

City of Biddeford

Mayor's Affordable Housing Task Force

June 28, 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>

Passcode: 685380

Or One tap mobile :

US: +16469313860,,91984566865# or +13017158592,,91984566865#

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 646 931 3860 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 558 8656 or +1 669 900 9128 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 386 347 5053 or +1 564 217 2000 or +1 669 444 9171

Webinar ID: 919 8456 6865

International numbers available: <https://biddeford.zoom.us/j/91984566865>

Status: In-person and via Zoom Link, Council Chambers, 5:30 pm

1. Welcome Members

2. Adjustments to the Agenda

Presentation:

Habitat for Humanity

Additional Housing Data:

a. Housing Inventory

b. Historical Housing Data

3. Consent Agenda

3.1. Approval of Meeting Minutes from May 24, 2022

[052422-Draft.pdf](#)

3.2. Prioritizing Resources for Affordable Housing Needs

[Affordable Housing Task Force Memo - June 28.pdf](#)

[City Council 5-Year Housing Goals 2022 QI Implementation Progress.pdf](#)

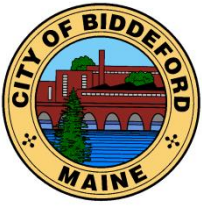
3.3. Survey Update

[Affordable Housing Survey Responses as of June 24.pdf](#)

[Draft Survey for Developers.pdf](#)

[Our Biddeford Posts](#)

3.4. Next Meeting Expectations



CITY OF BIDDEFORD

Planning and Development Department

Mayor's Affordable Housing Task Force Meeting Minutes

DRAFT

Date: May 24, 2022
Time: 5:30 PM
Location: Hybrid Meeting: City Council Chambers & Remote Access Meeting (1MRSA § 403-B permits public proceedings through remote access during the declaration of state of emergency due to COVID-19).

Committee Members in Attendance:

Doris Ortiz (Chair), Ciel Caldwell, Seth Harkness & Ian Garcia-Grant

Staff Present: Gail Wilkerson (via Zoom), Danica Lamontagne & Nan Whitten

1. Chair Ortiz brought the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.
2. There were no adjustments to the agenda.
3. Consent Agenda:
MOTIONS: 5:36 PM
Caldwell: Motion: To Approve Meeting Minutes from 4-26-22
Garcia-Grant: Second
Unanimous Approval of Meeting Minutes from 4-26-22.
4. Discussion
 - 4.1 The results of the most recent survey was discussed. It was mentioned that creating more homeownership has become less of a priority in some areas due to homelessness. Creating at least 90 rental units per year is necessary at this time.
 - 4.2 Danica Lamontagne, Communications Coordinator for the City of Biddeford gave a presentation about the Outreach Plan. She shared information from the Comp Plan surveys. Suggestions for the Housing Survey were to partner with non-profits in order to improve outreach. Question if people have to move within the next year and if so, why. The sample size for the survey should be between 600-700. Distribute the survey through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, the Currier and by making an informational video. Create a survey geared toward developers asking what barriers they are facing in creating housing, giving incentives for creating affordable housing. It was suggested to collaborate with the Library to make the survey more available to the public. A list of landlords was requested, the Task Force would like to know how the public defines affordable housing. The Task Force would like to discuss the ease of doing business with the City, they would like to talk about Rent Control and what the public thinks this means. There should be a progress report at the June meeting and results at the July meeting.

4.3 Updates for the June meeting from staff review on historical housing data.

Identify housing shortages.

A representative from the Habitat for Humanity will speak at the June meeting, they are offering a tour of the Cape Porpoise project.

They would like to get input from the City Manager on acquiring ARPA Funds Chair Ortiz announced that the City is working with Devine Capital on affordable Housing, they will give the City \$500,000.00 toward affordable housing.

The City is trying to find more funding to go to affordable housing.

The Task Force would like a list of City owned property.

Governor Mills has signed in a new law which will give additional density for properties, a presentation on the specifics of this new law is wanted.

