hard working taxpayers
- Landlords skyjack the rent mainly because they know the subsidization will make them a ton of money. They are going to get their money, period. No way on earth can my daughter afford a 2-3 bedroom apt for her and her 2 kids. They are dumps or full of drug addicts, dealers and meth labs. Clean that crap up first.
- There should be a limit on annual rent increase percentage to control continuous rise in housing costs.
- Property Tax freeze for long term owners 20+ years so they don't have to move because they can't afford the taxes on their homes. Enforce building codes in unsafe apartment units. Rents keep increasing but the units keep getting worse.
- Cost of living is up. Wages haven't moved much. We need to keep people who work here living here. I would love to see some level of tax for people who are working remotely making wages that are far more than what locals make which drives up the cost for those who actually live AND work here. People making NY, Boston, or DC money should be contributing to the affordable housing not effectively driving costs through the roof.
- Citizens working 40 plus hours can't afford basic necessities...including a roof over their heads.
- Stop renting to out of state employees. People moving here don't need to work our jobs. Leaving those who need housing to work here, homeless. Out of state money is driving the bottom line up. Maine should protect their citizens.
- A friend of mine moved into the building I currently reside in, one year before I moved in. Their rent is \$1650 for a two bedroom. Mine is \$2300 for a two bedroom. In Biddeford. The prices are skyrocketing and no one seems to be doing anything to stop it.
- Not so easy. Can the City work with the banks to help the families to get incentives? Low wages? Shortage of rentals and housing availability. What about bank foreclosures? Delinquent Homes?
- Thank you!
- There should be a cap. Most residents work 40+ hours a week for \$15.00- to \$20.00 per hour. A 3 bedroom for \$2,400 a month leaves the average Joe struggling. Never mind low income families. Forcing people to unsafe living situations. I'm scared for many reasons. Biggest concern is that I will most likely be homeless by the end of summer. This is a small city. Up & coming or not, it's still a small city with small time folks & average folks. This is wrong in every way. Please help us who live here. Thank you.
- Maine needs a tiny home movement as it is more affordable and sustainable
- The cost keeps rising but the quality doesn't go along. Offer more subsidies to housing company's that renovate/update their apartments. Updating will save them more money in the grand scheme. Also invest in area to create easily affordable housing, like focus on renovating the mill into housing for instance.
- Biddeford has some great visions for improving our city already. What it is lacking is a reality check that takes into consideration what the average citizen can afford. I am not speaking about welfare families; but rather about the families who are considered middle class. These are the people who are rapidly becoming welfare families do to the insane costs of housing and food. Ideas need to flow in this direction. Support home owners to improve their personal homes. Assist known solid tenement landlords to improve their buildings. Drive out any and all "a trouble makers" presently residing in the city. All are welcomed who have good intentions. Others need to move on.
- Biddeford or maine in general, need to really look into the cost of rent for people who work hard and still may need assistance with housing. There have been times when rent comes first in the budget and with the cost of living being so high, other things are neglected for example groceries, yes we have a wonderful food pantry here in Biddeford and there is government aid like SNAP but when you make a

few dollars too much and you don't follow within the guidelines of income. People including my family have gone without. And the paperwork 11 PAGES long and counting just to apply for SNAP AND wait times and hassles and phone calls it almost doesn't seem worth the trouble. The help is available but access to it is impossible and overwhelming. Or a landlord won't rent to you without perfect credit that's my struggle. Having a roof over my head yes has come before a light bill or a credit card bill or whatever the case maybe. My hard work and effort for my family should never be a final say for a decent and affordable roof over our heads.

- Help people purchase affordable homes (and not live in rental properties)
- Maybe can the city make land affordable to developers who will build an apartment complex or affordable homes
- Biddeford natives struggle with being able to remain in their home town due to market conditions
- There is a group of 27 units being sold as commercial property right now. The listing includes how the purchase price (v. High) can work, including specific information about what the now affordable rents could be raised to. These numbers look like rental numbers in Portland! It's a false suggestion of market raise of rents, and it shouldn't be allowed to happen. This would possibly put 27 parties out of rental units here. It makes me furious.
- I'm 62 and would like to retire one day but with house,apartment prices as high as they are I'll never will be able to retire.
- Property taxes are way too high for the services provided by the city. Those higher costs hit homeowners and renters alike. The government being less would help everyone
- Have the code officer do more in house inspections of rental units people don't mind paying for units that are kept up.
- Young people out of college can not afford anything. We are being pushed to buy houses well into our 30s, while we waste our 20s trying to keep up with high rent and attempting to save for a house. With inflation, I've been putting less and less away to house savings. It's disheartening.
- My only issue is I just moved here and they don't have any apartments that are two bedroom and under for 1600, and I can't use my VA home loan yet to buy a house because anything more than 1600 for a 2 bedroom is just greed and I would rather move to another state or town than pay that. I had a 2 bed room in Tennessee for 875 a month I had another one in upstate new York with a garage for 1275 a month the cost of living here doesn't compare with what the average American can make at one job
- My portion of my rent is 50% of my monthly income. I have used up my portion of rental assistance from the state so I am left to fend for myself. Rental assistance is kind of helpful for a very short time period but it doesn't change anything permanently. We get thrown back into these hardships. I am a single person with no kids and only 1 animal (which was so hard to find a place in general that allows animals, don't get me started on that) and I make well over minimum wage and I STILL don't have enough left over after bills to feed myself consistently. And when I recently applied for food stamps I was denied because I make \$3k over the limit. It is absolutely atrocious that someone has to be struggling that hard to even be considered for assistance. Landlords need to be stopped from raising rent any higher and evicting tenants because of their rent increases.
- No
- Rental cap,
- Rent cap
- Affordable housing developments would be super helpful
- Not at this time
- I'm on housing. You could raise the level of housing Payments.
- The rents are too high
- rent caps, higher minimum wage (\$15+)
- Rent caps and higher minimum wage. Do not allow the city to be gentrified at the disadvantage of those already living and working local to the area.
- This is a hard question. One would be to cap the rents according to bedrooms and location.

- Put a cap on rent cost my rent went up 400 a month and nothing is included 2100 just rent alone for 4 bedroom the to pay heat hot water and electric and internet
- Lower taxes so landlords don't pass the cost on to renters
- Build multi family house in new developments
- My partner and I (both 27) can only afford housing with my rich family's help, despite the two of us having three jobs total.
- No
- I really want a first floor or second floor that I can afford
- I think we have enough low income housing and that downtown is trending in the correct way. I hope that it continues to get cleaned up and Biddeford continues to be on the rise!
- Rent should be drastically lowered as current prices are gouging millennials and gen Z to the extreme. Most of us have reliable jobs but my entire pay check goes to rent, student loans car payment, insurance, electric, water, gas, groceries, etc. I have barely any savings and am 27 years old, this is atrocious
- Inflation is increasing but employer wages are not
- Rent control would be a big plus
- I don't think that Biddeford needs more section 8 housing. The section 8 housing Buildings are disgusting and drag the rest of the property values in Biddeford down with it because tenants and landlords treat the property like a trash heap. Housing in Biddeford should be affordable for middle class to buy and to rent decent places with the income from their jobs.
- It is not up to the city to get involved in housing
- Presidium taking over the Pepperell Mills was the worst thing that could happen. They're jacking up the rents and the other mills will follow.
- Apartments need to remain affordable. People are getting evicted just so landlords can raise rents for the next tenant. We do have a low income population and residents with disabilities who are on fixed incomes that are left out in the cold. I have been in my rental for 17 years. If I have to look for another place I would be terrified. Nor would I be able to afford the prices they are asking. "Market Value" is a b.s. term that really means profit value. Evicting to solely double the rent should be criminal. I am okay with incurring extra costs, I pay my landlord extra in the summer when I use my air conditioners and I understand the price of heating oil has risen and we are reasonable and make it FAIR to each other when these costs rise. When this town has a homeless population that includes children and families, not just the addicts and mentally ill, I think sweeping it under the rug will not be so easy. We went from rents being 900 for a 2br to 1800 for the same apartment. I know people took horrible advantage of the no eviction during COVID, but honest hard working people are paying the price. Tiny houses are good for singles and couples but why not a mobile home park? That's affordable and can fit families. This is just going to get worse before it gets better.
- It's sad that people who have good paying jobs can't find apartments
- Accommodate for the people who have been living here for many years, not the ones moving from another state that may have better financial stability. I understand the importance of upgrading Biddeford's look and making it more visible to tourists. However, it should not come at the expense of people losing their homes, or being evicted because of huge rent increases or because the property was bought by people out of state. We have to meet somewhere in the middle. Not just to make it more affordable for adults but also for the children that are affected by these changes that force them out of their homes. Forcing them to leave town, their schools, their friends. Who is looking out for them?
- Rent restriction laws. Making things affordable for the life long Mainers who work and live here instead price gouging to the appeal of tourists with money.
- Restrict out of state multi unit slum lords. Help the actual local residents from Biddeford. Offer Tifs to local landlords vs big business.
- Sell the condemned buildings cheap so they can be rebuilt affordable. Too many empty condemned buildings that aren't for sale or for sale asking way too much for the condition they are in. Banks won't even give loans for them. Instead of building new buildings with 1 and 2 bedroom units, add some with 3 and 4 bedroom units. These are impossible to find.

- I could not afford to rent anywhere in Maine right now. I am an educator and my wife is retired with a fixed income. we consider ourselves very fortunate to have bought a home in Biddeford 4 years ago before the housing costs rose so significantly. We were able to lock in a reasonable rate. We have had to spend a lot of our savings to make improvements upon the house since then, however its still more affordable than renting. I think the people who just bought out the mills are being ridiculous about the increase in rents when the city gave so much of a tax break to Doug Sanford to rebuild them. Their ideas of rental prices is based upon out-of-state rates and something should be done about that. utility prices are costing people right out of their homes as well and the city ought to be considering generating their own electricity, much like Kennebec does--which saves their citizens so much more money! Being stuck with CMP is not a solution for any of the city residents.
- Many current renter way below market which makes it hard for them to move into better places. The utilities are high and unpredictable so that cost is hardship.
- Help end the stigma regarding housing vouchers to landlords
- Need more affordable housing
- Rent increase caps. My rent increased by 20% in February
- I just feel that it isn't right if a landlord's mortgage is low or he doesn't have one, that he still continues to increase the rent annually - especially for tenants who have been renting his apartment for several years and never late on the rent! I understand that other expenses go up as well, but they do for all of us too!! The amounts I see for rent in Biddeford now is outrageous!!
- Landlords = Scum of the earth. Commodifying basic human necessity is evil.
- Just up zone everything and let people and business build denser. You literally don't have to do anything else to increase housing stock, private money will do the rest, and eliminate parking and set back minimums so other neighborhoods have a chance to have fun options like downtown has.
- Landlords have too much power. I shouldn't be worried about where I will live when I work full time and pay my bills. There should be rental increase limits.
- Living without a roommate is the only way to survive
- Rents are up because of the mills charging high rents
- People should stop looking for handouts from the cities taxpayers. Work hard and live within your means!
- It's not affordable. I don't think you can incentivize landlords and developers enough for them to create affordable housing. Who wants to charge \$900 a month when they can charge \$1,500+ For market rate apartments? Not sure how this problem gets solved, but glad you are trying
- Do not go down the path of rent control!
- There should be a rent cap
- Instead of offering new builds, renovate some of the older buildings in Biddeford; make them into small efficiency apartments.
- It's too expensive
- Stop landlords from evicting renters who pay on time so they turn apartments into college dorms!
- accessory dwellings are a no-brainer. this is the quickest way to get a bunch of available housing for people
- It would be helpful to have a definition of "affordable". Obviously some find the high end units affordable. An affordable rate for a two-bedroom apartment would differ greatly if occupied by two single individuals or by a single parent with children. Do we know the segment of the population who are having housing issues in terms of demographics and income?
- Mobile home park
- Housing and apts rents depend on what's included. We do not need a new housing development where Clifford park is. I will fight that to my death
- "Encourage" developers to make a number of their units affordable. Don't give a developer a giant piece of land and not insist on some affordable units.
- There must be city wide rent control. Our rent is being raised 150/month next month, which makes our lives extremely precarious. Our landlord owns many multi unit buildings, and has not explained why he is raising our rent such an extreme amount. We also have no clue if he will continue to raise the

rent each lease cycle. Renters need tangible, unshakeable protections against the predatory business practice of landlords (in our case, who don't even live in Biddeford).

- Rent control!! We moved here last summer and our rent was \$1400 for a three bedroom apartment. We were informed a couple of months ago that our rent will increase to \$1600 per month starting in July. That's an increase of over 10%!! If our rent increases 10% every year we'll be forced to move out of Biddeford. I know we're not the only ones who have experienced this exorbitant raise in rent. Affordable housing is great, but there are plenty of apartments that exist but people are being forced out due to rent increases.
- Gentrification of the city is frustrating. I have lived here all my life and if I were single, I would be homeless. Apartment buildings are being bought and tenants are being thrown out so they can renovate and charge an offensive amount that Biddeford residents simply can't afford. People moved here because they wanted to live in a nice city but did not want or couldn't afford Portland. At this rate there won't be a French last name in sight.
- Placing a cap on all size apartments
- It's tough to be a government of a free nation and still regulate. Investors from out of state should not be able to purchase homes for use as a business or other means. Air bnbs should be taxed or penalized in a way that prevents overuse. Buildings that are bought with previous tenants still in them should not be able to be vacated.
- Help any way you can!!!!!!
- Stop raising property tax and the budget. With the current economic situation it is not the time to put additional strain on families budgets.
- A mobile home park or a modular home park where people can rent a lot and buy their own mobile or manufactured home. It is an affordable home ownership option for some people that cannot afford \$300k house prices but want to stay in the area. I would love to stay in Biddeford but cannot afford a 3 bedroom apartment or a traditional house. A mobile home park is a good option for myself and other people like myself. There also needs to be rent caps and more subsidized housing built in the area—the current public housing waiting list is closed because it is too long.
- Lower the rents
- Stop approving market rate apt housing ,2000 a month is driving your young people away and low to middle income working families away
- Be more lenient with construction projects & renovating rental units so that there could be more, which would lower the price of all apts in town.
- Think about what people are going through... think about how can a new teacher starting out afford 1300 a month for a one bedroom and pay other bills. My mortgage is 1200 for a 5 bedroom house. Pretty lopsided! I want to sell but I can't! Where do I go?
- As the taxes go up rents will have to go up. Flattening the taxes on building owners would allow for more affordable housing in my opinion
- Losing young people in our community due to high cost of housing. Need tax breaks and/or incentives to help purchase or improve home.
- I want to build on my own acreage and to do that the city needs to approve the road and allow us to build. Please that's all we want... we want to put more houses on our family property off of little house of prayer drive. However because it's along the Saco river, the city wants it for themselves... and won't allow us to build. Please help us change that.
- We need to bring back the "alternative" ways of living of our ancestors such as multi-generational homes. Think of "The Waltons". Raising a family should be more the responsibility of the entire family and not of the general taxpayer population. We should encourage and bring back these options, perhaps with updating such as more in-law apartments and tiny homes. We are a nation of over-consumers and resource wasters. Other housing options that were encouraged by our ancestors were boarding homes. These were very popular and very effective when a single person needed housing and fellowship. Perhaps unused office buildings could be rehabbed into efficiency-style apartments. I would also recommend some pet friendly development with dog parks included in the design. Not everyone has or should be encouraged to have children. There are many responsible individuals who

have chosen to have pets over children (less impact on taxes, etc.) and should be rewarded for this. There have been some talks of "neighborhood" style developments, with mixed use (small business, diverse housing options, etc.). This is a wonderful way to create a small community and limit excess vehicle usage. Again, much of what I am recommending is just an updated 21st Century version of the late 1800's and early 1900's. New developments should be encouraged to have electric car charging stations. I am NOT in favor of continuing to simply "hand out" housing vouchers to those who continue to make bad choices. This is only a band aid and encourages the continued abuse of the system in crisis. I am TOTALLY in favor of giving "hand ups". We should be encouraging and giving breaks (such as contract zoning changes, etc.) to contractors who are building income eligible housing for PURCHASE combined with assisting income eligible buyers with down payments. I believe Gray has a development called Collier Brook which could be used as a model. Homeownership is the greatest wealth builder for the majority of the U.S. population and should be encouraged. There is more pride when you have "skin in the game".

