

THE BEDFORD WE WANT: PLANNING FOR A VIBRANT FUTURE

*Building a vision and devising practical steps
to ensure a strong community
with a high quality of life
over the next decade—and beyond*



Workshop One
Comprehensive Plan
Update
March 3, 2012
Town Hall

THE THEMES OF A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU?

- More business growth, to boost town revenue and lighten residents' tax burden?
- More attractive and concentrated commercial development?
- More and better options for walking, biking, and taking public transit?
- Preservation of the character of Bedford's central areas and historic neighborhoods?
- More housing diversity, to offer choices to residents of all ages?
- Preservation of Bedford's natural resources and open space?
- Continuation of first-rate municipal services and facilities?
- Others?
- All of the above?





WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (CP)?

A Comprehensive Plan (also called a “Master Plan”):

- is a vision of what people want the town to be like over the next 10 to 20 years
- creates public participation process
 - people identify their important issues, craft them into goals and suggest strategies for attaining those goals
 - Planning Board has already met with or received written input from 9 town committees
- results in a set of detailed implementation items (“actions”)



WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (CP)?

- Statistics
 - population, housing, demographics, economic conditions and more
- Maps
 - how and where land is being developed or redeveloped, open space preserved and other information.
- Plan elements or topics
 - often presented each as separate chapters in the Plan (e.g. Economic Development, Housing, Open Space)
- Gradation in the proposed ideas
 - going from the general to the specific, such as Goals, Strategies and Actions, or, Goals, Objectives and Policies.

2002 CP VISION STATEMENT

The Town of Bedford envisions its small-town character enhanced over the next twenty years as it moves into the twenty-first century. Both the historically significant architectural resources and the beauty of the center of Town distinguish this character. The center of Town is a functional area that emanates from the Town Common at The First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church and as the central focus of town includes governmental, educational, recreational and public assembly activities supplemented by small shops and businesses. The Town sees its architectural heritage preserved and the center of Town strengthened as the central community focus, and that in Bedford:

- Traffic congestion is alleviated;
- The Great Road is a linear, pedestrian-friendly environment with street trees, attractive signage and stores in scale with the environs and close to the street;
- A system of sidewalks and trails provides a network within and between neighborhoods, commercial areas, and public facilities;
- Substantial open space is preserved supporting small-town character, providing balance to developed areas, and protecting our natural resources;
- A range of activities for social interaction and services for social needs is provided, with particular emphasis on specific activities for youth and seniors;
- Active and passive recreational needs are met for residents of all age groups and physical capabilities;
- Superior public education is provided by a diverse educational program; and
- Housing choices for different types of units are available and affordable for all.

THE ELEMENTS IN BEDFORD'S PLAN

- Vision, Goals & Strategies at the beginning...
- Implementation Plan at the end.

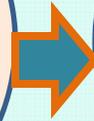
- Six Plan Elements*
1. Land Use
 2. Housing Policy
 3. Economic Development
 4. Natural & Cultural Resources & Open Space
 5. Services, Facilities & Recreation
 6. Transportation

Workshop #1 (TODAY!):
Land Use
Housing Policy
Economic Development
Transportation

HOW THE WORKSHOP WILL BE CONDUCTED

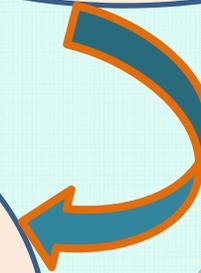
1: Overview Presentation

- Review the process for the workshop
 - Where is Bedford is today: what does the data tell us?
 - Some Q & A
- Maximum 45 minutes.*



2: Breakout Groups

- Focus on 4 planning elements
 - Develop goals & strategies for each topic
 - Write thoughts on flip charts for later recording
- Maximum 60 minutes*



3: Synthesis Session:

- Spokesperson from each group summarizes goals and strategies.
 - Full Q & A
- Maximum 70 minutes*

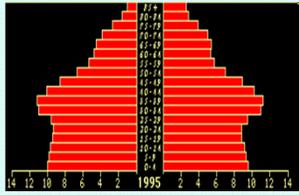




TRENDS IN BEDFORD SINCE THE 2002 PLAN

What does the data
tell us about
Bedford today?



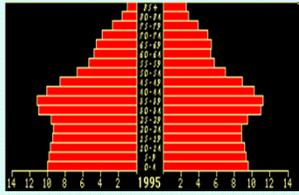


Population Highlights: *a little older, a little more diverse ... and still growing...*

Bedford's population grew 10%

12,595	→	13,320 (US Census 2000-2010)
12,446		13,765 (Town Census 2000-2010)

faster than average for
MAGIC sub-region (3.69%) and
Middlesex County (2.75%)



Population Highlights: *a little older, a little more diverse ... and still growing...*

Percentage of minorities
in Bedford increased

4.1%  12.1 %

Growth in specific minority populations:

