

Brighton’s Housing Profile

Note: The population figures in this plan range from 62 to 86. The higher estimate of 86 comes from the American Community Survey (ACS), while the lower figure of 62 is based on the U.S. Census, which is more accurate but outdated. Some tables use the ACS estimate because related data was calculated using that number. Replacing it with the Census figure would result in inconsistencies. It’s important to note this difference to avoid confusion, as it may appear to be an error when it is not. These discrepancies are noted throughout the document where relevant.

The Housing Stock

Brighton’s housing supply and prices determine the potential for future growth in the town, as well as the diversity of opportunities. A mixture of housing types encourages a mixture of residents – young and old, singles and large families, as well as different economic classes.

The 2020 Census shows Brighton has 80 total housing units, 30 occupied units, and 50 vacant (seasonal) units. In contrast, the 2023 ACS data show Brighton as having 87 total housing units, 28 occupied units, and 59 vacant (seasonal) units. Table 1 below highlights the disparities between the 2020 Census data and the 2023 ACS data.

TABLE 1: DIFFERENCES IN 2020 CENSUS VS. 2020 ACS DATA COMPARED TO 2010 CENSUS DATA

| | 2020 Census Data | 2023 ACS Data | 2010 Census/ACS Data |
|------------------------|------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Population | 62 | 86 | 38 |
| Total Housing Units | 80 | 87 | 56 |
| Occupied Housing Units | 30 | 28 | 15 |
| Vacant Housing Units | 50 | 59 | 41 |
| Seasonal Use Only | 45 | 59 | 32 |
| Households | 30 | 28 | 15 |

Source: 2010 ACS & Census, 2020 Census, 2023 ACS

The variations between the 2020 Census data and the 2023 ACS data may be a result of the three-year difference in data collection and because the ACS is more estimate-based from a smaller sample size than the Census. Regardless, the numbers are similar enough that the 2023 ACS will be used throughout this chapter.

Based on projections by the Office of the State Economist, by the year 2040 Brighton's full-time population is estimated to be 54, a decrease of 8 residents. With the current average household size (3.07), a population of 54 would need approximately 18 houses for this population size. Brighton's current occupied housing stock is 28 houses. This projected population decrease would mean that 10 houses in Brighton would no longer be needed in the next 15 years.

It is important to remember that there are many outside factors that influence population changes and that projects may not be accurate; they are based solely on past trends. With the changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, it is not possible to predict the future based on past trends.

One important variable that could significantly impact Brighton's future housing landscape is the potential sale of large land holdings by timber companies. Approximately 80% of the land in Brighton is owned by timber companies, with Weyerhaeuser being the dominant landholder. While current development has remained low-density and seasonal, this could shift if substantial tracts are sold for residential or recreational development. Weyerhaeuser has already sold parcels in neighboring communities, contributing to a rise in seasonal camps and private lots. If similar sales occur in Brighton, it could lead to increased development pressure and changes in housing demand. However, Brighton currently lacks the infrastructure necessary to support large-scale or year-round residential development — including no public sewer, water, or three-phase electrical service. This presents significant limitations for any future growth and underscores the need to consider long-term infrastructure capacity, road access, and emergency services. Additionally, any increase in residential activity could have implications for environmental conservation and natural resource protection, especially if development occurs near sensitive areas such as wetlands, forest habitat, or key watersheds. As such, monitoring land sales and proactively considering zoning and land use policies will be essential to ensure that any future development aligns with the community's vision and capacity.

In Table 2, 2023 ACS data was used for comparison, because not all the 2020 Census data was available, and calculations were made (by the Census Bureau) using the ACS data. Table 3 shows the development of housing by type since 2000.