- Cap rent for family housing, limit out of state investors buying multiple homes.
- The reality is most people use the value of their home as a retirement so asking people to lower pricing will not happen without a complete stagnation of the economy. Our family is paying 1600 a month with no utilities and are making the payments but buying a house where the mortgage is a 1000-1200 is a denial by the banks. There has to be a common sense solution to make that viable.
- Don't ruin nice neighborhoods... Renters don't pay taxes My taxes are over 5k a yearI'm not interested in growing the size of Biddeford
- Don't allow landlords to go past a certain amount on rentals
- I like all the restaurants and shops available in Biddeford. If I didn't have to commit so much of my income to rent and utilities I would be able to spend more money on local business.
- The city was ahead of the curve with the ADU ordinance in parts of the city a few years ago. The state just recently mandated all homes can be allowed to have one ADU. It would be great if Biddeford added the state mandated ADU to the number of ADU's previously allowed under local ordinance. This would mean those who used to be able to have one unit could now have two. We would highly consider putting one in if we could do two. The fixed construction costs would be spread over 2 units making it a more realistic financial decision while adding two new apartments to our available housing inventory.
- I wanted to sell my house and either rent or purchase a smaller proy but there was no way I could afford to leave my house.
- Due to increased cost of buying a home, I have to increase rent in order to make my living situation more affordable. As a first time homebuyer and landlord, I've poured a lot of money into home improvements and making sure it's most efficient. If there are ways to improve cost of utilities or getting grants from the town to make cost of living easier, I think that would help everyone a ton.
- I love my 1 BR apartment in Riverdam but \$2,200 for a 1 BR with nothing included is on the pricier side. My only concern is if this is raised when my lease is up as I'm not sure I would resign but I'm also not looking to buy a home yet. If there's more housing options for others and the rental demand goes down, maybe I'll have less concerns.
- While I am fortunate to be able to afford my rent because of my privilege. This is not the case for so many residents of Biddeford. Housing is inaccessible, unaffordable, and honestly landlords are taking advantage of residents.
- stop letting big corporations buy up the properties and inflating prices.... it's pretty sad you can't afford to live in the city you work we don't all come from New York and California and sit at home on a computers collecting a check some of us have to go out in the community and work
- I feel like there should be laws in place to prevent rents going up at whatever amount the landlord wants. Like no more than a certain percentage per year... Or... Apartments that are 500 ft.² or less can't be more than X amount... so basically determining rents by square footage. Last year my 450 sq ft studio apartment rent went up \$200 and I anticipate it to go up more this year. The \$200 was already a blow and I can't take another increase. I've been living in this apartment for seven years.
- Rent cap percentage increase, similar to Portland

- landlords should be more transparent with how the cost of rent is supporting the building overall. rent is rising, wages are not. If we are going to be paying hundreds of dollars of extra rent in a year, then it would be nice to see how that is helping our building as a whole. we need rent control.
- Shouldn't we have a wider discussion about whether residents feel it is the City's responsibility to create housing?
- There need to be clear standards for adequate rentals and those standards must be enforced. Incentives to encourage more and affordable rentals is essential. Encourage owners of the two strips malls (Five Points and Biddeford Crossings) to develop plans to overhaul those complexes to include rental or condo units above the retail space capped with solar collectors. Five Points especially needs an overhaul and redeveloping that property to include work force dwelling units would make retail space more attractive, better use the land and increase the housing inventory.
- Lower taxes.
- New development in the city should be focused on affordable, multi-family, or condensed units - not single family homes/sprawl. Single family homes make a minimal impact and are geared toward developer revenue, where apartment units or multi-family units are geared toward the people of this city. Developing plots of woods/farmland to build 10+/- homes at a time is unsustainable, and we need to consider the number of people/families that can be served with each new development proposal. Additional considerations need to include how more people moving into Biddeford creates more traffic, needs more road service and plowing, etc. and how that affects taxes which also have an impact on vulnerable communities.
- I feel like there is so much low income housing it impacts the market value of homes for people who don't qualify for government assistance. I make too much to be low income but can still barely afford it. I would love to see more limits on how much landlords can increase rent per year and how much they can charge for space/quality options
- wish I could afford a 3 bedroom apartment
- We were "renovicted" from my apartment in South Portland last year, homeless for one month, and moved into my apartment in a 2-unit building in July. In October, I started a new job working from home, and my downstairs neighbor moved in. We believe his apt. is now a heroin den. There are vagrants coming and going all the time, smoking in the house, staring us down when we see them outside, slamming doors at all hours of the night. Our mental health is significantly damaged. I'm worried about my ability to perform at work. We have not tried to look for another place to live because we are overwhelmed at work and in the home and know how bad the housing market is. I am a 38 year old college educated professional native Mainer. For the first time in my life I do not feel safe in my own home. The process of finding someplace else to live is daunting, based on our experience finding this apartment. Biddeford is a great city, but I hate it here. We did not move here by choice, and our day-to-day experience is miserable. I worry about my future and ability to be successful because of my current living situation. I don't have thoughts or suggestions on how to make things better at the moment, but thank you for letting me vent. :)
- I'm ok for now, I reluctantly "unretired" to cover increased costs/rent. Currently and with the plans I've seen and heard about though, I'm concerned about low wage earners and people on fixed incomes losing their housing in the current economic climate. When I do have to move, I will likely have to leave Biddeford where I've lived for the past 15 years and probably leave Maine. Believe it or not, I can get a better apartment for less money in Duxbury, Massachusetts. Elderly and low income housing stocks are quite simply insufficient to meet the community's needs. It's a shame because I consider Biddeford my home and I'd much prefer to stay here.
- Renovate or tear down houses that are abandoned so that new housing can be made available. 2. When building or renovating housing units, keep the cost and rent down by not including fancy extras like swimming pools, high end appliances, etc.. People who need affordable housing need basic housing that keeps them off the street.
- Setting rent increase limits, because pay in Maine is not increasing at the rate rent is increasing, making it extremely difficult to find affordable living in a safe place. Making it easier for individuals who have lived in Maine versus people from out of state to purchase homes.

- The city needs to block or ban companies from buying up housing just to turn into AirB&B and other rental units, because that's a major part of the housing issue. I don't want to see more marshland and forested areas being bulldozed for tacky apartments, when there are plenty of properties that could and should be used as regular housing.
- I just think we're not Massachusetts but yet our rent payments are the same
- Stop new builds and developments. Work with landlords to reduce rents. Tax out of state folks higher on their seasonal homes - like 50% more. if they dont like, they can sell to locals at a reasonable price.
- Our daughter recently returned to Maine with her young family from Boston (Roslindale). We found it nearly impossible to find a clean two bedroom apt in town. When we did, we learned that her new rent was two hundred more than her former rent. I lived in suburban Boston years ago for a few years. That's an insane price hike and likely not sustainable. As great as this town is we don't have the economic job engine to make it sustainable. We can't continue to grow without the people that make this community home.
- Having experience with being homeless at one time in my life here in Maine, an affordable rooming house situation to be used as a stepping stone to move forward into more permanent type living situation would be ideal as opposed to living on the street or an over crowded shelter. Shared living spaces for men and women can give a sense of support and a place to share struggles and hopes and needs. People do need people. The realization that each person that is homeless has individual needs and hurdles to be met is pertinent to coping and assisting said individual in achieving goals and moving forward from the current situation and issues. Of course some people have financial issues in regards to obtaining "affordable housing" due to substance abuse issues or health issues or job related issues , the list of possibilities is endless, but if each individual is considered unique yet one of the "whole" it may shed a new light on this ever growing concern and problem. Once a person becomes "homeless" there comes along with that situation a whole new list of hurdles to overcome on the path to having a safe affordable place to live and sleep at night.
- Housing for the disabled should be a priority
- We need to make sure the developers are building multi-unit affordable homes - not single family homes that only cater to the wealthy and don't help relieve that housing crisis
- This is not strictly about affordable housing, but why does Biddeford spend a fraction of the GA money that other cities of comparable size and poverty rates spend? Our neighbors have been hurting!
- Biddeford is a city and should have more apartment rental units walkable to downtown, and fewer sprawling developments. Suburban and exurban sprawl are terrible for the environment (everyone has to drive everywhere), for community connection (people don't talk to each other and live in divisive bubbles), and the local economy (people buy online and at big box stores instead of downtown). Every time I see another single family development being approved and built, I'm disappointed in the City leadership.
- I answered this based on MYSELF - not on what I think we need to do for affordable housing. E.g. as a non-renter, rental assistance is not important to me; what I can afford in my income bracket, etc. However, I think assistance is a crucial move within this conversation. In addition, following Smart Growth (Grow Smart ME) guidelines especially for re-development (since we have so many housing opportunities that can be renewed/revitalized e.g. mills) that MUST have affordability in the mix. If you build new out by Biddeford Crossing, fine, but to give away all the housing literally adjacent to the transportation center to luxury condos, we've gone very wrong. I'm worried about the mix of luxury and affordable in the downtown that shoves out all affordable units to the outskirts where there are fewer services and transportation opportunities. We have an existing density of buildings in the core that can and MUST be for all income levels to serve everyone that lives here, not just the rich. Consider rent control, permanent affordable units (pegged to HUD standard), etc. I think the City does a good job controlling property taxes (but I also don't mind paying for services) for those of us that already own a home; but for the renters and house-seekers in my network, Biddeford seems already nearly impossible to live in affordably.
- There seems to be a number of abandoned buildings or homes in Biddeford that could be turned into housing options or even 'shelter' or transitional options for those in transition between housing

solutions. I'd love to see our spaces being put to better use. I also appreciate that housing affordability is one part of overall financial stability - so anything that supports a sustainable community can support folks finding or staying in a home in Biddeford - it's great to see the increase of community gardens, community spaces, and collaborative living approaches.

- Strong communities are built with less turnover within the communities population. This allows for strong economies to develop and grow within those communities. To achieve this a community must have a reasonable cost of living, affordable housing and a strong transit network being essential to this.
- Ban short term rentals like air bnb. Institute rent control. Tax second homes/vacation to redistribute wealth. New housing should be built close to grocery stores, bus lines and other essential services. Make sure Biddeford is affordable and liveable for working people. Don't make the mistakes that Portland has by catering to rich people, landlords and small business owners.
- My answer to question 12 would have been N/A but that option was not available. Additionally, as I identified as a homeowner, my answers to questions geared toward renters are my beliefs about how the city can help those who are renting. Further, I encourage the council & city staff to enact meaningful change with regard to a requirement for a percentage of affordable housing in new developments that is *tied to a percentage of the area median income* and not tied to what the developer may think is "affordable."
- mobile housing platforms for housing emergencies
- Allow and encourage building additional affordable housing units in the downtown business district (urban area), not on farm or forest land (rural, natural resources).
- Everyone seems to point a finger to a different sector when it comes to the housing affordability conversations. I would ask the municipality to take a risk and take the lead in these initiatives.
- I had a typo on a former question: 1100 should be the answer, not 11100. I am very happy with my apartment and my landlords. However the price my partner and I pay is at least \$2-300 more than we should be paying. We pay the most of anyone in our building. It is far above market value but with so few rental options available, the costs are driven up. I understand this is a systemic issue that can't just be easily solved with rental assistance. But it is completely unaffordable to live here.
- The only other thought I have is on addressing our homeless and/or mentally ill residents. I'm becoming more and more concerned with our residents that are struggling with substance abuse, mental health and poverty. The lack of basic needs to numerous people living on the streets in downtown is difficult to accept and not address.
- My thoughts are... complex. I do not think I need direct financial assistance but I recognize that there are those who do. What would help me and many others is if the rents themselves were lower, in line with wages. For example, my rent went up \$200 in April and another \$200 this August; it was \$975 in March. That is about a 45% increase in one year. On top of that electric has doubled. I got a 2% raise at work.
- Please consider some form of rent control, otherwise with Biddeford's current and expected future growth people will get priced out of the market. A viable, vibrant city requires housing for various income levels.
- As a senior citizen and long-term resident at Pepperell Mill, I am concerned that the rent in the Mill may become unaffordable. I would like to know if there might options being considered for the City to review the percentages of rent-increases. Thank you.
- Home repair loans since housing stock is old
- Any help from the city...accessory dwellings...need to be affordable and never turned into short term rentals. We need to tighten the rent on affordable. Do the math. Most are NOT affordable for a person on min wage or disabled. We need congregate housing or tiny homes for rent. The city needs to slow business dev down and find room for the ones on the street...like a dorm setting or hotel setting with communal kitchen. Everyone needs shelter.
- Lower the cost of property taxes first!