5. Adjourn:

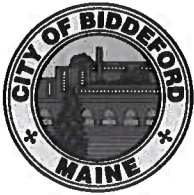
- **Caldwell: Motion to adjourn 6:53 PM**
- **Garcia-Grant: second**
- **Motion carried with unanimous vote**

Task Force Chair

Date

These minutes are summary and are not intended to be verbatim. Archived meetings are viewable on the City's website: www.biddefordmaine.org.

City of Biddeford, Maine

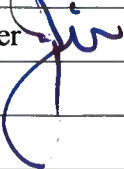


The Office of
City Manager

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

*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.*

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

Year II (2022) Implementation Progress, Q1

March 2022
Page 1 of 2

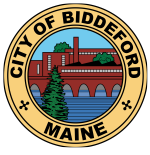
Housing Goals & Strategies	Activities	Status
<p>1. Increase Homeownership from 48% to 51%</p> <p><i>A. Create 200 1st time Homeownerships for Families at 80-120% AMI</i></p>	<p>I. Recommend for Council review & Planning Board approval: (a) Zoning ordinance changes that support housing creation in Growth 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>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>Council approved JDA agreement with Harington at Diamond Match; condos included</p> <p>Saco Lowell, second phase of Gooch, condos included</p> <p>Brady project, 3 Lincoln, 77 condos proposed</p> <p>Unit Inquiries 36</p> <p>Applications 20</p> <p>Denied for LMI% 4</p> <p>Withdrawn 3 <i>timing</i></p> <p>Approved 6 <i>4 under construction</i></p> <p>In Review 7 <i>2 inspected</i></p> <p>Units Complete 0</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><i>B. Create 200 'Next Homes' for Growing Families</i></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>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>



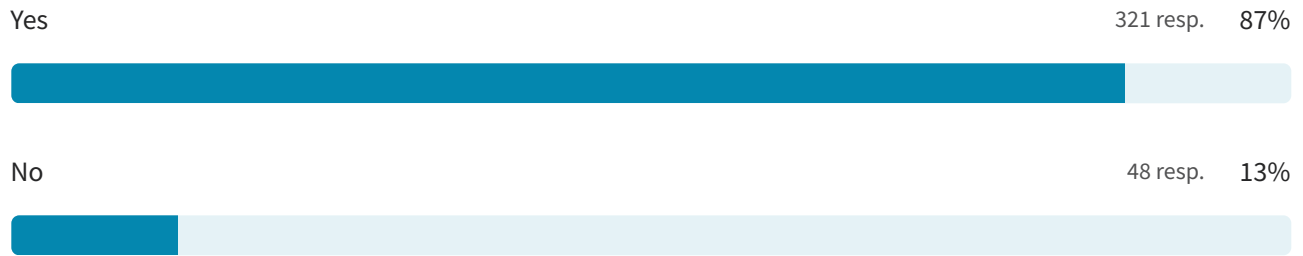
Affordable Housing Survey

370 responses

The full set of answers to free text response questions can be viewed here.

Do you live in Biddeford?