TABLE 2: HOUSING: TYPE AND OCCUPANCY FROM 2000 TO 2023

| | 2000 | 2010 | 2023 |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Total Housing Units | 73 | 56 | 87 |
| Occupied Housing Units | 37 | 15 | 28 |
| Vacant Housing Units | 36 | 41 | 59 |
| Seasonal Housing Units | 31 | 32 | 59 |
| Mobile Homes | 10 | 3 | 0 |
| Owner Occupied Housing | 30 | 12 | 14 |
| Renter Occupied Housing | 57 | 3 | 14 |
| Single Family Housing Unit (attached and detached) Including Mobile Homes (out of total housing stock) | 62 | 53 | 87 |
| Two or More Unit Housing | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Source: 2000, 2010, & 2023 ACS

Table 2 Highlights:

- The data for 2010 appears to be skewed.
- Total housing units increased by 19 percent between 2000 and 2023.
- The number of seasonal housing units stay about the same from 2000 to 2010, then increased 84 percent.
- In 2023, all the vacant units were also seasonal. There were no year-round houses that were vacant.
- The number of people renting in Brighton increased significantly between 2000 and 2023.
- There is no record of any duplexes or multifamily housing in Brighton.

Brighton's average household size has fluctuated over the last several decades. Smaller household sizes are an important factor to consider with housing because they affect the amount, size, and type of housing that will be needed in the future. For example, an increase in people living alone equates to the need for more housing to accommodate the same number of people.

Average household size is defined by the American Community Survey as those living together, related or not. This is opposed to average family size, which strictly refers to those living together and are related.

TABLE 3: AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE FLUCTUATIONS

| Year | 2000 | 2010 | 2015 | 2020 | 2023 |
|-------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Average Household Size | 2.61 | 2.53 | 2.17 | 3.33 | 3.07 |

Source: 2000, 2010, 2015, 2020, 2023 Census/ACS

Table 3 Highlights:

- The average household size in Brighton decreased from 2000 to 2015.
- After 2015, the average household size in Brighton appeared to jump by 53 percent — a sharp increase that reflects the quirks of working with very small population numbers rather than a dramatic demographic shift. In a community as small as Brighton, even the addition or subtraction of just a few households can significantly skew averages and percentages. This statistic should be interpreted with caution, as it likely reflects normal fluctuations rather than a meaningful long-term trend.
- The average household size decreased by about 8 percent between 2020 and 2023.

Table 3 shows the average household size for all households in Brighton. Shrinking household size is a national trend. Almost all social and economic factors favor smaller households – more independent living among youth and elderly, smaller families, and more single-parent families.

The average household size, according to the 2023 ACS, was 3.07 people per household. Comparatively, the average household size for those who rent was 1.71 people per household, whereas the average household size for owner-occupied housing was 4.43 people per household.

Smaller households tend to be in flux more than larger households and they tend to be renters. Based on the 2023 ACS, Brighton has 14 renter-occupied units (75 percent decrease since 2000) and 14 owner-occupied units (53 percent increase since 2000). As of 2023, 50 percent of people living in Brighton were renters.

To some extent, the household size statistics relate to the type of housing that will be in demand, as well as the quantity of houses needed. Young and old households (seniors and singles) tend to prefer smaller houses than average. A specific type of housing suits them, such as apartments, retirement communities, or just smaller houses. Large lot subdivisions typically attract families with children. As the baby boomer generation reaches retirement age, there is an increased likelihood that the market for large family housing will be greatly reduced in favor of smaller, more efficient housing.

Seasonal Housing

The number of seasonal housing units in Brighton increased only slightly between 2000 and 2010; however, a more noticeable rise occurred between 2010 and 2023. This uptick may be attributed in part to the COVID-19 pandemic, when many people sought out rural areas as a refuge from more densely populated regions. Despite the overall increase in seasonal units, there is no clear trend of camps being converted into year-round

residences or vice versa. Seasonal and year-round housing continue to exist as distinct categories within the community, reflecting longstanding patterns of use rather than a shift in occupancy type.

Housing Conditions

Very little statistical data exists on the age and condition of the town's housing stock. The Census does ask questions such as how old a house is and whether it has modern plumbing and heating systems, but this is based on a statistical sample. Frequently, these samples are so small in a plantation the size of Brighton that they are little more than a guess.

The 2023 ACS indicates that 27 of the 28 occupied houses in Brighton have complete plumbing facilities and all occupied houses have complete kitchen facilities and telephone service. No occupied houses were reported as having more than one person per room, an indication of overcrowding.