- Increase of 4 and 3 bedroom units results in a tremendous burden on taxpayers due to a substantial increase in school population . One and two bedroom units results in a more professional influx of residents.
- People need affordable housing!! !!!!
- Develop Emergency Homeless Center
- Biddeford is a lovely town that deserves to grow and thrive responsibly, but just keep development the *heck* away from our beloved Clifford park. Please!
- There is plenty of housing in Biddeford but it needs to be affordable for the people who live here year round. Second homes
- All deals with developers should include a percentage of lower income housing and large deals that got special tifs or other deals should not be allowed to be sold for a number of years like what happened with Doug Sanfords' buildings without some clawback clause. Protect taxpayers at all expense.
- We need better housing plans for those of us who cannot afford rents that are to high right now
- This past January, my household of 3 (myself, partner, and roommate) fled a severely under-maintained building. 23 Middle St, owned by Robb Crawford. Our landlord had failed to properly address multiple maintenance issues during our time there, but we finally left after our unit was continuously infested with cockroaches from August 2021 through January 2022. He told us it was fine for us to break our lease, then turned around and threatened to sue us for back rent when we asked for our security deposit back. He has taken apparently retaliatory actions toward our ex-neighbors for demanding essential repairs, such as ensuring sufficient heat and hot water. One neighbor's disabled son ended up in the hospital due to the lack of hot water for proper hygiene. We observed leaks and signs of water damage in the building that went unaddressed. In my view, negligent landlords like Mr. Crawford are responsible for exploiting and degrading Biddeford's precious housing stock. I believe the town should be able to expropriate properties from the most egregious offenders and entrust them with a community-owned entity that can maintain them properly and rent them out at cost in order to create competition in rental prices. The current laissez-faire system has clearly created a crisis. Our former neighbors are much less financially secure than us and lack the connections we used to find a new place to live. They are afraid of becoming homeless. Local government should balance the interests of real estate and landlords with those of working families, who are being left behind by skyrocketing rents and home prices and a lack of desire by developers to build new, quality affordable housing. Please treat this as the life-threatening emergency it is.
- There needs to be no more building in Biddeford. There's too much congestion & density now. Over population has been studied for years & it leads to the social problems we see today. Concentrate on improving the quality of what we have now.
- the housing should all be free market. No subsidies.
- Inclusionary housing and hold affordable housing developers like Nathan Szanton to a higher level of accountability in property management post-development.
- There's a huge gap between income & housing costs! I don't know anyone who pays less than 30% of their income in rent. Most people I know make \$1200-3000/month and pay at least \$1200-\$1500 in rent (not including utilities)
- Officially, a resident is considered "cost-burdened" if they spend 30% or more of their income on rent. About half of renters in Biddeford are "significantly cost-burdened," meaning they spend at least half of their income on rent and other housing related bills. I am concerned that by allowing new developments to call their housing "affordable" when it costs \$1,500+ a month will affect the local economy for multiple reasons: 1. People born in Biddeford will not be able to afford to stay here, especially if they are young adults moving out of their family homes for the first time. 2. It will make it harder for middle- and working-class people to move to our area, whether they're out of state or not. 3. We already have a labor shortage crisis. If workers in sectors like hospitality can't even afford to LIVE here, why would they choose to work here when they can find employment in Portland? 4. If residents are spending half of their income on rent, that's less money they are able to put into the local economy. That boils down to less sales at local businesses. Rent hikes harm small businesses.

- More multi-unit housing options in and around downtown would have a huge impact
- It used to be that it was hard to gather the start up costs of a new rental (first, deposit, sometimes lasts...) when you live paycheck to paycheck you can have the rent reliably, but not always have the savings to secure the place. Now, the first month's rent on it's own is too high. Similarly with owning a home, the initial down payment is impossible but the average month to month mortgage payment would be doable. It's the cash flow of living paycheck to paycheck. How do we assist those people who do have reliable income but an income that doesn't allow for savings to position them to put deposits down. There are many already constructed buildings that could be rehabbed for businesses or apartments. IF there is new construction it seems that multifamily housing should be the biggest priority.
- We need affordable multiunits. I think a small tiny house/trailer park community with communal things like gardens and parks will help to solve housing issue while preserving quality of living. I've had to raise rent because of oil prices and maintaining old oil heating equipment - any way to bring natural gas to Biddeford or get support to update heating systems?
- We need an affordable housing ordinance that ensures development is inclusive of affordable housing of 10-25% of all new units of housing to be affordable.
- A place where tents are allowed or small houses are offered.
- There should be a city wide moratorium on landlords increasing rents beyond what HUD allows.
- I would love to own a home in a good area of biddeford
- Urban blight commercial properties taxed fairly so they are encouraged to sell to housing deveopers
- I think if more residential units are built, it will the supply and demand will intersect and be more affordable. The main reason we cannot afford housing is due to the job market. The jobs do not pay enough, the housing is not too expensive. Do not hurt landlords because businesses do not pay employees enough money. I work in affordable housing and many take advantage of cheap rent and do not look to better themselves or their family. They also may have too large of a family for their income. It is not my tax burden to pay for irresponsible citizens.
- It would be good if the city encouraged current residents to purchase multi unit housing. Financial assistance for a promise to owner occupy and keep rents reasonable for a specific time period. In my opinion this could help current residents who may be boarder line for financing providing them housing. It would vest them in the community and provide housing for lower income residents as their tenants. A program like this builds relationships and strengthens community.
- Even as a high-income earner, I am being priced out of Biddeford because of the rent increase in my current home and the lack of open units elsewhere
- We need to address the large number of empty homes owned by seasonal residents. They do not pay their fair share in taxes, and their homes are empty while full year residents are homeless. We also need to find a way to prioritize sales to Maine residents, perhaps through seller incentives or other programs. Property taxes need to be lessened significantly- there is no reason for them to be as high as they are, and frankly they are oppressive. Work with other communities to consolidate services. We must address the homeless population as well. It puts a poor face on Biddeford's revitalization when we have people sleeping in and littering the streets. Surely we can find a solution to assist them with getting on their feet, mental health services, etc.
- recently saw 27 units being sold as a package. They included current rents and market rent comparisons. All of these market rents were from \$300 to \$500 more. There should be a cap on how much a landlord can raise rents, even when purchasing. I imagine this will be a loos of 27 units of affordable housing in the near future. We are not Portland. We need to take care of the working class who built this city. In 2021 I was finally hired as a permanent employee at a job where I was temping. Found that a 2-unit I had looked at in 2019 was now selling for \$340k - double the original price. With no improvements made whatsoever. Just to adjust to market pricing. I find this terrible. This is what raises (raised) home prices here. I now can't seem to make the numbers work for any unit multi unit purchase. And I work 35 hours a week at \$20/hour. Making it work always means raising rents substantially. How does one fix this? It's happening now.

- I feel I make a decent living but finding affordable housing has been a major stressor for me and a primary source of anxiety.
- We cannot wait for the housing market to level off. We need to help those who have jobs and can afford a reasonable rent but can't find housing because rents today are too high and unattainable for the majority.
- With gentrification on the rise in downtown, I think prices will naturally skyrocket. However, the types of amenities bigger cities offer (like Portland or Boston) simply are not in Biddeford yet - such as event venues, more city parks, community gardens, rooftop bars, better public transit, safer communities, local art events, barcades, etc. Since these are few in Biddeford, it's hard to justify the current prices of rent and homes. I think building more affordable housing on the outskirts of downtown and putting more money in to public transit will help distribute population enough to continue refurbishing the whole downtown area for more businesses and new, eco-friendly units that can eventually scale up as Biddeford grows with desirable businesses.
- The City cannot simply rely on market forces to solve the current housing crisis. We desperately need inclusionary zoning with meaningful opt out fees that will actually enable the City to creatively partner with developers and other entities (local, regional, state) to build affordable housing. For example, the \$500,000 that the developer for the 100+ proposed market rate apartments across from Biddeford Crossing will pay in lieu of including any affordable units is completely ineffective and totally insufficient. We need a comprehensive solution.
- We need rental limits and better protection for tenants. I should not be worried about losing my home of four years when I have done nothing wrong and have paid my rent.
- There is a huge divide in Biddeford between lower-income folks and those in the middle and upper classes. I am a lower-income person due to disability (a former professional who left the work force due to cancer). I live in an Avesta property and pay almost 40% of my income for rent. Because rent, food, gas, and almost everything else has increased in the past 12 months, it is a challenging time for me. It is not possible for me to afford a market-rate apartment, and it is difficult to even afford my apartment in a building meant for people 55+ with low incomes. We need to redefine what affordable means, and then find a way to provide more truly affordable housing for residents of Biddeford (and all of Maine).
- I know personally at least half a dozen people being forced from their apts. There are no rentals in this price point. These people all work 40hr or more per week, they have stable jobs, and are responsible and not behind on rent but can NOT afford the result of what you refer to as "The Biddescance" Rents doubled in many units in the past 3 years. These prices and many are dumps, are absurd. This is not an upscale town. It's a poor/middle class city with a huge drug issue and now more homeless people than ever. Revamping Main St did nothing for most long term residents as they don't go downtown unless they work there. The need is 100% for affordable housing for workforce. Enough on the section 8 and vouchers for those who choose not contribute to society at all and instead provide affordable housing for those towing the line if you will.
- The cost-of-living is too high right now. The biggest expense being the cost of rent. I work for a professional medical office full-time as a single parent and I'm constantly struggling to keep up with my bills. If I work full-time I shouldn't be struggling
- The rent and property taxes are out of control. There are too many out of state folks buying up what precious little natural resources we have left and then building to rent out/air b&b/UNE students, etc... which leaves those that work here and live here year around struggling for shelter or struggling to pay property taxes and mortgages. The gentrification of Biddeford is pushing out honest and hard-working folks. Landlords are kicking out renters in order to bring in wealthier folks. Market rate housing does not equal affordable housing.
- Make rental companies or owners prove they're doing their jobs as well as not making record millions off tenants. And can we mention how many people are making thousands of dollars off application fees alone each month?
- The joint development you just agreed to should have required 25% set for renters below the poverty line. If this were required of all developments it may help the situation

- More affordable options for single working professionals that have just one income, affording a studio apartment for \$1,200 on one salary is difficult. Also increase options for starter family homes and young couples who want to have a family, more space, etc.
- There needs to be a limit of how much landlords can increase rent in a year. I'm living in fear that rent will increase significantly and there are no cheaper apartments I can find.
- We've fostered about 12 therapeutic foster kids. Adopted 2 of those kids. Our adoption assistance ended ... minus \$1,400/month. Our new landlord increased rent from \$1,000/month to \$2,000/month. Our latest oil bill was just under \$800 for about 175 gallons of oil. I work only a 2 day/week job, so I can keep SSDI. I literally and physically cannot work more hours. We rely on SSDI and SSI, overall income of about \$3,000. Oil and rent alone would leave us with only \$200 for gas, car insurance and groceries. Thank God for rent relief (ERA) and LIHEAP!!! But i now understand ERA has been reduced from 18 to 12 months per household of availability. Come August, 2022, that will be our 11th month of ERA. So we can only get approved for 1 more month. We have resided here for over 16 years. I am active in the community ... VP of Alumni Band, and am a member of the Maine Pops Concert Band. We have enjoyed all that Biddeford offers, and hope we have contributed to our community in return. We want to continue on this path and stay in Biddeford. We do not know what will come of our situation. Feel free to contact me. Sue Niemoeller Soodlebug@gmail.com (207)286-4826
- The prices are not sustainable. Families who have been living in the city for generations can no longer stay here
- WE NEED PRICE CAPS. Do not become the next portland.
- more affordable housing of all types, rent control. Taxes for empty second homes. Regulations on AirBnbs so they don't replace existing housing
- MORE 4 BEDROOM AFFORDABLE RENTS IN HANDICAPPED BUILDINGS! PEOPLE NEED MORE BEDROOMS!
- Place a cap on the rental rates to actually reflect the median income of the population. Limit the percentage of short-term rental properties (AirBnB's, VRBO's, etc.) to allow current residents the opportunity to buy/rent a home. Place a moratorium on "rental application fees," which is a predatory and exclusionary practice. Require landlords to have an inspection done of their rental properties once every 5-10 years. Maine law gives tenants an "implied warranty of habitability" and landlords must be held responsible for their properties. The fees necessary to pursue a civil suit against a negligent landlord are often a barrier to those who live in low-income housing.
- Housing affordability is being driven by too little supply being brought to market outside of the Mill buildings. The Mill developments were great to jump start the growth of Biddeford but we need to focus much less time now on the Mills and more on how to bring a broad array of housing to market quickly
- Easing zoning. Allow more ADUs, tiny homes, modular homes, and multifamily. There aren't a lot of places for new construction to happen, so it will be important to maximize the space that we have and allow greater density to increase the housing supply.
- Put requirements on market-rate developers to include workforce units or pay into housing trust. 2. Establish housing trust to increase affordable rental units and/ or help workforce afford to purchase homes
- There should be a rent cap in Biddeford. My rent went up four times during a pandemic, and while we have floated by, we will soon be priced out of our home if this keeps happening. Pay isn't increasing anywhere, but rent is. My household has even changed jobs, and every time we get ahead, our rent goes up again and we are trapped where we were. We can't buy a home because we can't save, because we can't get ahead, because rent keeps going up.
- Whenever possible, housing solutions should incorporate existing buildings that are not longer in use, instead of new construction. This approach both increases housing stock and maintains the city's character.
- The ADU/tiny house idea is a good start, but MUST be regulated to prevent short-term rental abuse

- Density increases in the downtown core would be easy on infrastructure, good for the housing crisis, and could potentially allow us to incentivize lower rents.

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What do you consider to be an affordable monthly housing cost for a three-bedroom unit?

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\$1,500/month	

What do you consider to be an affordable monthly housing cost for a 4+bedroom unit?

- \$ 500
- \$ 800
- \$ 800
- \$ 850
- \$ 850
- \$ 875
- \$ 900
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 Median: \$ 1,700.00

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Developer Survey

27 responses

Are you a multi-family property owner in Biddeford or a developer that has completed projects in Biddeford?

23 out of 27 answered

Yes 22 resp. 95.7%



No (Click this option to take our Housing Affordability Survey instead!) 1 resp. 4.3%



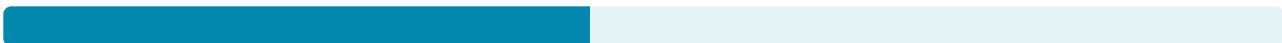
Have you completed any development projects in other communities?