369 out of 370 answered



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

48 out of 370 answered



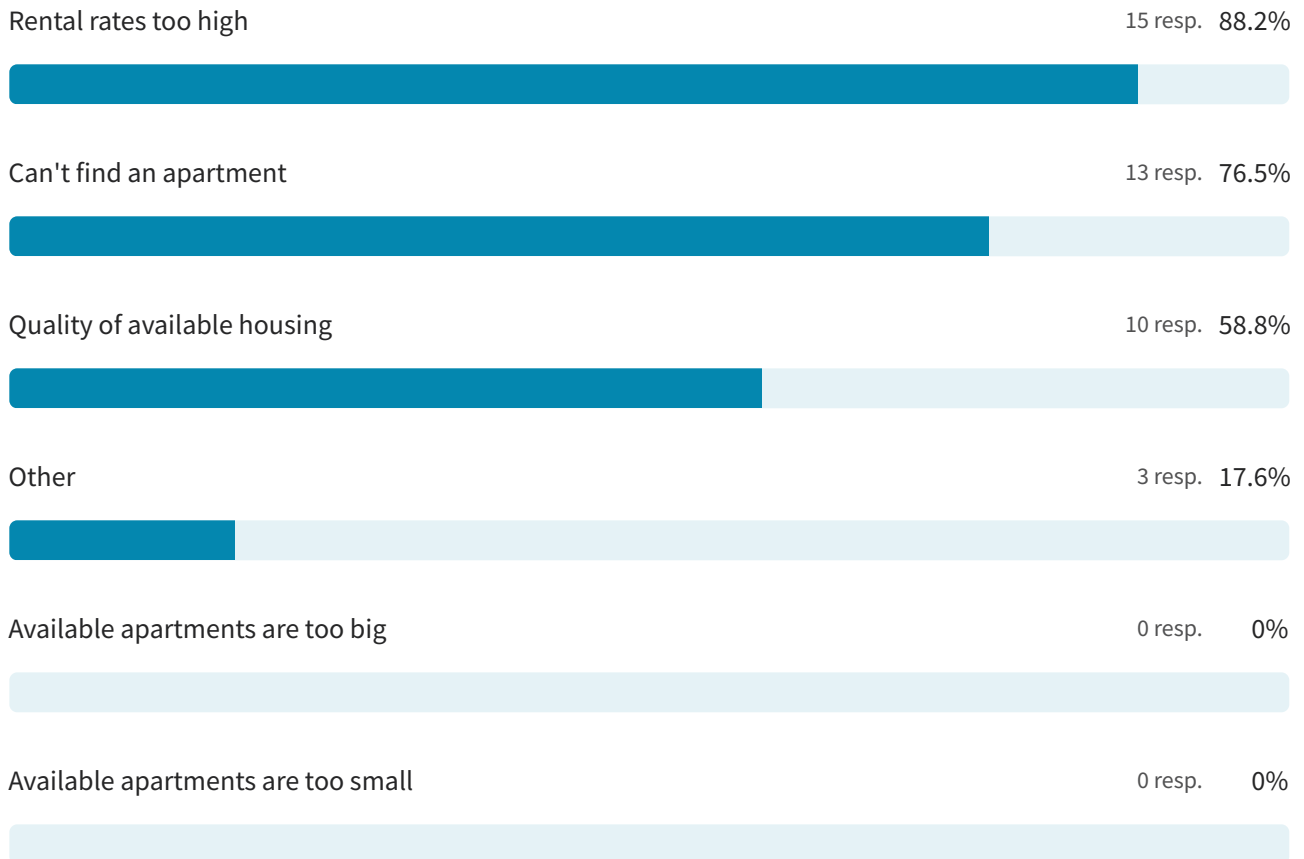
Would you prefer to own or rent in Biddeford?