Commented [MW1]: Probably not accurate

Very little statistical data exists on the age and condition of Brighton's housing stock. While the U.S. Census and American Community Survey (ACS) collect information such as the age of structures and whether homes have modern plumbing or heating systems, these results are drawn from statistical samples. In a plantation as small as Brighton, the sample size is often too small to draw meaningful conclusions, making the data more of a rough estimate than an accurate reflection.

The 2023 ACS, for example, reports that 27 of the 28 occupied housing units in Brighton have complete plumbing facilities, and that all have complete kitchen facilities and telephone service. It also notes that none of the occupied homes experience overcrowding, with no units reporting more than one person per room. However, this data likely misses important nuances of rural living in Brighton. Many residents are drawn to the area specifically because of its remoteness and lack of municipal infrastructure, embracing an off-grid lifestyle that may include solar power, composting toilets, wood heat, and satellite phone or internet service. These choices allow residents to live independently of traditional utility systems — a lifestyle not always accurately captured in federal surveys. As such, while official data may suggest conventional standards of housing service, the lived reality in Brighton often reflects a deliberate preference for self-sufficiency and low-impact living.

The age of housing structures can often be used as an indicator of housing conditions with varying degrees of accuracy. While some older homes are structurally very sound, they may have inadequate wiring, inefficient insulation, or contain hazardous materials like lead paint or asbestos. It should be noted that this age estimate is provided by Census responders.

TABLE 4: AGE OF HOUSING STOCK IN BRIGHTON, MAINE

| Year Structure was Built | # of Homes | Percent of Total |
|--------------------------|------------|------------------|
| 1939 or earlier | 28 | 32% |
| 1940-1949 | 0 | 0 |
| 1950-1959 | 0 | 0 |
| 1960-1969 | 0 | 0 |
| 1970-1979 | 13 | 14.9% |
| 1980-1989 | 0 | 0 |
| 1990-1999 | 18 | 20.7% |
| 2000-2009 | 14 | 16.1% |
| 2010-2019 | 14 | 16.1% |
| 2020 or later | 0 | 0 |

Source: 2023 ACS

Table 4 Highlights:

- A considerable portion of the homes in Brighton were built prior to 1939.
- There was another building spurt around 1970-1979.
- 46 (around 53%) of Brighton’s housing stock was built between 1990 and 2019.

Price and Affordability

The price and affordability of housing is often a significant factor in the economic life of a town or plantation. Housing prices are generally set by the open market, but if supply and demand get out of balance it can result in insufficient housing availability, unaffordability for prospective workers, and it could result in residents relocating to another area because they cannot afford local housing.

The growth management goal for affordable housing states that 10 percent of new housing should be affordable to households making less than 80 percent of the median household income. How this goal is attained is left up to the town to determine, such as if that ten percent should be as stick-built homes, mobile homes, rental properties, or elderly apartments.

A housing unit is considered affordable if a household whose income is at or below 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) can live there without spending more than 30 percent of their income (including insurance, utilities, heat, and other housing-related costs). This is true for both renters and owners.

In Somerset County, 80 percent of the AMI by household size is as follows:

TABLE 5: 80% AREA MEDIAN INCOME LIMITS BY FAMILY SIZE

| Family Size | Income Limit for Family Size |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| Family of 1 | \$47,600 |
| Family of 2 | \$54,400 |
| Family of 3 | \$61,200 |

| | |
|-------------|----------|
| Family of 4 | \$68,000 |
| Family of 5 | \$73,450 |
| Family of 6 | \$78,900 |
| Family of 7 | \$84,350 |
| Family of 8 | \$89,800 |

Source: https://www.mainehousing.org/docs/default-source/homeimprovement/80-ami-income-limits.pdf?sfvrsn=6df08615_5

The determination of whether housing is affordable begins with the consideration of cost. The Census usually provides adequate, though sample-sized, data regarding the price of housing. It is imperative to bear in mind that these prices are derived through owners' estimation of their home's value, meaning they do not necessarily match up with actual recorded sales prices, assessor evaluation, or real estate appraisals.