24 out of 27 answered

Yes 13 resp. 54.2%



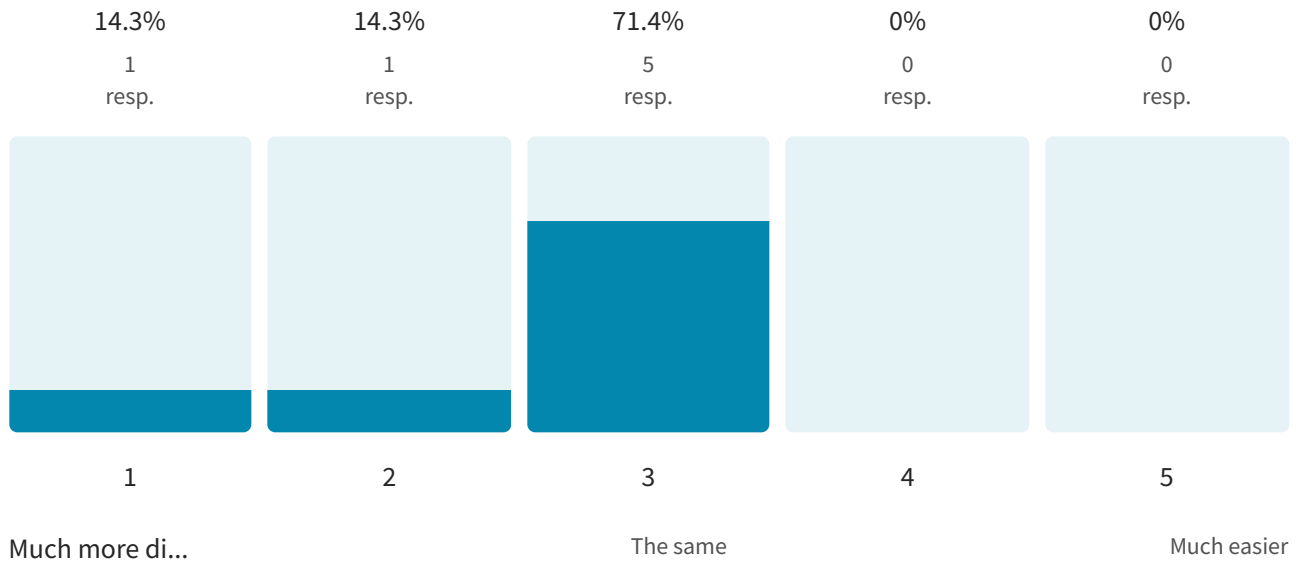
No 11 resp. 45.8%



In your perception, how easy do you believe it is to work with the City of Biddeford on projects compared to other communities?

7 out of 27 answered

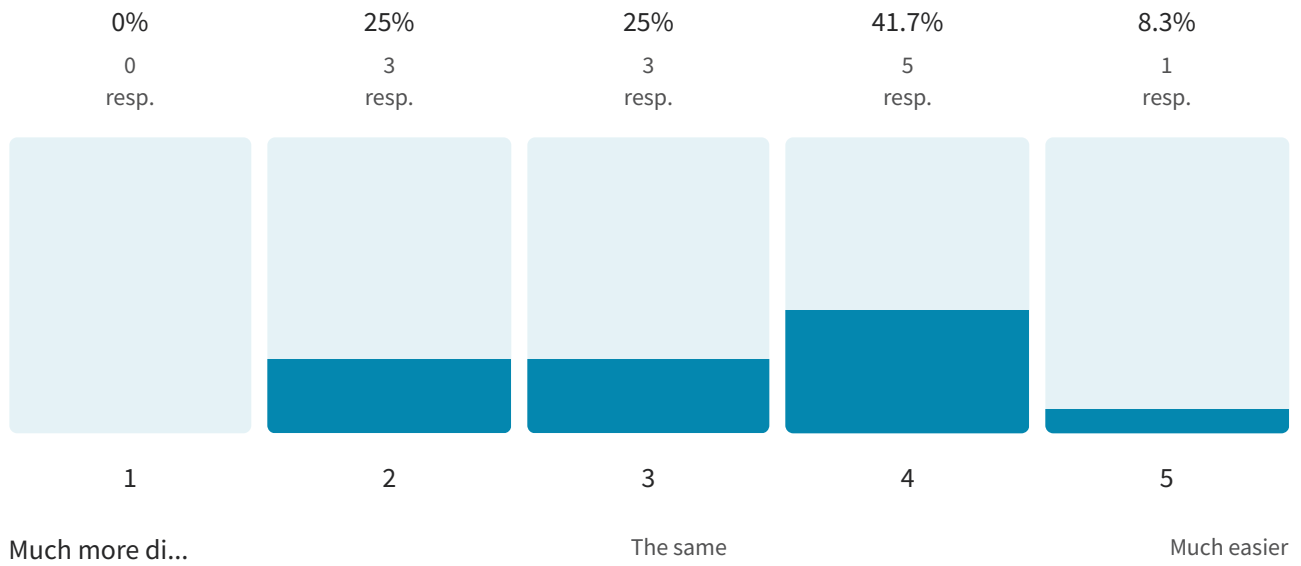
2.6 Average rating



Compared to your experience with other communities, how easy do you find it is to work with the City of Biddeford on projects?

12 out of 27 answered

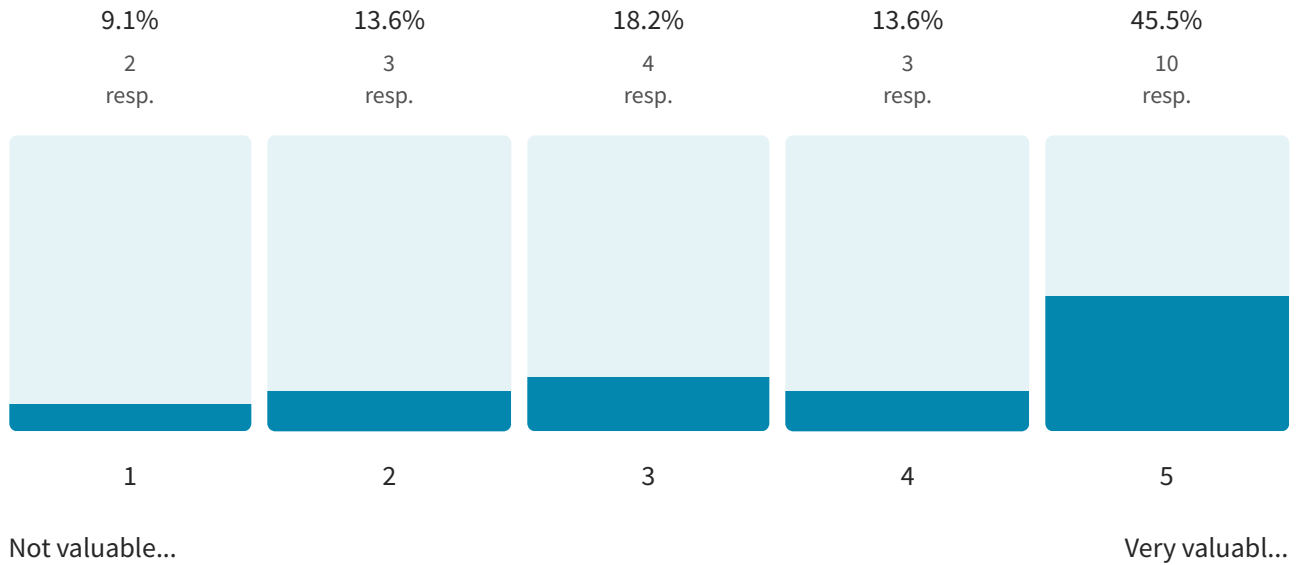
3.3 Average rating



How valuable would it be for the City to provide consultant-type support to help you get through a project?

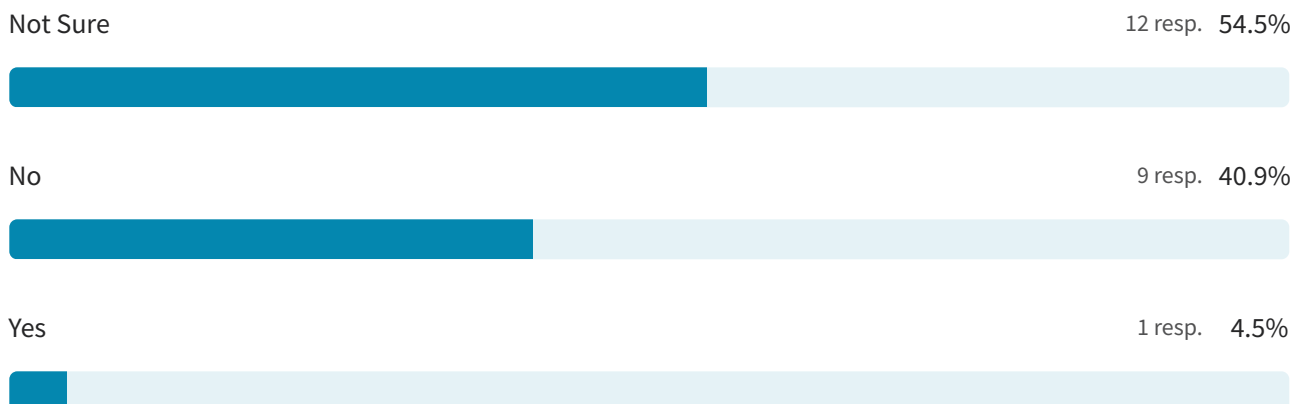
22 out of 27 answered

3.7 Average rating



If the City did provide consultant-type support to help you get through a project, would you be willing to pay for this additional service?

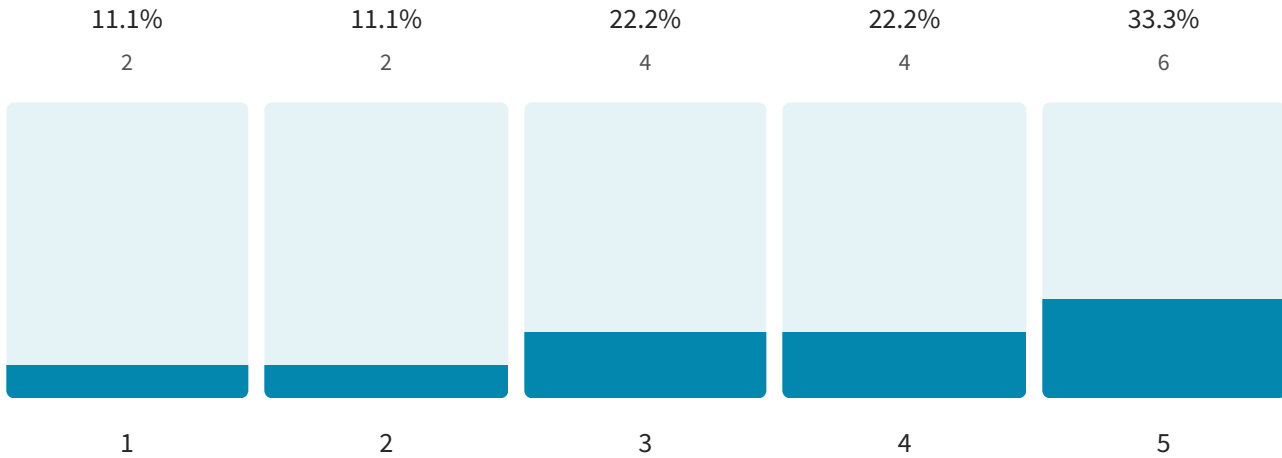
22 out of 27 answered



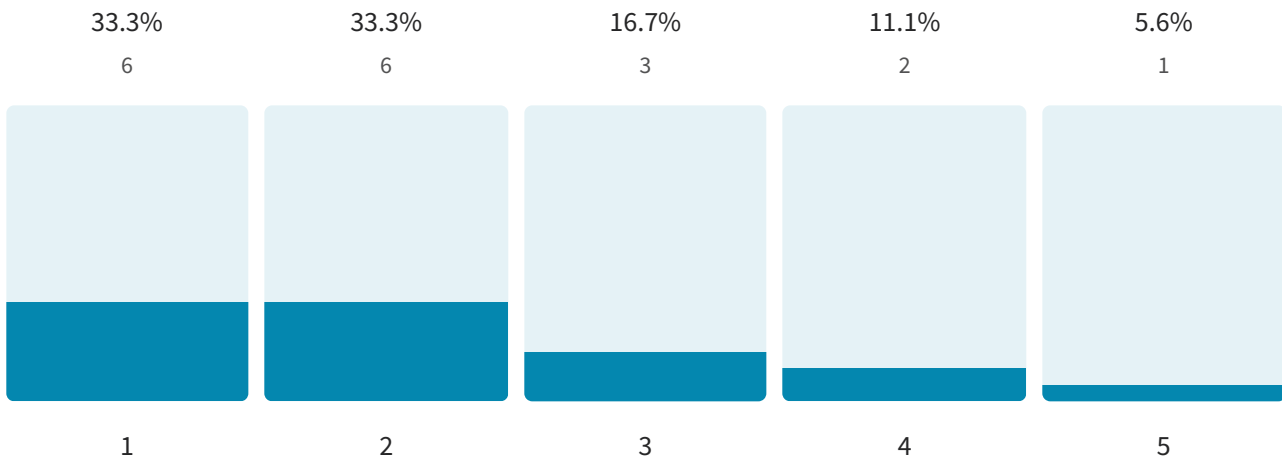
Rank the following types of written materials that would you like the City to provide to help you complete projects efficiently.

18 out of 27 answered

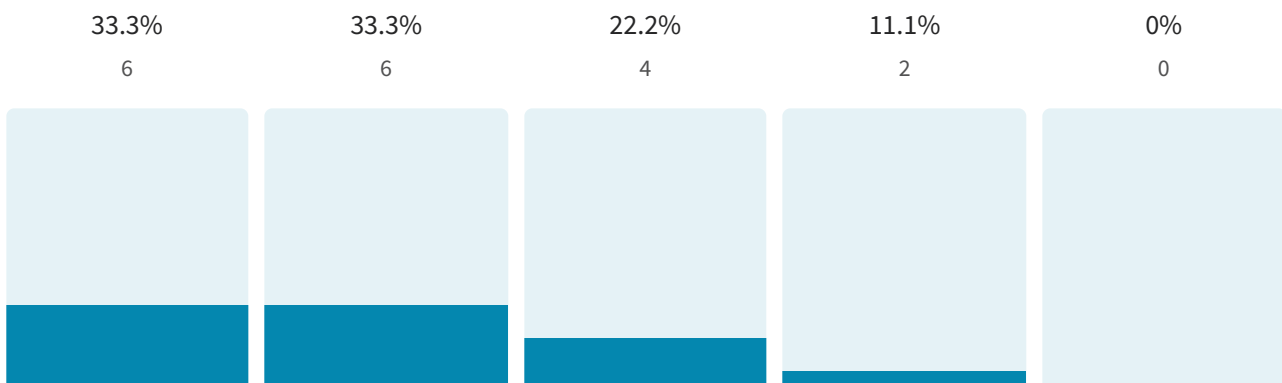
Information about current events regarding potential changes in zoning and other policies that may impact your project



Easy to find and clear to read zoning regulations



Checklists to outline what steps will need to be taken to complete your project successfully





1

2

3

4

5

Lists of City resources that may be available to you to create affordable housing opportunities

16.7%

16.7%

16.7%

33.3%

16.7%

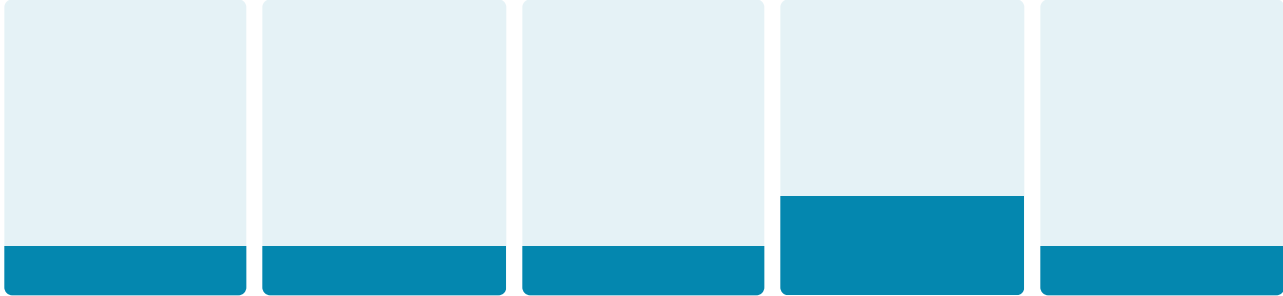
3

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A guide to explain which department to engage with for each step of the development process

5.6%

5.6%

22.2%

22.2%

44.4%

1

1

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8



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Social Media Comments on Housing Survey

Running the ad for the survey on Facebook prompted a lot of discussion in the comments section of the ad. These comments generally reflected the same sentiment that was expressed in the comments of survey. I have pulled a few key comments from the discussion. If you would like to read the full conversation, with over 150 comments, you can find it [here](#).