32 out of 370 answered



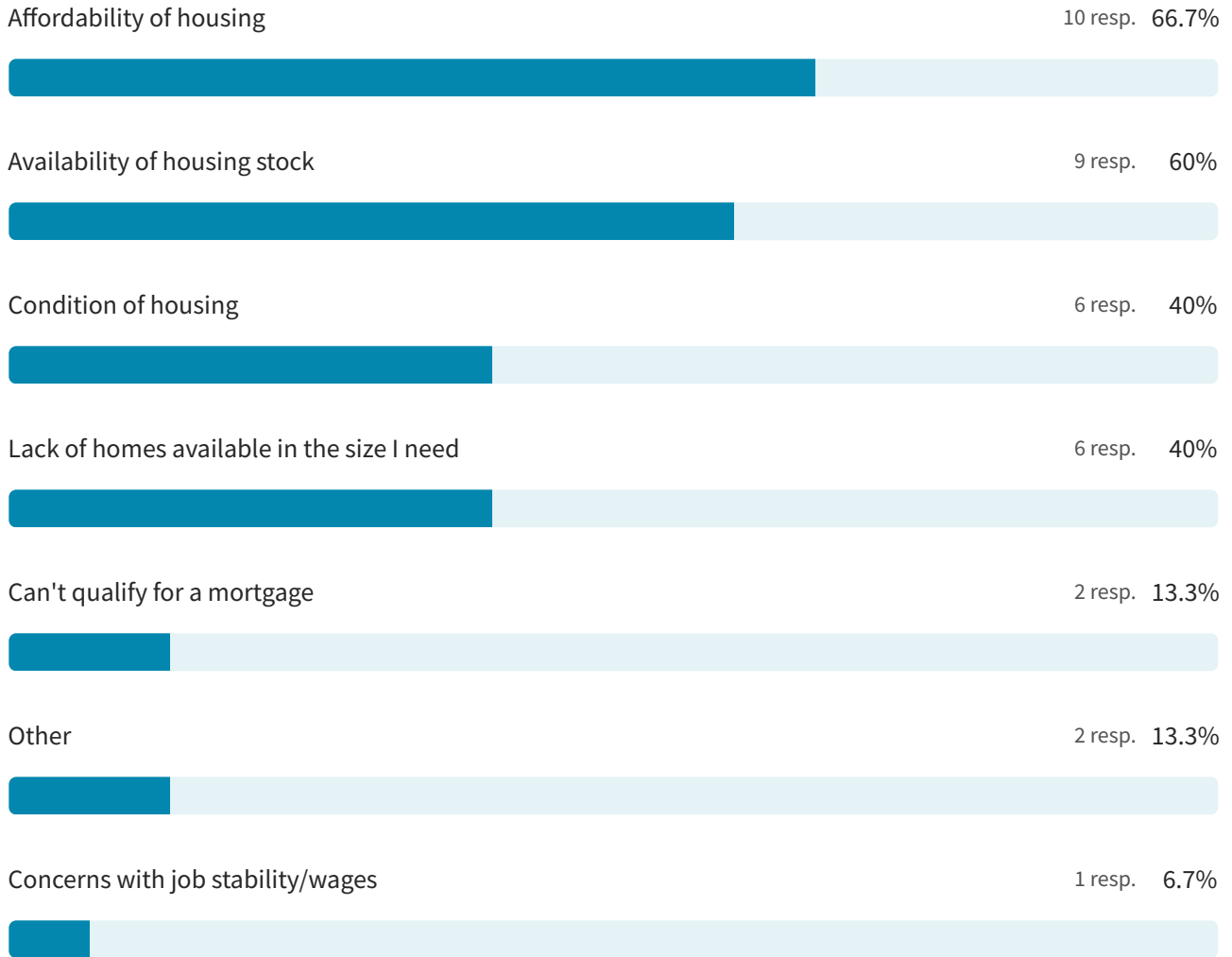
What factors keep you from renting in Biddeford?

17 out of 370 answered



What factors keep you from purchasing a home in Biddeford?

15 out of 370 answered



Which of the following applies to you?

321 out of 370 answered

I rent my home 170 resp. 53%



I own my home 142 resp. 44.2%



I am unhoused 9 resp. 2.8%



If you rent, would you like to own?

170 out of 370 answered

Yes, I would like to own. 125 resp. 73.5%



No, I would not like to own. 45 resp. 26.5%



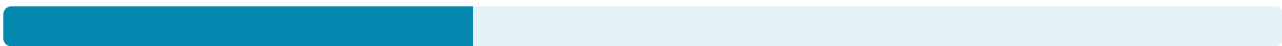
Is your housing cost affordable?

313 out of 370 answered

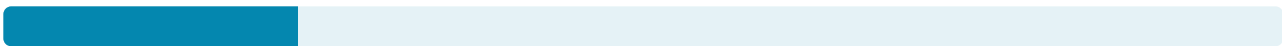
Yes 126 resp. 40.3%



No 115 resp. 36.7%



Somewhat 72 resp. 23%



Are you happy with your current housing?