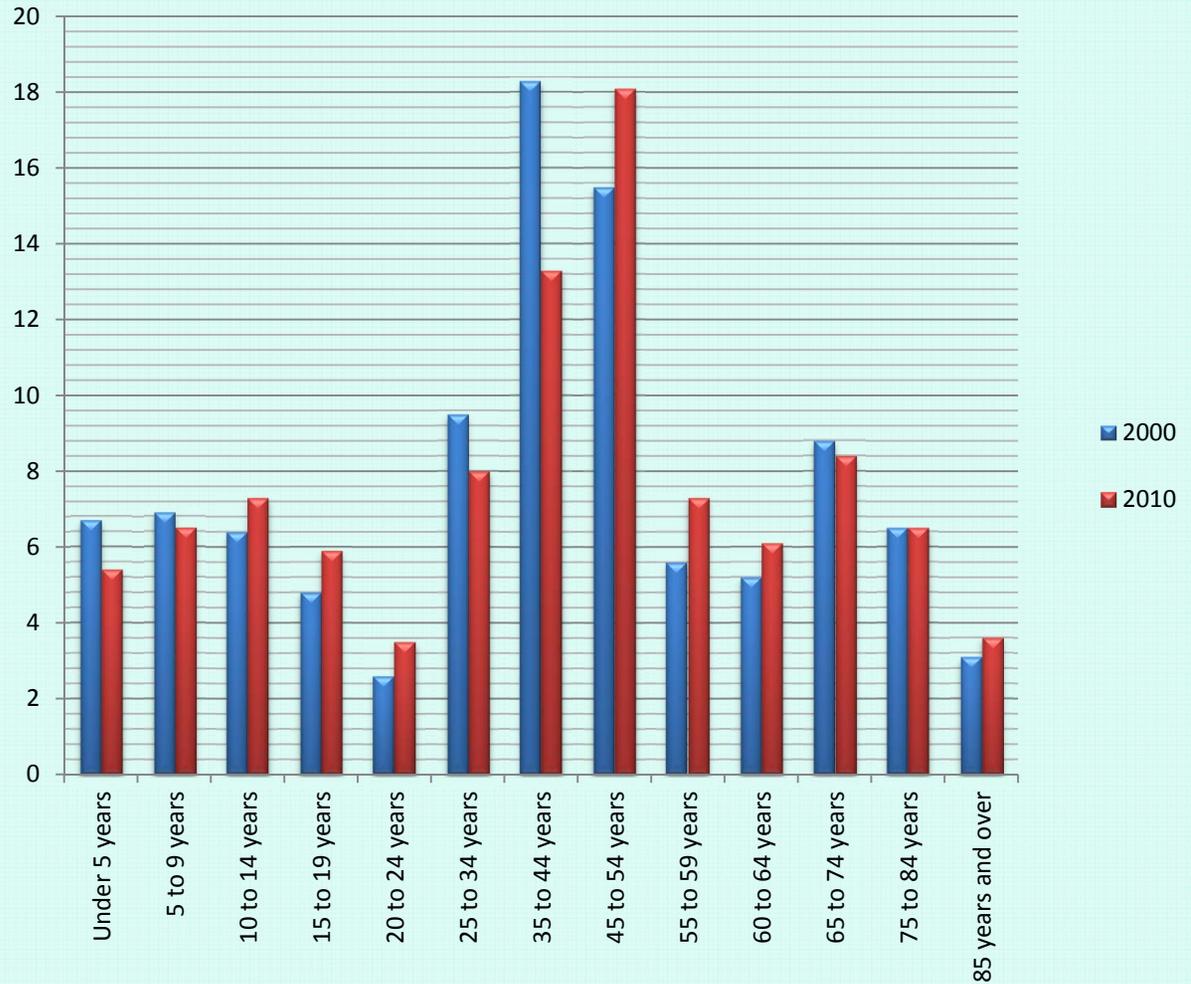
- Asians increased 84%
- African-Americans increased 50%
- Latino/Spanish/Hispanic increased 56%

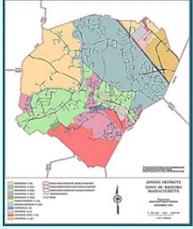
Demographic Trends

Teen/young adults: +2%
25 – 44 year olds: -6.5%
45–64 year olds: +5%
64–74 year olds: +8%

Median age has
increased from
42.1 to 45.1 years

Age Distribution 2000 and 2010





Land Use & Development: *big growth spurt in the middle years for all land uses, followed by a big drop-off ...*

Since the 2002 Plan

- 200+ acres acquired for conservation
- 158 acres developed residentially
- 60 acres for other uses

- 150 acres (approx.) developed for business
- 472,690 ft² of business space constructed
 - ❖ 19 businesses & 12 different locations
- 323,718 ft² of parking area constructed
- Over 73% of building permits for these projects issued between 2003 and 2008



Innovations in Zoning Since the 2002 Plan: *restoring mixed use in Bedford*

- Industrial Mixed Use, 2006
- Depot Park Mixed Use Overlay District, 2006
- North Road Mixed Use Overlay District, 2006
- Town Center Overlay District, 2007



Employment Patterns 2000-2011:

unemployment went up...