Due to the origins of this data and the sample size from Brighton, this data is likely highly inaccurate. Unfortunately, there are few other data sources from which to obtain more accurate data. For this reason, the margin of error is significant and should be considered when reviewing the information throughout this chapter and Plan.

In the following tables, the values used are that of 'specified housing' which means they are owner-occupied, one-housing unit structures, on less than 10 acres without a commercial establishment or medical office on the property.

TABLE 6: VALUE OF OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS FROM 2000 TO 2010

| | 2000 | 2010 | Change |
|--|----------|----------|-----------------|
| Median Value of Specified Housing Units | \$26,300 | \$77,500 | \$51,200 (195%) |
| Number of Units Valued at: | | | |
| Less Than \$50,000 | 13 | 0 | -13 (-100%) |
| \$50,000 - \$99,999 | 2 | 7 | 5 (250%) |
| \$100,000 - \$149,999 | 0 | 2 | 2 (100%) |
| \$150,000 - \$199,999 | 0 | 3 | 3 (100%) |
| \$200,000 - \$299,999 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| \$300,000 - \$499,999 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| \$500,000 - \$999,999 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| \$1,000,000 or more | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Source: 2000 & 2010 ACS

Table 6 Highlights:

- The median housing price increased between 2000 to 2010 by 195 percent, or \$51,200.
- In 2000, there were 13 homes valued at less than \$50,000.
- In 2010, no homes were valued at less than \$50,000.
- In 2010, there were an increase in homes valued between \$50,000 to \$99,999 and homes valued between \$ 100,000 to \$149,000.

TABLE 7: VALUE OF OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS FROM 2010 TO 2023

| | 2010 | | Change |
|--|----------|-----|------------|
| Median Value of Specified Housing Units | \$74,500 | N/A | N/A |
| Number of Units Valued at: | | | |
| Less Than \$50,000 | 0 | 2 | 2 (100%) |
| \$50,000 - \$99,999 | 7 | 3 | -4 (-57%) |
| \$100,000- \$149,999 | 2 | 0 | -2 (-100%) |
| \$150,000 - \$199,999 | 3 | 1 | -2 (-67%) |
| \$200,000 - \$299,999 | 0 | 3 | 3 (100%) |
| \$300,000 - \$499,999 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| \$500,000 - \$999,999 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| \$1,000,000 or more | 0 | 5 | 5 (100%) |

Source: 2010 & 2023 ACS

Table 7 Highlights:

- The median home price for homes in Brighton was not available after 2017. In 2017, the median home value was \$67,500, which seems inaccurate.
- In 2023, there were 2 homes valued at less than \$50,000, an increase from 0 in 2010.
- In 2023, there were fewer homes at lower values, such as the \$50,000 to \$99,999 and \$ 100,000 to \$149,000 than in 2010.
- There was an increase in homes in the \$200,000 to \$299,999 range and the \$1,000,000 or more range.

The Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) tracks actual sales data and other affordability data, though it is sometimes out of date by the time it is published. While the MSHA did not have data on the median home price in Brighton, data from this source will be used in other comparisons throughout this chapter and will differ from the estimate from the ACS.

While the exact median home price for Brighton Plantation is not available through state or federal sources due to the community’s small size, a general estimate can be made based on recent home sales and current listings. According to Realtor.com, homes for sale in Brighton have had a median listing price of \$249,000 in recent years. However, this figure is likely skewed by a small number of higher-end properties and may not reflect typical sale prices in the area. Listing prices also differ from actual sale prices, which are often lower. For broader context, the median home sale price in Somerset County was \$211,000 in 2023, and the Skowhegan Labor Market Area — which includes Brighton — reported a similar 2023 median of \$210,000. Given Brighton’s limited housing stock and rural character, home values can vary widely depending on factors such as land size, condition, and the presence of off-grid infrastructure.

Neighboring communities have the following median home prices (Maine State Housing Authority data):

- Bingham (2023) \$146,000

- Athens (2023) \$182,450
- Moscow (2020) \$82,500
- Solon (2022) \$187,000

The only data available for Moscow was from 2020, which makes it too outdated for this comparison and to use to obtain an estimate for Brighton. Solon and Athens had similar median home prices, while Bingham’s were slightly lower.