- “Invest more in public housing. We need more more more”
- “Let us turn our in-law suits into actual rentable units”
- “Building was bought out last year. New owners raised rent \$800 a month. Now this year they are not renewing. Nothing wrong on my end just going to renovate and charge 3,000 plus utilities for a three bedroom in Biddeford... Moved in this unit three years ago at 1250 and in a mere three years it’s all of a sudden 3,000.”
- “Stop letting companies purchase housing units. Stop allowing rents to be jacked up just because of these expensive mill apartments”
- “I am on affordable housing waiting list since for four years and on waiting list avesta house four year and Phoenix housing waiting for four years. This October will make is five years I have been waiting. I have been in same place and my rent is high... my landlord won't put in new rugs and stuff and if then go up on rent any more we will be living in woods”
- “I been in my same apt for 9 yrs now and if I could afford to move, I would cuz my whole building is a dump and we been thru 3 owners and the new one, don't even fix anything, it's crazy!!! My rent is only \$1100 for a small 3 bdrm, this is why I stay mostly cuz rent isn't crazy and I pay full rent every month.”
- “Stop letting hedge funds and contractor gobble up any property they can get their hands on so they can inflate rental prices put rent control in place if this actually matters the pure greed is ridiculous.”
- “Part of the reason why rents have gone up, is because of various housing programs in the state. Within the last few years, it was commonplace for some owners to offer rents at least say \$900, but then affordable housing would offer \$1,100 for the same rent... so of course they will then try to get at least \$1,100 from everyone because that just makes sense (at least on their end). This trend has continued and while it isn't the only cause, it hasn't helped the situation.”
- “People who is on disability and get a Monthly check and can't afford rent and all bills . But then landlord can fix then own apartment ... i have been waiting list for four years .. my landlord will not accept it ..”
- “I mean, you could have started by not changing the ordinances to allow 3 unit buildings to be turned into 4. I literally got kicked out after years of being a good tenant because and I quote my landlord “I can now turn your apartment into two and make way more money, so you have 30 days to leave”
- “I bought home in Biddeford in 2008 as the last housing bubble was deflating. I was employed in the Boston area and could not afford to buy a home in the local market. I recognized that Biddeford was going through a rebirth at that time. i wanted to raise my children in Maine and commuted to Boston for 7 years to make that happen. The housing market in Maine and Nationwide is no longer affordable for working class families to buy or rent. I am blessed to be a home owner. Perhaps, as a community we can demand that developers offer a certain percentage of below market housing units in exchange for the opportunity to build in our city.”

- “The city has gone in the direction of gentrification. The city is pricing out those that can't afford to live here without government assistance. This city will never be as cool as living in Saco.”
- “Houses that use to sell for 200k 2 years ago are selling for 400 to 600k. Why would i want to become a home owner? The problem this city will have is all the people my age (30-40) will move away and only the boomers will remain. When everyone retires and the workforce is gone what will happen then? For the same price in biddeford i can get a home in the outskirts of boston. I dont want to move but why would i stay?”
- “Stop short term rentals (under 3 months) in residential districts and neighborhoods. Stop the crazy property tax hike, a 20% increase on multi family homes is only going to raise rents further”
- “I work full time and still can't afford my rent... can't afford to buy a house which is even cheaper”
- “We need to make it so people can afford to live in the city of Biddeford. The struggle is real people. My grown children who have jobs in education can't afford to survive let alone live here.”
- “We moved out of Biddeford because could not afford to build and the taxes where high. Bought and build a two bedroom retirement home in Waterboro with lake access”
- “Rent has doubled in the past five years. All my neighbors were once older couples that had guests here and there. Now the two units are occupied by 10is people each from out of state”
- “I think seniors should get a tax break if they own their own homes so they can afford to stay in them and do home improvements such as winterizing for better windows and doors, furnace, etc.”
- “Can we maybe, I dunno, actually allow new development of rental buildings and starter homes for people? Also prioritize locals for the building and purchasing of these instead of people from away.”
- “People who are retired deserve a break, limited income”
- “[Single family homes] don't get the added fee's and targeted extra taxes on multiunits by the city of Biddeford. Who pays those extra taxes and sewer fees on top of our bill? Last year it was a 20% property tax increase on multiunits only. The year before that a 10% fee on the sewer rate on multi-units only.”
- “We need to rezone area for the development of apartment buildings.”
- “rent controls do not work. They discourage new housing and encourage lack of maintenance and blight.”

title	description	author_name	published_at
Impact Fee for Affordable Housing	It would be great to charge an impact fee on all new/proposed developments. The funds could be used to create new affordable units as well as refurbish existing units. It would allow the creation and development of rentals and home ownership possibilities that are more affordable than what exist now.	Polly Finlay	6/7/2022
Affordable housing ordinance	Our community needs to stop letting developers pay their way around providing affordable housing. Time and again in recent years we have accepted money to go into a fund for undetermined number and unknown date to be completed affordable housing. We need to have an ordinance that requires any project over 10 units to require 10/15% affordable units and pegged to not the county income levels but Biddeford income levels. Require all of the development in our community to be inclusive!!	Sterling Roop	6/1/2022
Collaboration with Biddeford youth?	The BRCOT has historically renovated and/or built housing for the community as part of their curriculum. Is there an opportunity to partner with them to build affordable housing? Rotary has done so in the past, with Rotary purchasing the materials/homes then recovering the costs in the sale. Is there a way to collaborate with BRCOT for other/additional affordable housing? Rotary is planning to do so again this year, but it's worth a conversation with Paulette to see if the students/faculty have capacity to do more.	Melissa Cilley	6/20/2022
Revitalize Vacant/Abandoned Homes/Lots	Several condemned buildings/vacant lots exist in Biddeford, particularly in Ward II and around Lincoln Street (perhaps other places too, but that is where I work and live and see the most). I think finding funding, maybe through grants such as these: https://www.maine.gov/decd/community-development/cdbg-program/grant-categories/housing-assistance-program to demolish and/or rebuild multi-unit housing could be a sustainable priority	Victoria Gordon	6/7/2022
Zoning & Rent Control	With so many more people working from home due to the pandemic, the home is becoming an incubator for small businesses yet live/work space is still not legal in some Wards. Biddeford has become a real artist's community. Affordable space for artists is crucial to the continued growth of the arts in Biddeford. Zoning should be changed to allow more home space to be utilized for commercial purposes as long as that work doesn't adversely affect the neighbors. I also hear horror stories about massive rent increases. There needs to be a rent control policy in Biddeford.	Patrick Conlon	6/16/2022

comments	upvotes	downvotes
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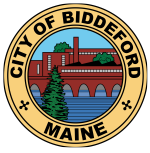
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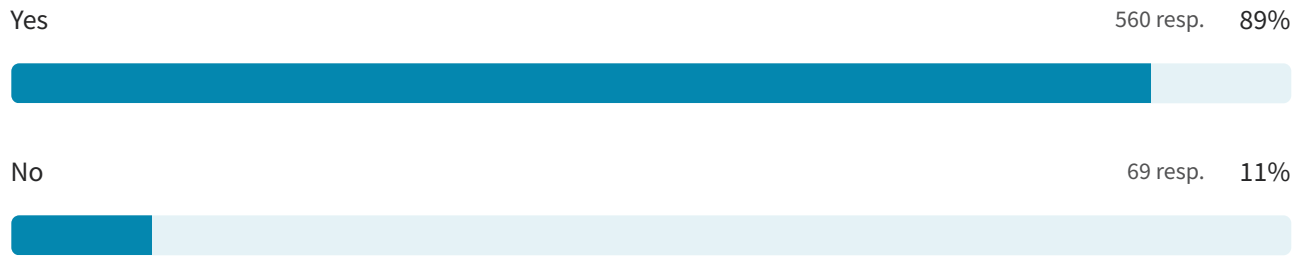


Affordable Housing Survey

629 responses

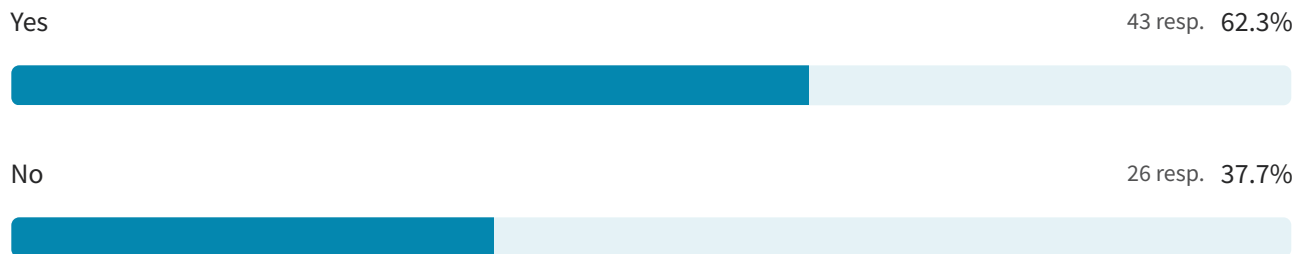
Do you live in Biddeford?

629 out of 629 answered



If you don't live in Biddeford, do you wish you did?

69 out of 629 answered



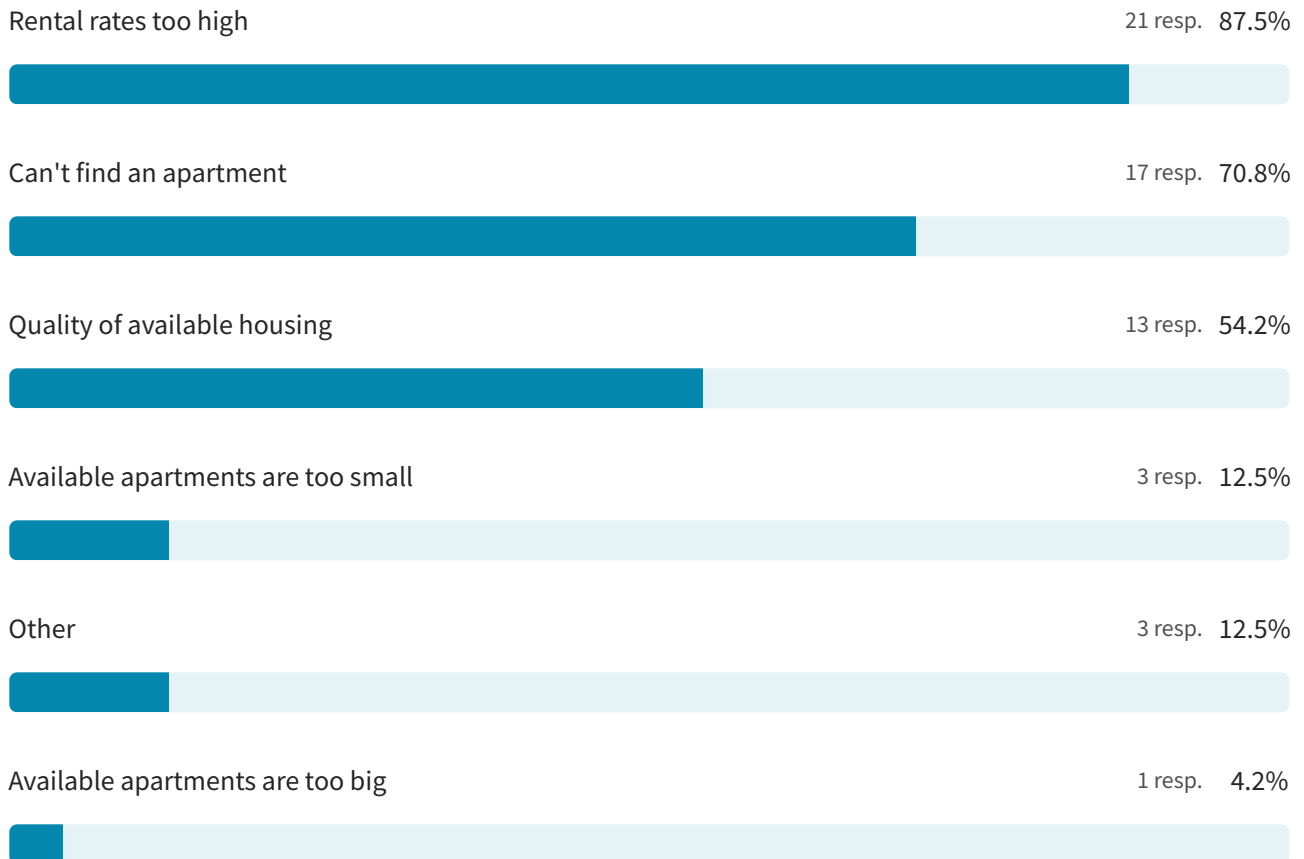
Would you prefer to own or rent in Biddeford?