- Employed population older than 16 years declined from 6383 to 6287
- Maximum potential Labor Force grew by 7.8% from 6706 to 7231, consistent with our 10% population growth and aging trends
- Unemployment in Bedford increased from 2.4% in 2000 to 6.3% in 2009

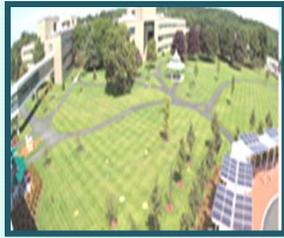
How Bedford compared in 2011:

- Bedford: 6.1% unemployed
- Middlesex County: 6.5%
- Massachusetts: 7.8%

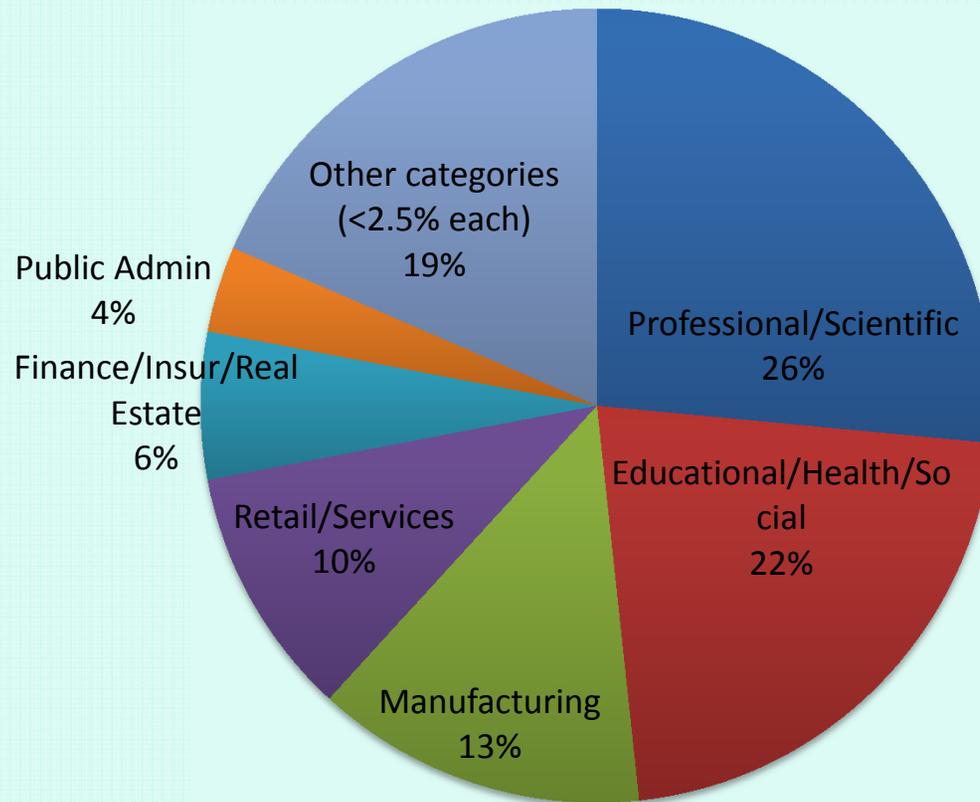


Employment Patterns 2000-2011: *but overall mix didn't change much...*

- Proportion of Professional/managerial /scientific jobs held steady at 60%, about 3800 jobs (US Census)
- Proportion of Manufacturing jobs fell by 3% from 1007 to 794
- Proportion of Retail jobs declined by 2.4%, from 589 to 434
- Proportion of Service jobs rose by 2.2% from 266 to 304.



