



# Housing

Bolton faces two main housing challenges that Bolton's Master Plan attempts to address. Bolton is not meeting the housing needs of its moderate to low-income residents, and does not have an adequate amount of housing alternatives for people starting out or downsizing. While working to achieve a more diverse housing environment, the Town will prioritize maintaining its rural character within the solutions and actions presented in this plan.

## Did you know?

- ◆ Bolton has approximately 1,982 units of housing (2020 Census)
- ◆ 85% of homes in Bolton are valued at over \$500,000 (2022 ACS, 5-year est.)
- ◆ 96.9 % of housing units in Bolton are 2+ bedrooms; 57.3% of all housing units are 4+ bedrooms (2022 ACS, 5-year est.)
- ◆ Bolton completed an update to its [Housing Production Plan](#) (March 1, 2021). A Housing Production Plan (HPP) is a document that sets forth a community's proactive strategy for planning and developing affordable housing. In August 2022, Bolton met its [mandated 40B obligation to the State of Massachusetts](#) with the approval of "[Alta Nashoba Valley](#)", a housing development comprised of 229 1,2 and 3-bedroom rental units.
- ◆ In 2018, Bolton was designated a "Housing Choice Community" by the State. A community achieves Housing Choice status by producing certain amounts and types of new housing. Housing Choice towns have preferred access to many state grants and capital funding programs.
- ◆ Bolton's residential development is guided by 6 housing-related bylaws:
  1. 1989 [Farm and Open Space Planned Residential Development Bylaw](#) – "FOSPRD" (322\*)
  2. 1996 [Major Residential Development Bylaw](#)
  3. 2003 [Inclusionary Housing Bylaw](#) (2)
  4. 2014 [Mixed Use Village Overlay District](#) – "MUVOD" (0)
  5. 2014 [Barn, Stable and Carriage House Preservation Bylaw](#) (1)
  6. 2021 [Accessory Dwelling Units Bylaw](#) (2)

\*Numbers in parenthesis indicate units of housing built under this bylaw. All other housing development has been developed "by-right," meaning the home conforms to all zoning constructed without discretionary approval.

## Goals and Objectives – Current Draft for inclusion in Master Plan

### Goal 1: Increase the diversity of housing stock and affordable housing options.

- Objective 1: Promote and encourage housing diversity for an aging population, for young families, and for those who are low-to moderate income levels.

### Goal 2: Ensure new housing development occurs harmoniously with the town's current character and growth trajectory.

- Objective 1: Create an environment through the town's zoning regulations that attracts diverse projects.

### Goal 3: Create additional housing opportunities in town.

- Objective 1: Encourage multi-generational living options.

## Other Key Points

When it comes to specific actions that could be taken to address Bolton's housing challenges careful consideration must be given to the following factors when encouraging development trends: How will this type of development affect the natural and historic resources of the site? What are the limitations due to well and septic requirements? How will it affect traffic? How will it affect municipal services? How will it affect the number of school age children in town? Preservation of open space and farms are a high priority for Bolton residents (Town Survey 2020). The Master Plan Steering Committee believes that while addressing the need to diversify housing stock, priority must be given to solutions that are in harmony with maintaining Bolton's rural character.