43 out of 629 answered



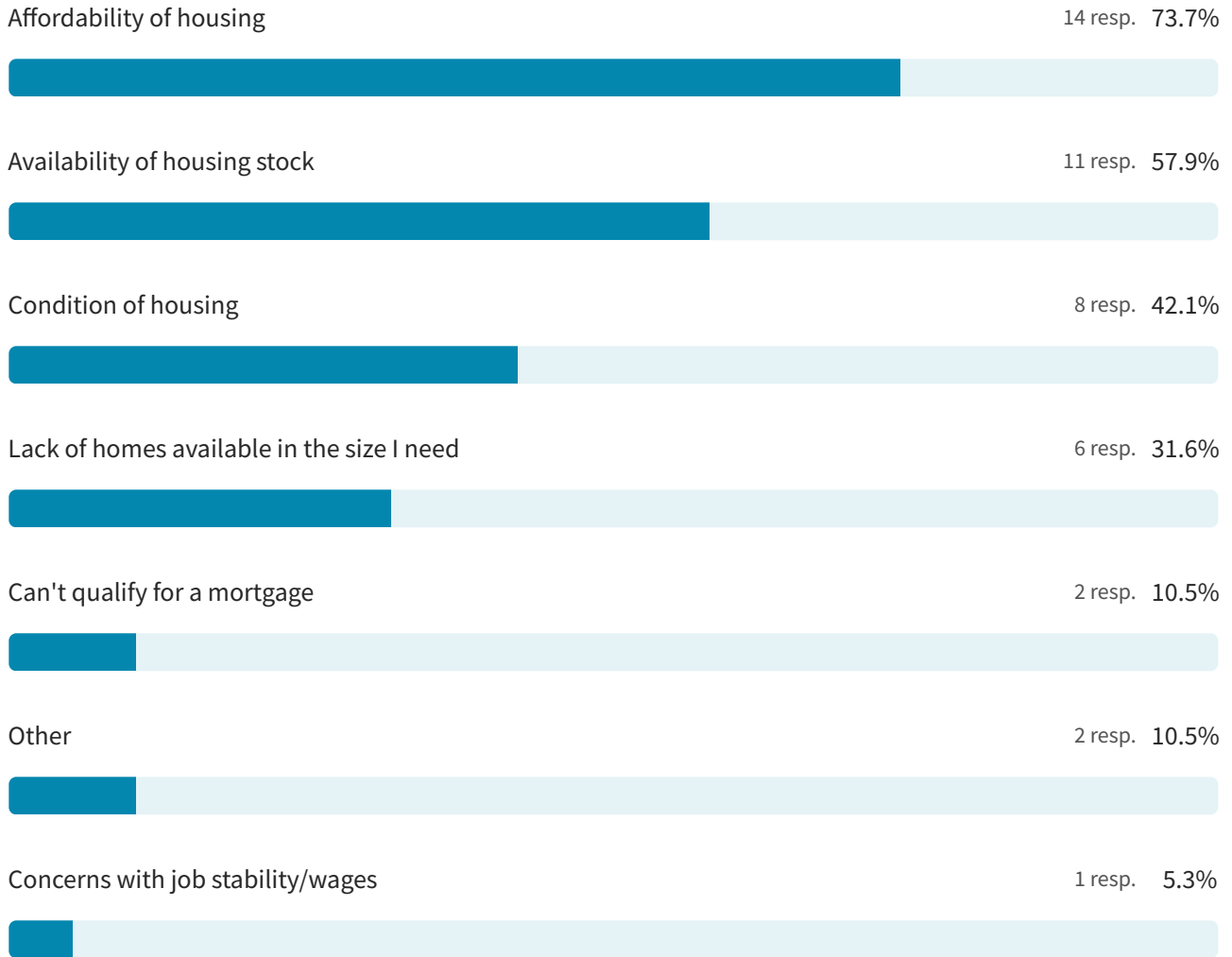
What factors keep you from renting in Biddeford?

24 out of 629 answered



What factors keep you from purchasing a home in Biddeford?

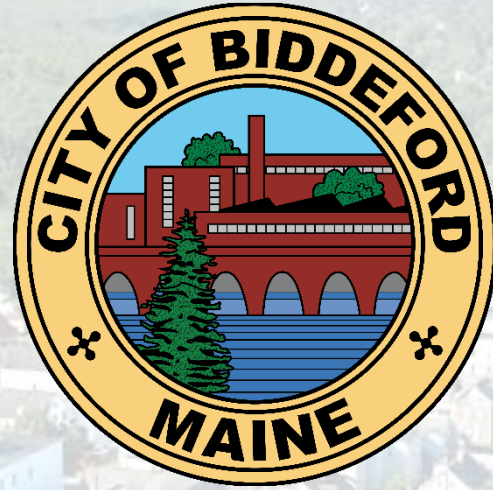
19 out of 629 answered



Any more information you would like to provide on why you do not live in Biddeford at this time?

- it's incredibly expensive
- More availability. My partner and I make good money, have no pets, we don't smoke or entertain and have great references yet we are living with my mother because we can't find a place to live under 1600 WHY
- Looking for a 3br but rent shot up to \$2,000 plus.
- Qualifications needed to rent are unrealistic. Studios to 1bd going for \$1500+ and wanting proof of 3-4x income (\$54k/yr) when the average Mainer is only making \$30k/yr
- I did live in Biddeford but the price of rent went up so I had to move I would like buy property in Biddeford I would like to buy a three or four unit there so I can show that you don't need to charge a whole lot of money for a rent
- I am a landlord of a 4 unit apartment building in Biddeford. I live out of town. I am getting prepared to retire. I have reluctantly had to increase my rents because of property tax increases (20%), water bill increases. Sewer costs are high as well, compared to some other towns. There are other costs that have increased as well as homeowners insurance, and fuel costs (of which you have no control over). I understand that this is occurring all over the state, however, with all the new growth of our great, and exciting city please see what we can do to lower these costs to landlords. We have more businesses contributing to our tax base. I understood that this would help alleviate some of the burden. I do not remember, in the 35+ years that I have owned this building a property tax decrease even as property values dropped. We have an influx of deep pocketed buyers coming into Biddeford and raising values. I believe, as others do, that values will drop again. I am seriously considering selling the building to get out from under all the costs involved, as I don't want to be the one to put-out my long term tenants, that I have close relationships with. My tenants cannot afford the rates I need to obtain to provide a clean, safe, and affordable housing experience. Not all of us are here to get rich.
- Had to move out in order to afford a home
- Bacon Street
- The city is good and I like the tourist tho
- Cost of housing is far too high. Studios are renting for \$1600/month. That means a single person needs to generate \$19,200 per year in after tax money just to have a home. Please permit more housing to alleviate the shortage. We need more homes to accommodate more people!
- Working families are being pushed out.
- Currently paying 3k a month to live in a motel because we were forced out of our home in Biddeford . Landlord wanted to take advantage of the housing boom. Sold a house that he paid 117k for in 2017 for over 200k.
- Rents are so much higher than they were even 5 years ago.
- I use to go up to Maine for the summer and I like it very much we went to Goose Rocks Beach because we had a summer cottage to go to Anne Lemar
- As much as I want to live in Biddeford, I can't justify leaving my very affordable apartment in Kennebunkport based on the housing that is currently available in Biddeford.
- Not ready to buy a place and have not found a rental worth moving for
- I live in Saco, own a house as a retiree that I'd like to Sell and rent.. rental prices too high and rents unavailable to senior incomes who worked in Maine on Maine incomes
- Housing prices are too high for the wages many local jobs pay.
- I haven't been able to find an affordable rental in a safe neighborhood. Rents have jumped significantly and I'm doing a seasonal rental and camping for summer, and the seasonal's used to be more affordable and now they are too expensive. The STR's also seem to be growing and longterm shrinking

- A couple days ago I became "homeless" (was a part time caretaker for my father who has late stage Alzheimer's - his wife asked me to leave when I accused her of neglect,) but I am fortunate to be able to stay with my mother in Alfred while I seek housing. I'm in a catch-22 situation as I am also unemployed and would like to find a job close to where I live. Most landlords would prefer you to be employed, though I am again, fortunate, in that I have savings to pay for an apartment for a year, or have plenty for a down payment on a "normal" priced home, but obviously can't get a mortgage without a job. I will have to sacrifice a good chunk of my savings that I would've put down as a down payment toward a purchase of a home. I scour craigslist and facebook daily for any apartment rental that is somewhat affordable, but it's exhausting sifting through all the scams. When I find something decent, there's a slim chance of being accepted due to no job (despite me being a "good-on-paper" candidate with over 800 credit scores, no debt, single, no kids, no pets, non-smoker, decent savings.) I have driven all over the state to look at houses to buy and apartments to rent. And now with the price of gas, an hour drive here and an hour drive there becomes costly. Regardless, I just saw your survey on WMTW midday news and thought I'd throw my 2 cents in, since Biddeford is a town where I'm looking at rentals. The last time I paid rent, which granted, was several years ago, was \$750 for a 2 bedroom/2 bath bungalow in Wiscasset, ME with a barn. Nothing included, so roughly \$1100 per month with heat and electricity, somewhat less during summer. I can barely find a studio or a 1 bedroom for this price and everything I own is in storage units, which have also increased in price, naturally. I will obviously have to downsize, because to afford an apartment AND storage units is just ridiculous. I have 2 apartments saved on craigslist that are both 1 BRs that are priced at \$1350 and \$1500 per month, heat included. I just never anticipated that I would ever in my lifetime pay that amount for a roof over my head. Just assumed I'd own a home by now, but that window is dwindling fast for me. Thanks for reading. -Kim Doyle
- I lived in Biddeford with a roommate in 2016, but when they moved away I could no longer afford the rent on my own. I am self employed and love the artist community in the area and would love to come back, but the prices are even higher now.
- I own my own house in Saco , but I used to rent in Biddeford ...rent was \$700.00 per month for a two bedroom (2015).
- I lived in Biddeford for 4 years and absolutely loved it. Unfortunately after leaving previous apartment due to mold earlier this year, I could not find another apartment anywhere near my budget and had to move out of state. Most apartments seem to have a requirement of several months or years at your current job, and I will no longer be able to prove that after living out of state. at the current rate it looks like I will never be able to move back to Biddeford
- There are little to no units available for single professionals at a reasonable rent. 1500-1800 for a one bedroom or 1250 for a studio is not reasonable.
- credit score is improving but not stellar--doesn't mean i can't pay my rent--but this is a huge barrier
- I own property in Biddeford



Housing Survey Results

Mayor's Affordable Housing Task Force
July 26, 2022

Three Sets of Results

- General Survey – Live in Biddeford
- General Survey – Don't live in Biddeford but would like to
- Developer Survey

General Survey Distribution

- Facebook targeted advertisement
- Biddeford Beat
- Website
- Press Release
- Non-sponsored social media posts
- McArthur Library
- Seeds of Hope
- BSOOB Transit (on buses and at Transportation Center)

Live in Biddeford

General Survey

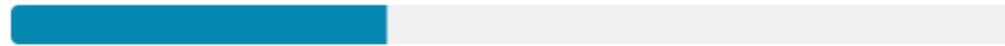
✓ 7 Which of the following applies to you?

561 out of 630 people answered this question

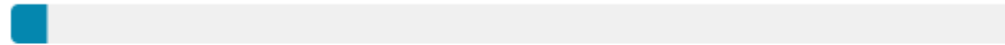
I rent my home 331 resp. 59%



I own my home 210 resp. 37.4%



I am unhoused 20 resp. 3.6%



✓ 8 If you rent, would you like to own?

331 out of 630 people answered this question

Yes, I would like to own. 252 resp. 76.1%



No, I would not like to own. 79 resp. 23.9%



What do you consider to be an affordable housing cost?

- **Studio**

- Mean: \$845.24
- Median: \$800

- **1 Bedroom**

- Mean: \$986
- Median: \$1,000

- **2 Bedroom**

- Mean: \$1,236.35
- Median: \$1,200

- **3 Bedroom**

- Mean: \$1,478.48
- Median: \$1,500

- **4 Bedroom**

- Mean: \$1,732.64
- Median: \$1,700

Responses vs. FMR

Survey Responses: What do you consider to be an affordable housing cost?

- **Studio**
 - Mean: \$845.24
 - Median: \$800
- **1 Bedroom**
 - Mean: \$986
 - Median: \$1,000
- **2 Bedroom**
 - Mean: \$1,236.35
 - Median: \$1,200
- **3 Bedroom**
 - Mean: \$1,478.48
 - Median: \$1,500
- **4 Bedroom**
 - Mean: \$1,732.64
 - Median: \$1,700

Fair Market Rents for Biddeford (HUD)

- **Studio**
 - \$961
- **1 Bedroom**
 - \$967
- **2 Bedroom**
 - \$1,216
- **3 Bedroom**
 - \$1,561
- **4 Bedroom**
 - \$1,790

Survey Responses vs. Pricing Today

- **1 Bedroom**

- Median: \$1,000

- **2 Bedroom**

- Median: \$1,200

- **3 Bedroom**

- Median: \$1,500

- **1 Bedroom**

- 1,175 - 1,400 - 2,200

- **2 Bedroom**

- 1,500 - 1,550- 1,625- 1,775- 1800- 1850- 2,000

- **3 Bedroom**

- 2,100

Mill District Pricing



RATES

Apartments rates range in prices based on square footage, views, and finishes. Current rates are as follows:

- Standard Studio Starting at \$1300
- Standard One Bedroom Starting at \$1500
- Standard Two Bedroom Starting at \$1800
- Luxury One Bedroom Starting at \$1900
- Luxury Two Bedroom Starting at \$2500

Residential Lofts

Studio, 1 Bath

486 - 772 sq. ft

\$1,350 - \$1,595 | No Availability.

1 Bedroom, 1 Bath

581 - 872 sq. ft

\$1,595 - \$1,795 | No Availability.

2 Bedroom, 1 Bath

720 - 1,093 sq. ft

\$1,850 - \$2,195 | No Availability.

2 Bedroom, 2 Bath

966 - 1,143 sq. ft

\$2,495 - \$2,695 | No Availability.

21 Have you lost your housing within the past year or do you expect to lose your existing housing within the next year?

559 out of 630 people answered this question



23 Do you know anyone who needed to leave their housing in Biddeford within the past year due to affordability?

559 out of 630 people answered this question



- Those who responded “yes” to having lost their housing were asked to elaborate:
 - General increases in rent
 - Rents were increased after sale of their building
 - Building was sold and they were forced to move

If the City were able to help you achieve better housing affordability, how important would the following be to you on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not at all helpful and 5 being very helpful:

510 out of 630 people answered this question

	1	2	3	4	5
Down payment assistance to buy a home	19.2%	8%	15.7%	13.9%	43.1%
Rental assistance to help me afford my current housing	20%	9.5%	21.8%	17.7%	31%
More housing developments where homes are affordable	9.1%	5.1%	15.2%	16.6%	54%
More housing developments where rentals are affordable	8.9%	4.2%	12.7%	17.4%	56.8%
Improving the condition of my current rental unit/building	24.2%	14.7%	21.9%	14.7%	24.6%
Rehabilitation assistance to help me improve the condition/energy efficiency of my home	23.4%	11.6%	23.2%	15.1%	26.6%

Should the City encourage "alternative housing" options in Biddeford?