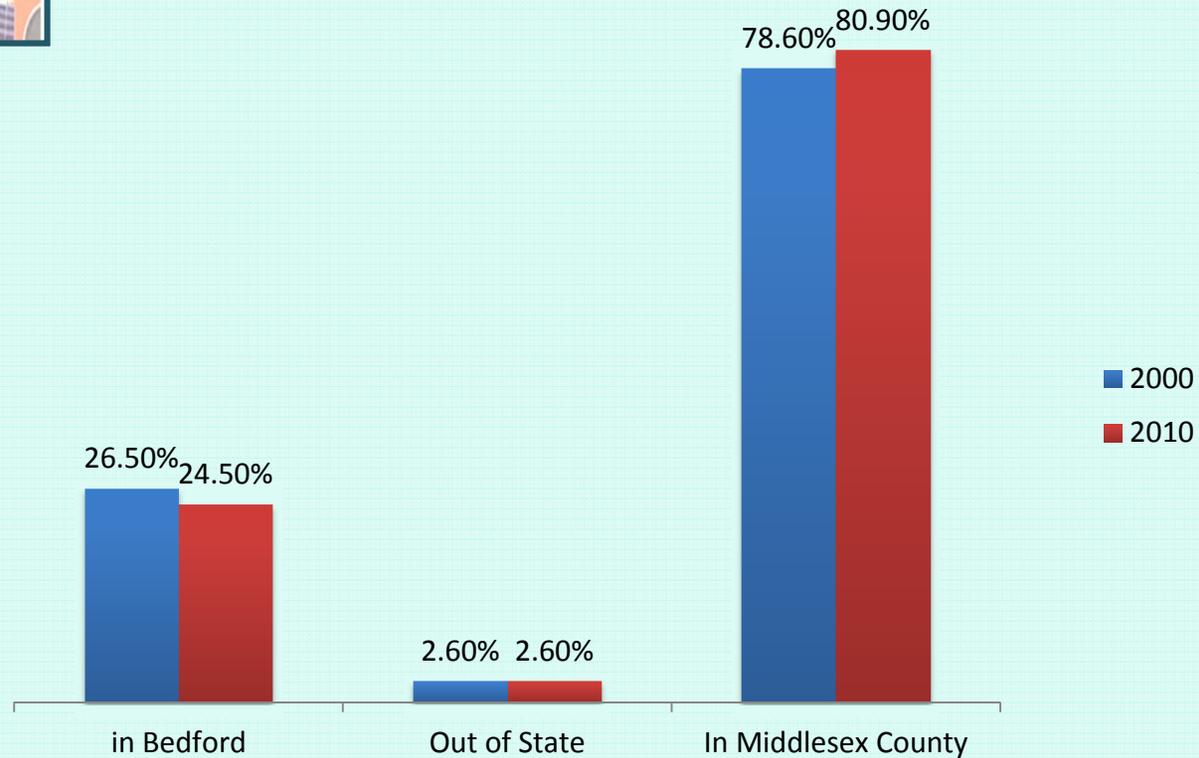
Employment Patterns II: *employment base didn't change much in spite of added space*



2010 Jobs Based in Bedford
estimated at 18,000 (not including Air Force personnel)



...nor did commuting patterns...



RESIDENTS' WORK LOCATIONS, 2000 – 2010
6300 (+/-) employed Bedford residents



Traffic: *the Great Road is the community's biggest problem at peak hours...*

Average peak hour volume (2000-2007)

- Great Road & Springs Road: +20% (1740 to 2095 vehicles)
- Great Road & South Road: +18.5% (1861 to 2205 vehicles)
- McDonald's & Dunkin's drives: +36.6% (1494 to 2042 vehicles)

Average peak hour volume (2010) *

- North & Great Roads (50/50 split): 3680 vehicles
- Mudge Way: 2690 vehicles
- Great Road Shopping Center drive: 2489 vehicles
 - 44% from turn movements to/from Shopping Center

*no *peak hour* comparisons from earlier years available at these locations



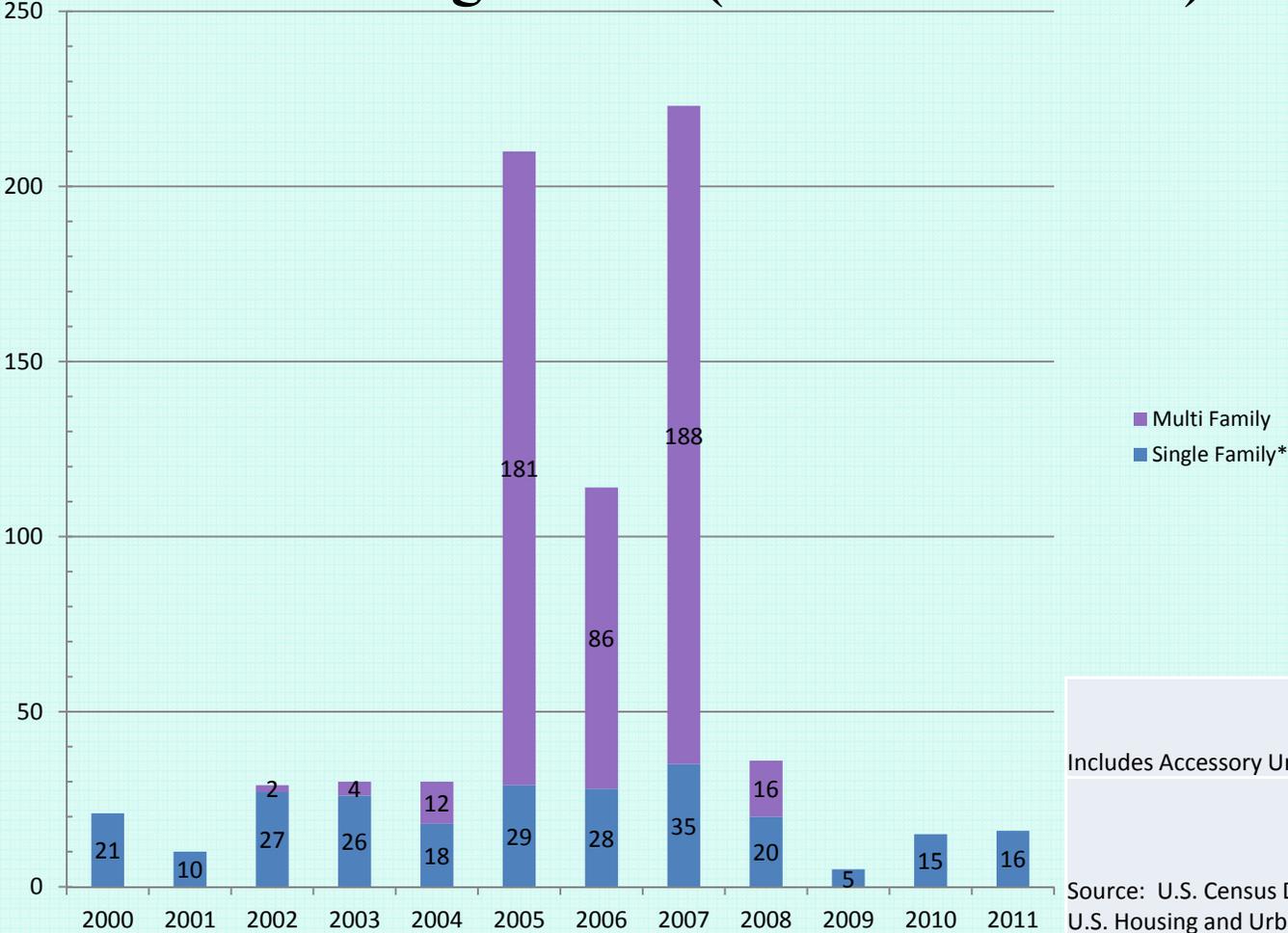
Housing: *significant diversification in housing stock & affordable units, but still costly...*