321 out of 370 answered

Yes 202 resp. 62.9%

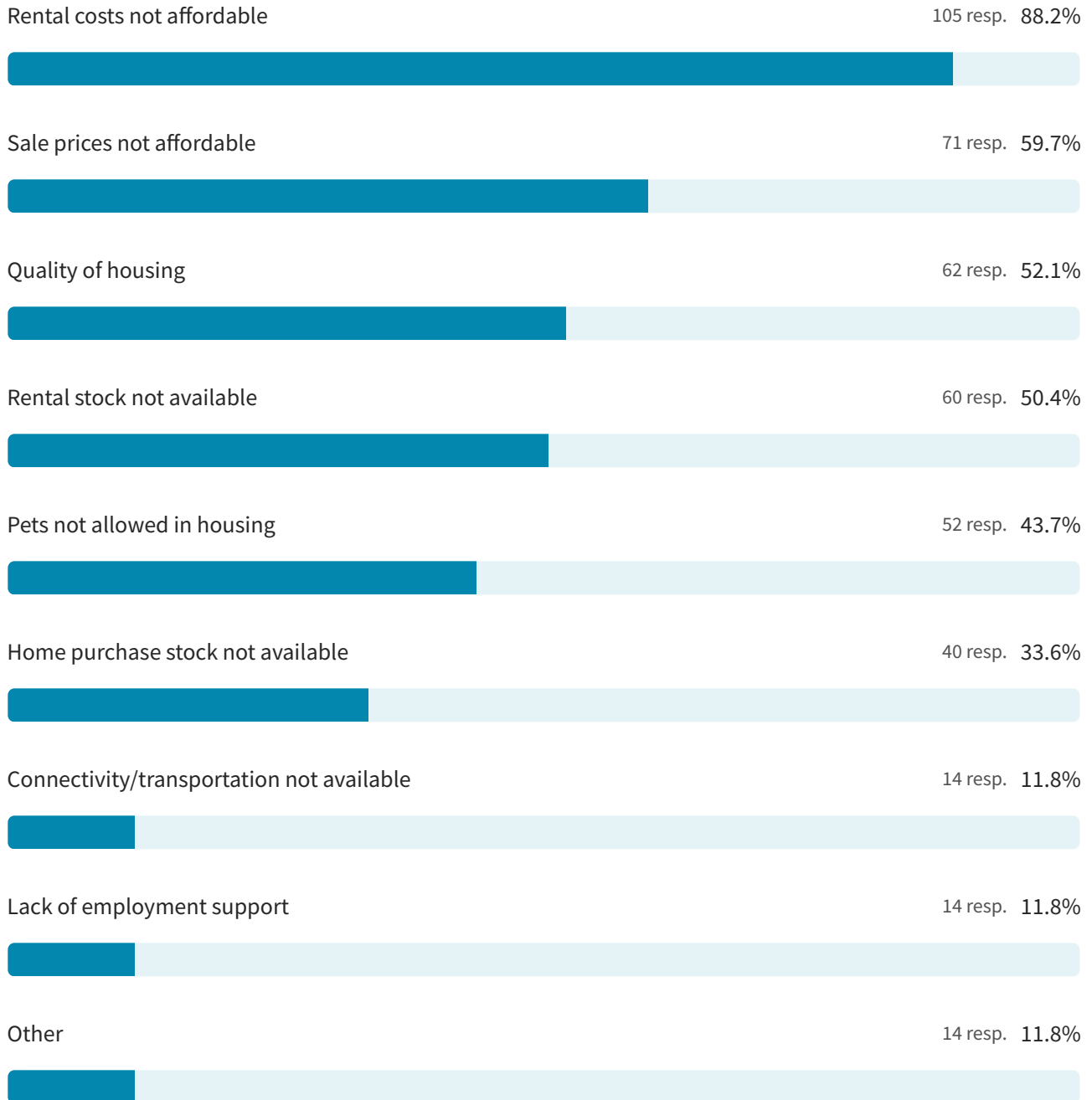


No 119 resp. 37.1%



What is preventing you from living where you want?