558 out of 629 answered

Yes

453 resp. 81.2%



No

105 resp. 18.8%



Comments

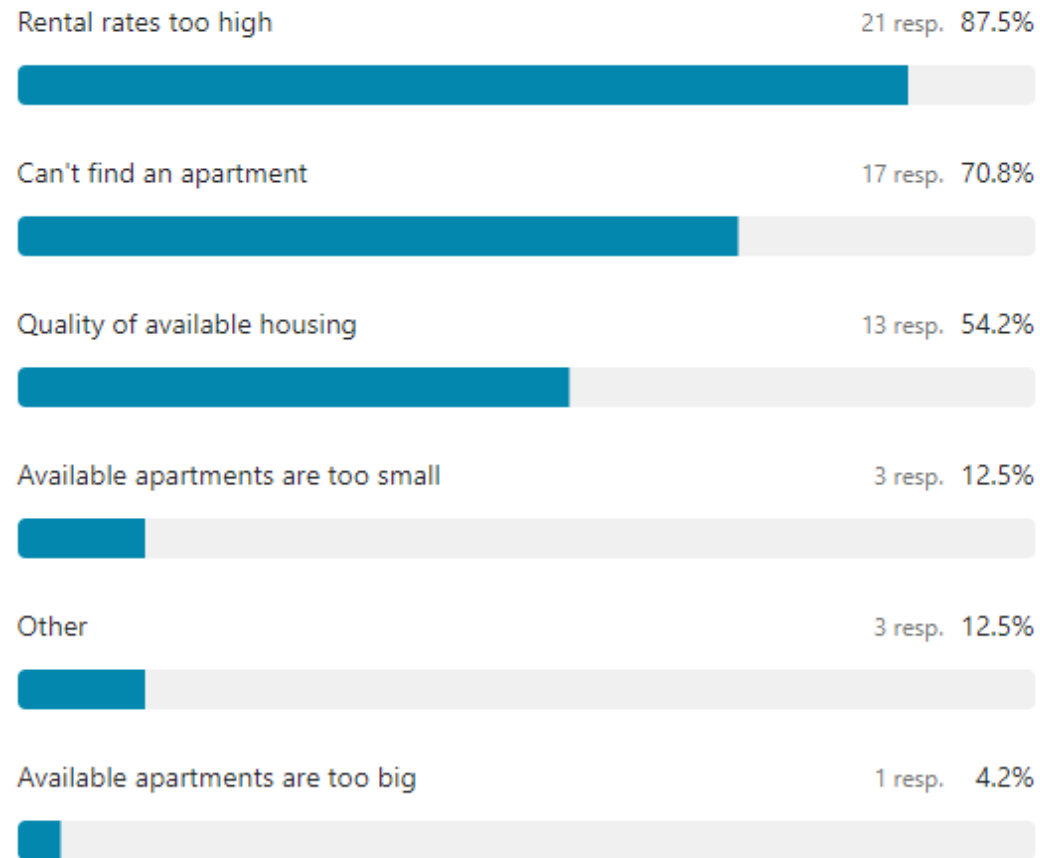
- Hard to summarize such a range of thoughts
- Concerns about investors (specifically from out of state) purchasing properties in Biddeford; desire for local buyers first access
 - Adding more supply, specifically affordable
 - Support for zoning changes to allow more supply
 - General sense of fear from respondents about not being able to stay in their homes
 - Concerns about short-term rentals
 - Rental caps
 - Quality of buildings
 - Concerns about affordability for single people
 - Down payments

Don't live in Biddeford, but
would like to

General Survey

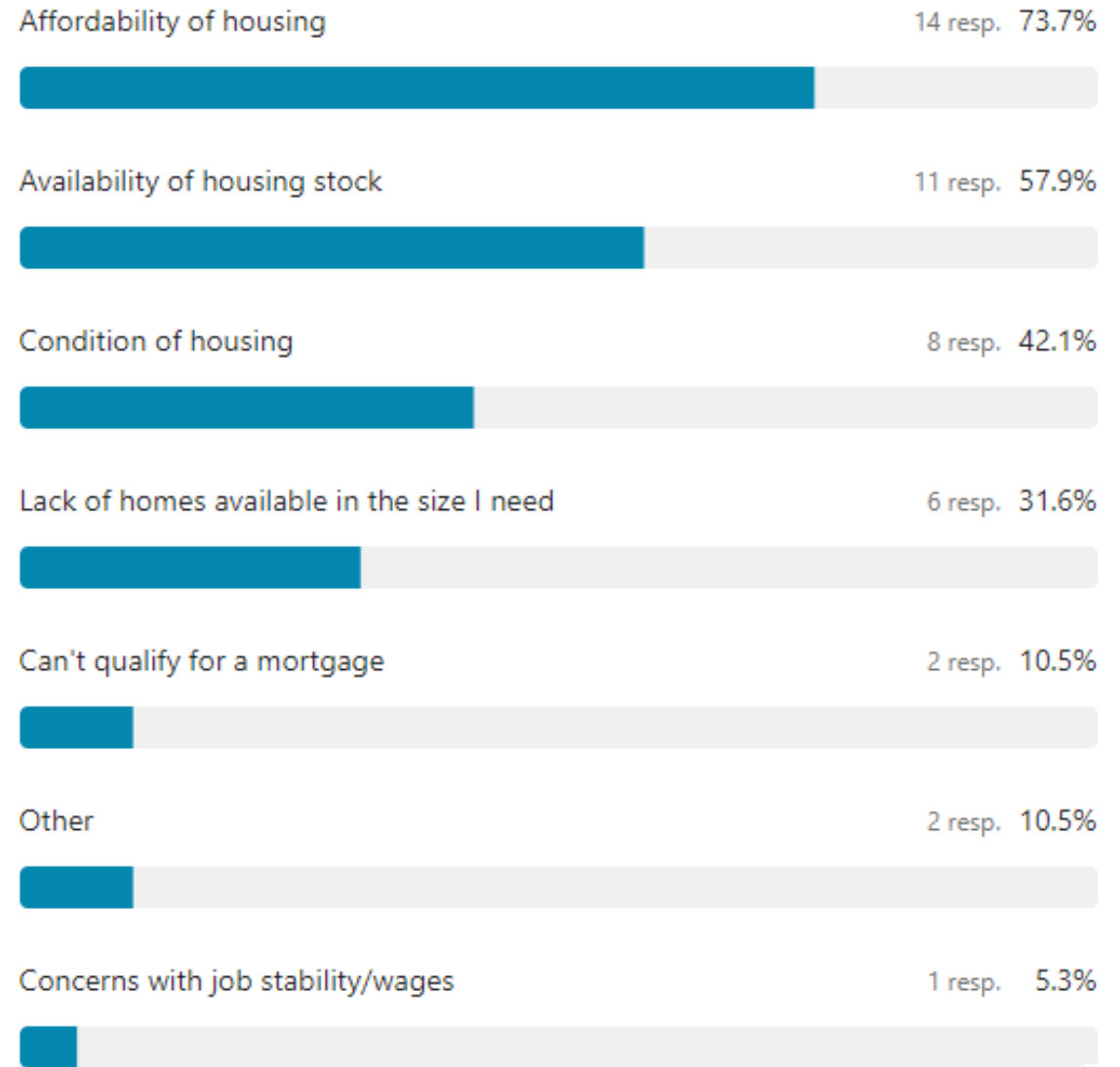
✓ 4 What factors keep you from renting in Biddeford?

24 out of 630 people answered this question (with multiple choice)



✓ 5 What factors keep you from purchasing a home in Biddeford?

19 out of 630 people answered this question (with multiple choice)



Developer Survey Results

Distribution

- Contacts from Code Enforcement for multi-family owners
 - Many owners did not have an email address on file
- Contacts from our housing rehabilitation and lead remediation programs
- Developer contacts from the Economic Development Department
 - Biddeford developers
 - Known affordable housing developers from around the state
- Total contacts: 80
- Total responses: 27



2

Of the following barriers to developing affordable housing that are outside the City of Biddeford's control, please rate how much each factor affects you on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being no effect and 5 being a major effect.

23 out of 27 people answered this question

	1	2	3	4	5
Cost of Labor	0%	0%	13%	34.8%	52.2%
Cost of Land	4.3%	8.7%	30.4%	26.1%	30.4%
Cost of Private Financing	17.4%	8.7%	26.1%	8.7%	39.1%
Cost of Materials	0%	0%	8.7%	43.5%	47.8%
Availability of State/Feder...	13.6%	13.6%	13.6%	22.7%	36.4%
Community Opposition	9.5%	23.8%	38.1%	19%	9.5%

3

Of the following barriers to developing affordable housing that are within the City of Biddeford's control, please rate how much each factor affects you on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being no effect and 5 being a major effect.

23 out of 27 people answered this question

	1	2	3	4	5
Plan Review/Approval Process	9.1%	9.1%	36.4%	13.6%	31.8%
Impact Fees	0%	13.6%	36.4%	36.4%	13.6%
Codes/Ordinances/Land Use Restrictions	0%	13%	30.4%	17.4%	39.1%
Availability of financial assistance from the City	0%	13.6%	31.8%	18.2%	36.4%
Site Availability	4.3%	30.4%	21.7%	17.4%	26.1%

Other barriers not on the list

- “Zoning preventing the addition of units to or existing multi family buildings”
- “Allowing higher densities in growth areas with water and sewer”
- “High taxes and fees for the building. It’s hard to do any affordable housing if I have to pay so much just to keep the building running”
- “Affordable housing is not being built because cost of construction and now interest rates are such that the developer can’t make the deal pencil (no profit or even under water). Financial assistance via TIF, state and fed tax credits and any other assistance to fill the financing gap is needed to build affordable housing.”



5

How much would each of the following factors help assure your ability to develop affordable housing in Biddeford on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being not at all helpful and 5 being extremely helpful?

23 out of 27 people answered this question

	1	2	3	4	5
Availability of a skilled local construction...	0%	4.3%	30.4%	34.8%	30.4%
Access to low-cost private financing	9.1%	4.5%	4.5%	22.7%	59.1%
Availability of affordable housing tax increment...	4.3%	0%	13%	17.4%	65.2%
Site availability	0%	4.3%	34.8%	39.1%	21.7%
Less restrictive codes/ordinances/lar use	4.3%	8.7%	30.4%	17.4%	39.1%
Streamlined plan review/approval process	8.7%	0%	26.1%	30.4%	34.8%

Other factors not on this list

- Multiple comments about allowing additional units on existing properties
- “Continuous and dynamic community engagement is an important factor that often gets overlooked. This requires a planning mentality at the City level.”
- “Allow federal funding opportunities to be passed down without unrealistic or overly controlling conditions.”
- “Available surveyor”

People who HAVE done business in Biddeford

11 Compared to other communities that you have done work in, how would you rate the following aspects of doing business with the City of Biddeford?

9 out of 27 people answered this question

	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledgeable of regulations	0%	0%	22.2%	77.8%	0%
Good relationship with the State	0%	11.1%	44.4%	44.4%	0%
Explains which Codes are relevant to your project	0%	11.1%	22.2%	55.6%	11.1%
Explains steps that needs to be taken to get a building permit	0%	0%	22.2%	55.6%	22.2%
Understands the zoning code and addresses concerns about project feasibility	0%	11.1%	33.3%	44.4%	11.1%
Understands State's new zoning regulations	11.1%	11.1%	33.3%	33.3%	11.1%

Perception of people who HAVE NOT done business in Biddeford

9 In your perception, how would you rate the following aspects of doing business with the City of Biddeford in comparison to other communities?

9 out of 27 people answered this question

	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledgeable of regulations	0%	22.2%	66.7%	11.1%	0%
Good relationship with the State	11.1%	0%	88.9%	0%	0%
Explains which Codes are relevant to your project	11.1%	22.2%	44.4%	22.2%	0%
Explains steps that needs to be taken to get a building permit	12.5%	0%	62.5%	25%	0%
Understands the zoning code and addresses concerns about project feasibility	22.2%	22.2%	44.4%	11.1%	0%
Understands State's new zoning regulations	0%	37.5%	50%	12.5%	0%



14

Rank the following types of written materials that would you like the City to provide to help you complete projects efficiently.

18 out of 27 people answered this question

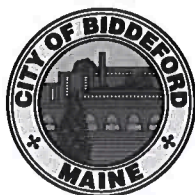
- | | | |
|----|--|---------------|
| #1 | Checklists to outline what steps will need to be taken to complete your project successfully | #2.11 average |
| #2 | Easy to find and clear to read zoning regulations | #2.22 average |
| #3 | Lists of City resources that may be available to you to create affordable housing opportunities | #3.17 average |
| #4 | Information about current events regarding potential changes in zoning and other policies that may impact your project | #3.56 average |
| #5 | A guide to explain which department to engage with for each step of the development process | #3.94 average |

▼ View details

Final Thoughts

- Allow the addition of units to existing multi family properties
- Someone to meet with to let me know what is available for help with this
- Pursue pattern zoning and pre-approved building types, provide micro-TIFs to help cover gap for projects that provide rents at 80%-120% ami, remove layers of regulation and fees for in-town projects.
- It would be great to develop some pre-approved housing types. It would also be great to identify City-owned land and make it shovel-ready for these pre-approved types.
- Treat small landlords and owner occupied with similar freedoms as the developers are treated instead of artificially creating extremely life-limiting conditions in order to access funding to assist with projects.
- I feel that the codes department is not on board with finding ways to increase density unless it fits into current zoning requirement which is too restrictive generally.
- Making sure any fees are defined, easy to calculate, and predictable.

City of Biddeford, Maine

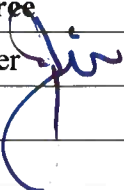


The Office of
City Manager

James A. Bennett

Email: jbennett@biddefordmaine.org

MEMORANDUM

TO:	Affordable Housing Task Force
FROM:	James A. Bennett, City Manager 
DATE:	June 24, 2022
RE:	June 28 Meeting

Please find the following information that has been prepared to assist you with your upcoming meeting.

Housing inventory: the following is the current housing inventory of the City

- Of 10,576 housing units in Biddeford as of 2020, 4,512 are owner-occupied, 4,919 are renter-occupied, and 1,145 are vacant.
- A renter household in Biddeford must earn \$23.27, or \$48,397 to afford the median rent and not pay more than 30% of their income for rent.
- 43% of renter households (2,091 households) pay 30% or more in rent.
- 51% of renter households are unable to afford the median rent in Biddeford.
- The median renter household can afford a monthly rent of \$1,178.
- 9.0% of Biddeford children experience poverty.
- Housing Choice Voucher Rent Payment Standard as established by Biddeford Housing Authority and approved by U.S Department of housing and Urban Development for 2022 are as follows:
 - Efficiency \$ 950
 - 1-bedroom \$1,050
 - 2-bedroom \$1,300
 - 3-bedroom \$1,600
 - 4-bedroom \$1,900
- BHA administers 153 Housing Choice Vouchers.

Prioritizing available resources: prior to the last meeting, each of you were asked to allocate one dollar of resources into the usual category of housing needs. As a reminder, those generally accepted categories are found below. The measurement of affordability is based on the median household income of a community and how that compares to the cost of housing. Biddeford's median income for renters have changed dramatically. In 2012, it was \$28,817. Based on 2020 information, the income is now \$47,140 which is up dramatically from only three years earlier (2017) of \$31,067.

- a. *Extremely low income* (defined as households that have an income of 30% or less of the total median income): Households that are in this category are usually those that are unhoused without

205 Main Street

Biddeford, ME 04005

Phone: 207.284.9313

Fax 207.571.0678

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Diana Depaolo, Human Resource Director, 205 Main Street Biddeford, ME 04005, or call (207) 286-0593.

assistance. The typical assistance provided would include section 8 vouchers, emergency shelter assistance and being housed in temporary shelters.