Since 2002...

- 575 multi-family units constructed (mostly 2004-2008)
- 216 single family detached homes constructed (most by 2008)
- 455 permits were issued for multi-family units in Chapter 40B/LIP* housing, more than 1 in 4 were affordable

*Local Initiative Program

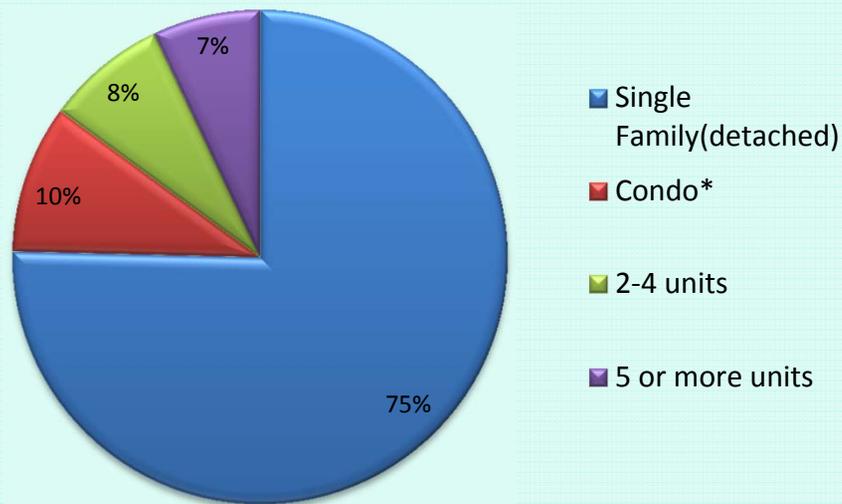
Number of Residential Building Permits 2000- August 2011 (new construction)



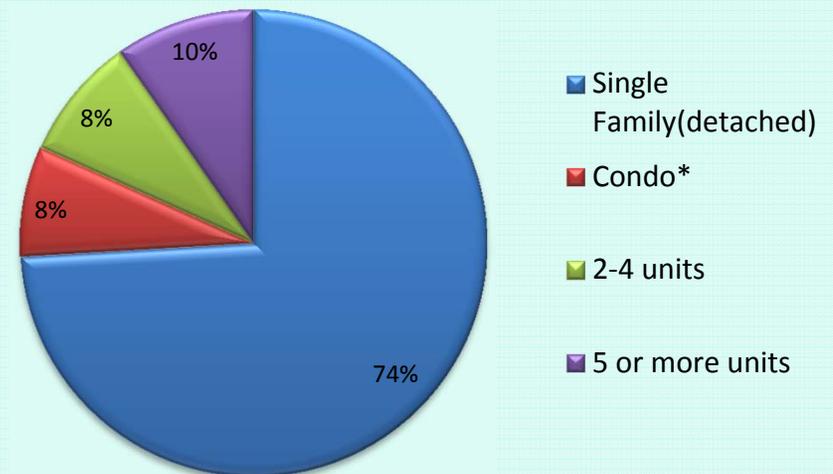
Includes Accessory Units*

Source: U.S. Census Data, Bedford Code Department,
U.S. Housing and Urban Development