119 out of 370 answered



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



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

322 out of 370 answered

No 179 resp. 55.6%



Yes 143 resp. 44.4%



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

322 out of 370 answered

Yes 189 resp. 58.7%

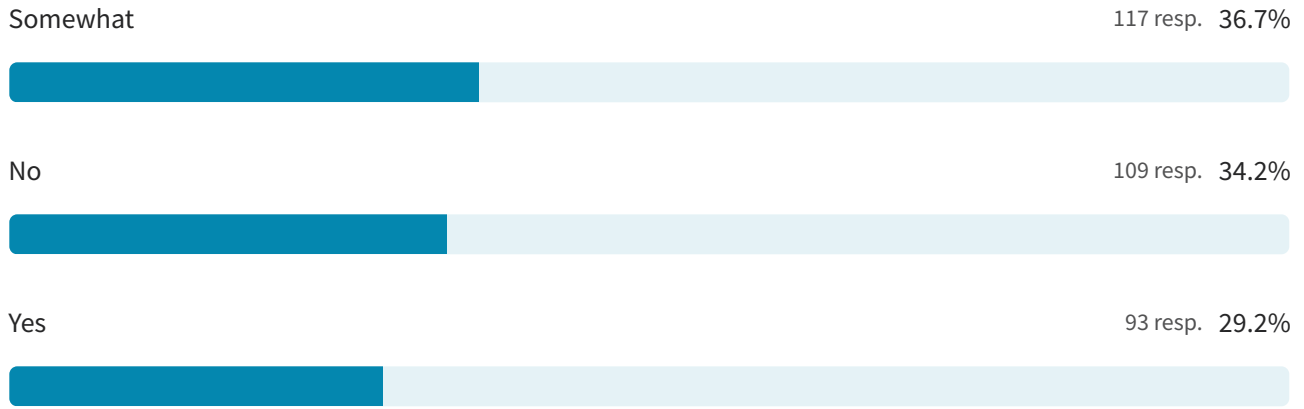


No 133 resp. 41.3%



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

319 out of 370 answered

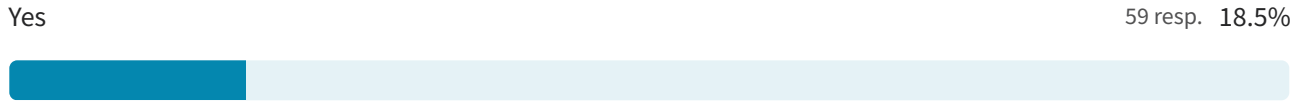


Are you currently behind on rent?

310 out of 370 answered



Have you lost your housing within the past year or do you expect to lose your existing housing within the next year?
319 out of 370 answered

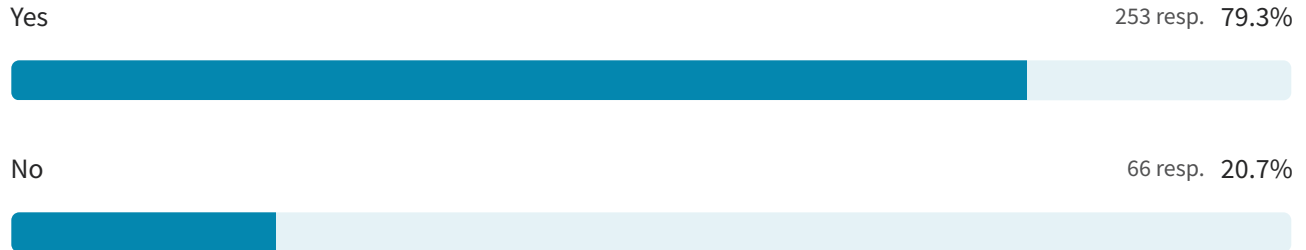


Do you know anyone who needed to leave their housing in Biddeford within the past year due to affordability?
319 out of 370 answered



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

319 out of 370 answered



Draft Survey for Developers:

<https://citizenlabco.typeform.com/to/ijtpP198>

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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0	1	0
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0	3	0
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0	1	0
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6	2	0
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2	1	0
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