- b. *Very low and low income* (defined as households that have an income of 31% to 80% of the total median income): The typical assistance for these households would include:
 - 1. Section 8 vouchers
 - 2. Community Development Block Grant
 - 3. Affordable housing program vis Federal Home Bank
 - 4. Maine Housing assistance
 - 5. Private foundations
 - 6. Low Income Housing Tax Credits
 - 7. Tax Incremental Financing
 - 8. Zoning incentives
- c. *Moderate Income* (defined as households that have an income of 81% to 125% of the total median income): The typical assistance for these households would include:
 - 1. Maine Housing
 - 2. First-time homebuyer programs
 - 3. Federal Housing Administration/Veteran Housing Assistance
 - 4. Private banking incentives
 - 5. Zoning incentives

Biddeford, like all other communities, simply does not have the resources to adequately address all of the needs. One of the major responsibilities for the elected leadership is to determine the priorities of the communities through the allocation of the limited resources that are available.

One of the most important roles of this task force is to recommend to the City Council how it should allocate the resources that will be available to address the housing challenges. The one dollar exercise was intended to assist the committee with that responsibility. On Tuesday evening, I have been asked to facilitate the task force's discussion on this topic.

There are two additional housing related factors that I would suggest the task force should be consider. In developing the 2021 housing goals, the City Council made the determination that the community's housing inventory was lacking what the City has dubbed 'Next Homes'. Described simply as the home that a typical family would buy after their starter home. As young families grow (and/or increase in size), the typical starter home no longer serves them effectively. The Council identified that creating 200 additional homes in this category over the next five years was desired.

Awareness of the issue increased as the reputation of the Biddeford School System improved. Often families found themselves making a choice between remaining in their first home and having to move outside of the community.

In the overall discussion of housing, increasing the inventory of these homes will increase the availability of first time homes. Doing so, serves the moderate income residents. As those renters move into their first home, the rental units they leave become available to meet the rental demand.

The second dynamic is one that many are probably passively aware. It does deserve a deeper discussion, in my opinion. As noted above, the median income for renters has dramatically changed, up 51.8% in just three years (2017 to 2020).

In evaluating the financial position of the City, the FY21 increase in excise tax revenue occurred because of two dynamics. Like all over communities in Maine, the national trend of buying new automobiles was the major contributor. Biddeford revenues was higher than most Maine communities. Exploration of the causes revealed that the newer residents owned more expensive vehicles. Some of

the newer residents were net increases in population because of the new units being created. Yet many of the newer residents were replacing others that had moved out of the community, presumably because of housing costs.

Using the typical government measures of affordability, Biddeford's rental affordability has actually improved dramatically *on the macro level*. Using the same three year horizon (2017 to 2020), the rental affordability index has improved by 36.6% (0.97 in 2020 compared to 0.71 in 2017). This occurred while the average cost of rents have increase by 10.3%. The improvement is totally driven by the higher average income levels of the residents.

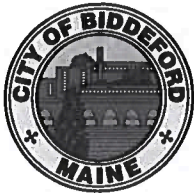
Behind the macro analysis is the micro experience. Residents that have lived in the community for some time did not, on average, see their income increased by the 51.8% that the macro analysis reports. The observation of importance for the task force to consider, in my opinion, is the affordability issue as it relates to rents is probably summed up in one simple factor; the length of tenure of the renter in the community.

Circling back to the task for Tuesday evening, I would encourage each of you to think about your response to the following questions:

1. Of the three categories of housing needs (see above; extremely low income, very low and low income, moderate income) which category do feel should be the priority for new City resources (financial and staffing allocation)? How much more of a priority?
2. Are there any of the three categories that you feel the City should not allocate any other resources towards?
3. Recognizing there are legal and practical limitations that will limit success, do you believe the City should have different resource allocation based on a citizen's tenure?
4. Returning to the original allocation question, if you had one dollar of city resources for housing related issues, how would you allocate the resources between the three categories of need?

I am looking forward to your important discussion and assisting you in developing recommendations for Biddeford.

City of Biddeford, Maine



The Office of
City Manager

James A. Bennett

Email: jbennett@biddefordmaine.org

MEMORANDUM

TO:	Affordable Housing Task Force
FROM:	James A. Bennett, City Manager
DATE:	July 22, 2022
RE:	August 26, 2022 Meeting

The task force work to date has been mostly in the information gathering process. At your last meeting, via a straw vote, the TF began the process of shaping the recommendations that will be forwarded to the City Council. After meeting with Councilor Ortiz and understanding the pending due dates for the interim and final report forthcoming, it was decided that a briefing memo for the committee outlining the next steps would be helpful. This memo is intended to serve that purpose.

At your last meeting, the TF members participate in a prioritization exercise. The goal of the exercise was to see if there was some alignment on targeting the potential resources of the City. The exercise was not designed to be the final decision given that the adoption of the final report would be considered the ultimate conclusion.

The results are summarized in the chart below:

	Extremely Low	Very Low to Low	Moderate 81% to 125%
Median Income	<30% MI	31% to 80%	>80% MI
\$47,140	\$0.00	\$14,142.00	\$37,712.00
	\$14,142.00	\$37,712.00	\$58,925.00
	10%	70%	20%
	30%	45%	25%
	20%	70%	10%
	15%	75%	10%
	20%	60%	20%
	15%	60%	25%
	15%	70%	15%
	50%	40%	10%
Average	21.88%	61.25%	16.88%
Standard Deviation	11.97%	11.92%	6.09%

205 Main Street Biddeford, ME 04005 Phone: 207.284.9313 Fax 207.571.0678

*The City of Biddeford is an equal opportunity provider. To file a complaint, write to
Diana Depaolo, Human Resource Director, 205 Main Street Biddeford, ME 04005, or call (207) 286-0593.*

In looking at the results, when combined with the discussion that occurred, I have put together a set of statements that I believe captures the current general thinking of the TF. As a general reminder, these statements are to be taken at a very high level. They are being used to guide the recommendations of the TF. They are not expected to appear in the final report as conclusions.

1. Members currently prefer the majority of resources to be used to support households that are considered very low to low income. Of the available funding, approximately 55% to 67.5% should be used to support this category (#2).
2. Members would allocate between 15% to 27.5% of the available funds to support solutions for the very low income category (#1).
3. Members expressed that they would increase support for the very low category if there was more comprehensive regional and/or state solution for those unhoused. With the lack of viable options for the unhoused throughout the state, there is a concern with Biddeford going it alone.
4. Members would allocate between 12.5% and 20% of the available funding to support households that are in the moderate income range (#3).

Assuming this information captures the majority of the TF members' opinion, a suggested next step would begin to translate this into specific goals. The members may recall there are already specific housing goals that have been established by the City Council. As a reminder, a copy of those goals are attached to this memo. Any recommendation by the TF would include three categories; namely modification or elimination of existing goals and the creation of new goals.

Focusing in on the priority category of the TF (very low to low income), I would refer you back to the June 24 memo. There are generally two ways to support this group. Towards the lower end of the income level, the support comes tied to the person directly, i.e. Section 8 vouchers. As you move up the income level, the support is generally found in the creation of permanent units that must service the targeted income level.

The adopted goals of the City Council (2020 adoption) for the next five years was to create or preserve 450 units (90 per year) of affordable rents. There are just under 5,000 rental units in the City. If achieved, assuming no additional units, the state goal would be to have at least 9% of the rental units in this category.

At your last meeting, the TF began to understand how dramatically the affordability has changed in the community over the last few years. As a reminder, the median income for rents increased 51.8% in three years (2017 to 2020). In 2012, the median income for renters was \$28,817; today it is \$47,140.

The rental market has changed in a similar fashion. Depending on the statistics used, rents have increased between 75% to 125% from 2015 to 2020. Notwithstanding the apparent slowing of the housing market over the last thirty days, the acceleration in rents have continued.

As the TF members begin to shape recommendations, the not so obvious impact of these changes deserves discussion. At the time of the adoption of the City Council housing goals, the effective 9% retention/creation of affordable rental units was supported by the historical nature of Biddeford's rental markets. Simply stated, rents were less expensive in Biddeford than other areas. Hence, the actual mix of affordable units in the community was assumed to be higher than the 9% goal.

That historical assumption of general affordability in Biddeford is logically no longer true. Accepting that to be the case, the TF (and ultimately the City Council) would be well served to have a deliberative discussion about the desired percentage of rental units that should be considered affordable. By establishing that mixture, it will guide the number of new/preserved units that are needed. I would encourage the TF members to have that discussion on Tuesday evening.

Path to Report

During our most recent discussions, Councilor Ortiz and I recognized the potential frustration of the groups feeling of frustration in not getting things done. While those of us that are involved daily in policy development and implementation are feeling the work of the TF is on target, we recognize that is not universally shared. To assist in closing the gap between the two perspectives, I will outline the next few meetings expectations;

- July meeting:
 - Review the results of the survey
 - Reaffirm or adjust the targeted resources
 - Discuss/ potentially establish percentage goal of affordable rental units
- August meeting:
 - Review staff suggested implementation alternatives to obtain the rental goals
 - Review & discuss rent control issue
 - Review staff suggested implementation alternatives for the extremely low and the moderate income targeted areas
 - Review list of topics TF members would like to include in the final report
- September meeting:
 - Address rent control alternatives; decide on how to make a recommendation on that issue
 - Adopted tentative implementation goals from August meeting
 - Decide on what to include in the tentative update/report to the City Council.
- October meeting:
 - Work on any other policy recommendations not already addressed

By including this outline, it is hopeful that the TF members can begin to see how the work to date will be coming together to meet the goal of issuing the report.

Outstanding Items

At your last meeting, the TF asked staff to prepare a briefing memo that would discuss the collective advantages/disadvantages of 'rent control' government regulations. This populist solution to the current housing pressures is being actively discussed in many communities throughout the U.S.

Staff will put together the memo prior to the next meeting. It is anticipated that the TF could then use that memo as the opportunity to discuss this issue at your August meeting as outlined above.

Final Thoughts

The next few meetings of the TF will be when members will use the information that you have gathered since your first meeting. The recommendations the TF will make, if implemented, will have dramatic impacts on the community for a long time. Staff will be working hard to provide you timely information to assist you. Please let Councilor Ortiz or myself know if there is additional information that you believe you will need. In addition, I would asked that you let me know if there is any clarification that you need in the information that you need as you do your due diligence in preparing for the meeting.

City Council 5-Year Housing Goals & Strategies: 2021-2025

Year II (2022) Implementation Progress, Q1

March 2022
Page 1 of 2

Housing Goals & Strategies	Activities	Status
<p>1. Increase Homeownership from 48% to 51% A. Create <u>200</u> 1st time Homeownerships for Families at 80-120% AMI</p>	<p>I. Recommend for Council review & Planning Board approval: (a) Zoning ordinance changes that support housing creation in Growth Area; and (b) Proposals for targeted mixed commercial/residential development in Growth Area</p> <p>II. Market CDBG program to help local families rehab & owner-occupy 2/4-unit downtown properties</p>	<p>Council approved JDA agreement with Harington at Diamond Match; condos included Saco Lowell, second phase of Gooch, condos included Brady project, 3 Lincoln, 77 condos proposed</p> <p>Unit Inquiries 36 Applications 20 Denied for LMI% 4 Withdrawn 3 timing Approved 6 4 under construction In Review 7 2 inspected Units Complete 0</p>
<p>B. Create <u>200</u> 'Next Homes' for Growing Families</p>	<p>III. Explore Cooperative Housing & similar homeownership models for Council & Planning Board review</p> <p>IV. Promote existing community programs that help local families build capacity for homeownership</p> <p>V. Prioritize use of appropriate City-owned property for affordable homeownership</p> <p>VI. Recommend for Council review & approval a plan to establish a Housing Development Trust Fund to support first-time homeownerships</p> <p>I. Recommend for Council review & Planning Board approval targeted zoning ordinance changes that allow 'Next Homes' creation on existing lots</p> <p>II. Promote the Accessory Dwelling Unit ordinance to create additional housing units on existing lots</p> <p>III. In the FY 2022 Budget, recommend for Council review & approval real estate tax considerations that help attain the Council's 5-year housing goals</p>	<p>No proposals, conversations ongoing with developers with interest</p> <p>Biddeford Housing claims no new HUD funding for this initiative</p> <p>No activity</p> <p>Topic of discussion at Mayor's Affordable Housing Task Force</p> <p>Council approved EON JDA agreement for property for future next homes and attainable homes</p> <p><i>Approved by Council</i></p> <p>No activity</p>

City Council 5-Year Housing Goals & Strategies: 2021-2025

Year II (2022) Implementation Progress, Q1

March 2022
Page 2 of 2

Housing Goals & Strategies	Activities	Due	Status
<p>2. Create and/or Preserve 90 affordable Rental Units/Year for 5 Years</p>	<p>I. Recommend for Council review & Planning Board approval zoning ordinance changes in Growth Area to create affordable rental units</p>		<p>Density bonus, expanding duplex provisions, and creating additional density in growth zones implemented; 50 units +/-; Riverdam 10% of units affordable</p>
<p>A. Create/preserve 45 units/year for households with incomes at 40%-80% AMI</p>	<p>II. Partner with Biddeford Housing Authority to help preserve units on South St & Mission Hill</p>		<p>Council approved Adams Street (33 units)</p>
	<p>III. Apply to Affordable Housing Program (or similar) to support unit creation/preservation</p>		<p>Affordable Housing Legislation approved, need to develop vehicle and fund; awaiting private development activity to proceed (Diamond Match).</p>
	<p>IV. Launch CDBG 2/4-Unit Homeowner with Rentals rehab program to preserve affordable units</p>		<p>Unit Inquiries 36 Applications 20 Denied for LMI% 4 Withdrawn 3 timing Approved 6 4 under construction In Review 7 2 inspected Units Complete 0</p>
<p>2. Create 45 units/year from New Construction</p>	<p>I. Recommend for Council review & Planning Board approval private developers' proposals that create subsidized units via credit enhancement incentives</p>		<p>Adams Street; Council approved EON JDA, calls for Subsidized Senior Housing (45-150 units; await planning)</p>
	<p>II. Recommend for Council review the sale or lease of appropriate City properties for the creation of affordable rental units</p>		<p>No activity</p>
<p>3. Rehab at least 65 rentals units per year for the next three years so housing is Healthy and Lead Safe</p>	<p>I. Leverage HUD Lead & Healthy Homes Grants to rehab 45 units/year</p>		<p>82 units moving through one level of approval or another, 29 units cleared</p>
	<p>II. Leverage MaineHousing Community Solutions Grant to rehab 10 units/year</p>		<p>Rehab funds committed for 5 units to date</p>
	<p>III. Leverage CDBG funds to rehab 10 units/year</p>		<p>4 units in construction, 7 unit applications in process</p>