Total housing units 2000



Total housing units 2010



Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates 2010; U.S. Census 2000

*For this data a condominium is defined as a single family attached unit



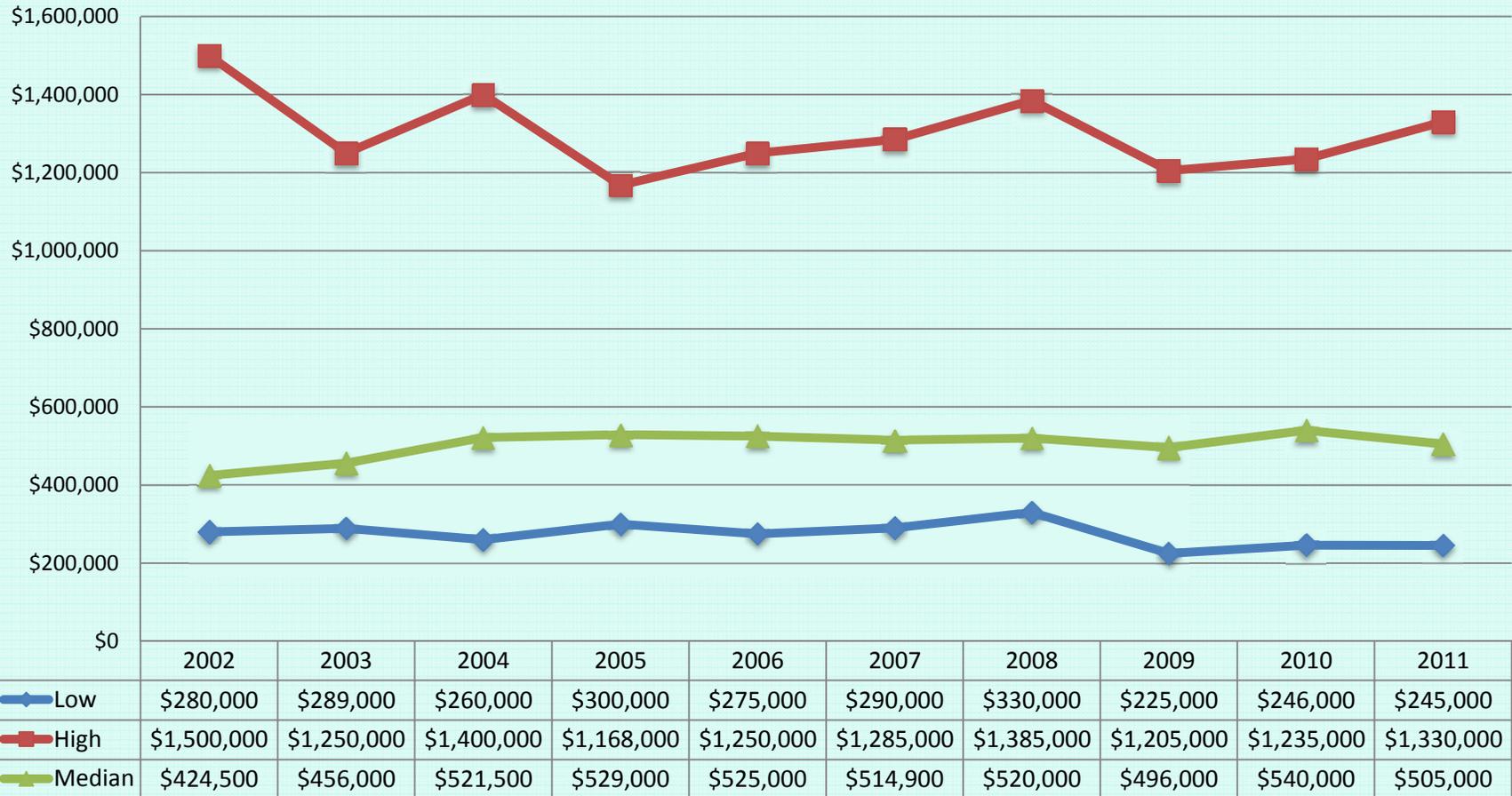
Housing: *significant diversification
in housing stock & affordable units, but
still costly...*

Median sales price rose 61% (2000-2010)

\$332,200  \$534,900

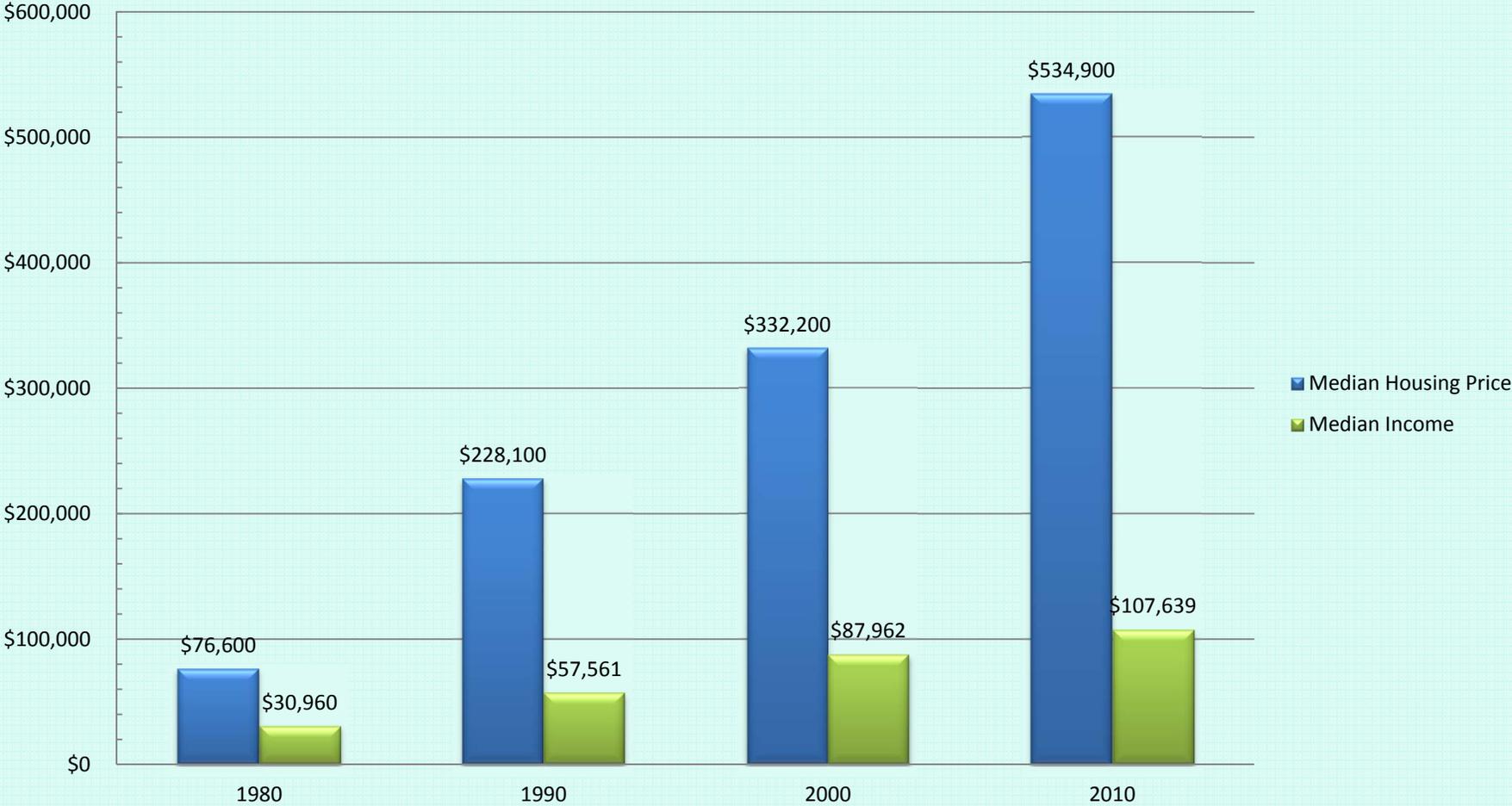
in spite of real estate downturn

Single Family Home Prices in Bedford 2002-2011: Low, High, Median



Source: Multiple Listing Service Database

Affordability of Housing



Source: U.S. Census, 2000; American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, 2010; The 2002 Bedford Comprehensive Plan

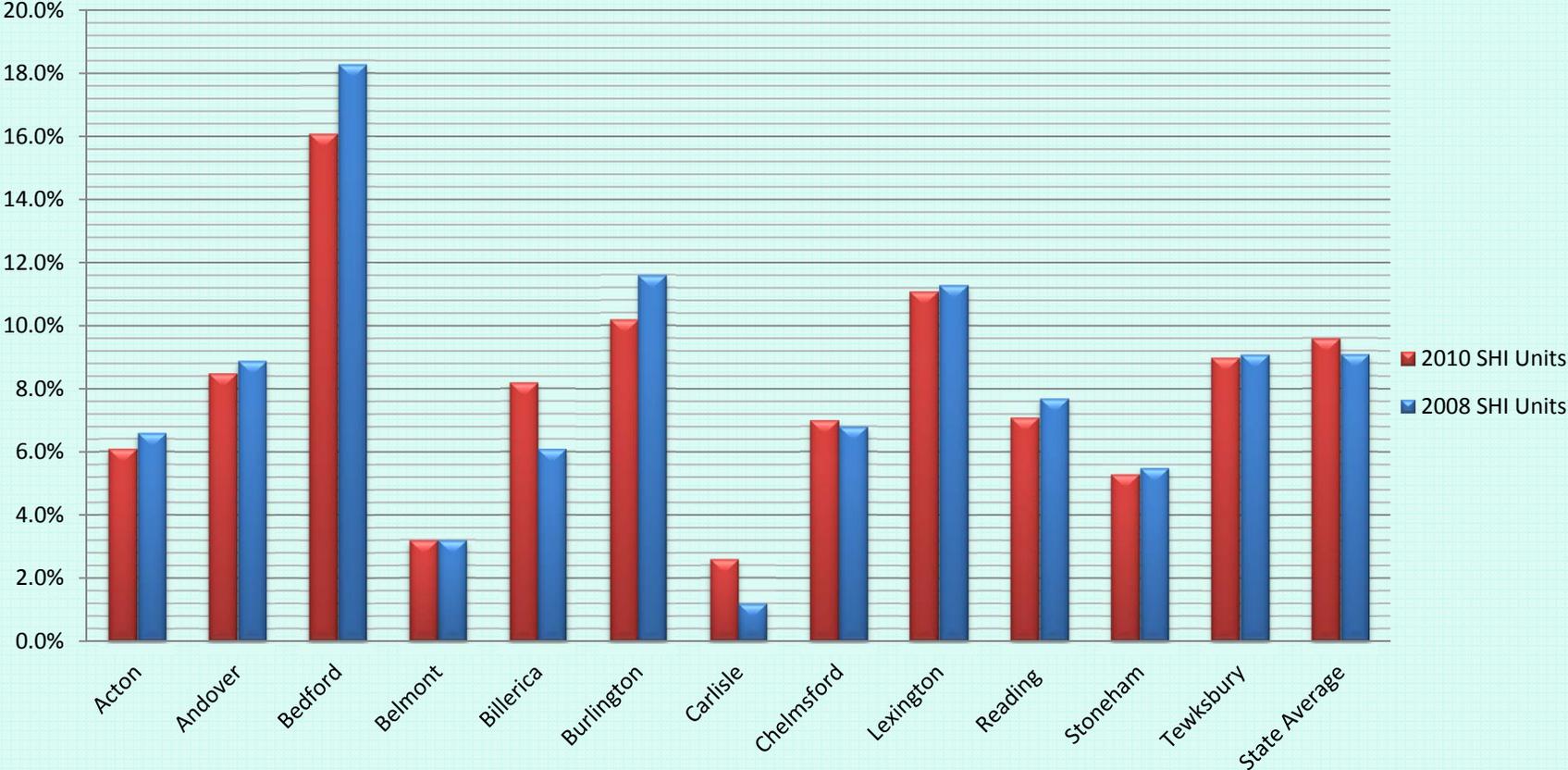


Housing: *significant diversification in housing stock & affordable units, but still costly...*

Bedford's percentage of units as counted by the State is currently 16.1%

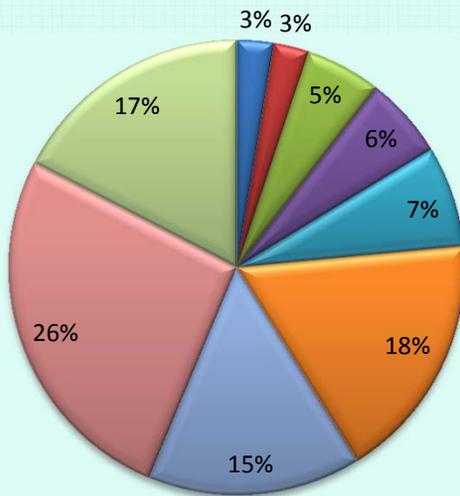
- down from 18.3% in 2008
- still highest in area and Middlesex County
- actual percent affordable units in Bedford (for families at less than 80% Annual Mean Income): 9.2%

Percentage of Subsidized Housing by Community



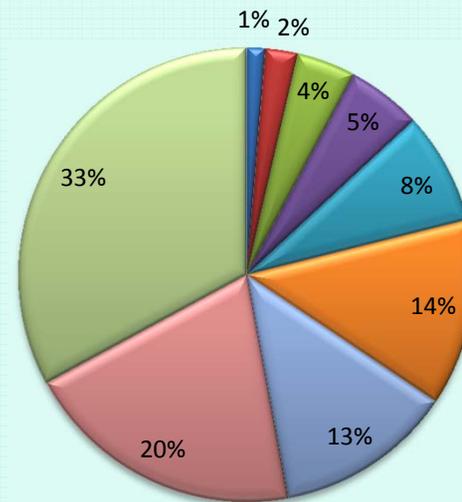
Source: Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development

Household Income for Bedford Residents 2000



- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 to \$14,999
- \$15,000 to \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$34,999
- \$35,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more

Household Income for Bedford Residents 2010



- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 to \$14,999
- \$15,000 to \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$34,999
- \$35,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 or more

Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, 2010; U.S. Census, 2000

QUESTIONS?



On to Break-out Groups...

Housing Policy

Land Use

Economic Development

Transportation