From the median home prices for surrounding towns, the Skowhegan Labor Market Area, and Somerset County, and considering Brighton’s rural location, it can be estimated that the median home price for Brighton is roughly between \$130,000 to \$175,000. If this range is averaged, an estimated median home price is around \$152,500.

Household Income

As with the data used throughout this Plan, the viability of the household income data provided by the Census Bureau is uncertain; however, it is included and analyzed because there are no other viable data sources available. Table 8 below details the household income in Brighton, as well as the median household income.

TABLE 8: BRIGHTON’S ESTIMATED HOUSEHOLD INCOMES

| Total Households: 28 | Approximate Number of Households |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Less than \$10,000 | 7.1% |
| \$10,000 - \$14,999 | 0% |
| \$15,000 - \$24,999 | 3.6% |
| \$25,000 - \$34,999 | 0% |
| \$35,000 - \$49,999 | 17.9% |
| \$50,000 - \$74,999 | 39.3% |
| \$75,000 - \$99,999 | 28.6% |
| \$100,000 - \$149,999 | 0% |
| \$150,000 - \$199,999 | 3.6% |
| \$200,000 or more | 0% |
| Median Income | \$52,500 |

Source: 2020 ACS

Based on the median home price estimate of \$152,500 and the median household income of \$52,500, the median home price would be considered affordable for families of one or two people on this income, when compared to the 80 percent rule for AMI in Table 5. A median priced home would be unaffordable to families larger than two people on the median household income.

Additionally, a median priced home would be unaffordable to households earning less than the median household income. According to the 2023 ACS, there are two

households paying 35 % or more for housing costs, which is also considered unaffordable.

Provision of affordable housing options is assisted by MSHA programs. MSHA provides some state and federal options for many types of buyers and renters. Maine State Legislature enacted several new bills with provisions to attempt to remediate the affordable housing problem state-wide.

Rental Housing

Table 9 below shows changes in rental costs between 2010 and 2023 based on ACS data.

TABLE 9: COST OF RENTING IN BRIGHTON

| | 2010 | 2020 | % Change |
|--|------|------|----------|
| Median Monthly Rent Specified Renter-Occupied Units | N/A | N/A | - |
| Less than \$500 | 0 | 0 | - |
| \$500 - \$999 | 0 | 0 | - |
| \$1,000 - \$1,499 | 0 | 0 | - |
| \$1,500 - \$1,999 | 0 | 0 | - |
| \$2,000 - \$2,499 | 0 | 0 | - |
| \$2,500 - \$2,999 | 0 | 0 | - |
| \$3,000 or more | 0 | 8 | 100 % |
| No Rent Paid | 3 | 6 | 100 % |
| Rent as a Percent of Household Income | | | |
| Less than 20 % | 0 | 0 | |
| 20 – 30 % | 0 | 0 | |
| 35% or more | 0 | 8 | 100 % |
| Not Computed | 3 | 6 | 100 % |

Sources: US Census 2010, American Community Survey (2023)

Table 9 Highlights:

- In 2000 there were no renters paying \$3,000 or more for a month's rent. In 2023, there were 8 households paying \$3,000 or more for a month's rent.
- In 2000 there were no renters paying 35 percent of their household income or more for a month's rent. In 2023, there were 8 households paying 35 percent of their household income or more for a month's rent.

The planning committee is not aware of any formal rental units in Brighton Plantation, and available data on rental housing is likely skewed due to the small population and possible misreporting of seasonal or informal arrangements. As a result, projections related to rental demand or affordability are not considered reliable. There is no demonstrated need for affordable, senior, or assisted living housing, and no current or planned municipal or regional efforts to promote such development. Seasonal homes are not being regularly

converted to year-round use, and local regulations neither encourage nor discourage affordable housing—but there are no plans to revise them, as housing demand remains low and infrastructure is limited.

Housing Location Trends

Town records show that 28 permits were issued in Brighton Plantation between 2013 and 2024. After a predictable slowdown following the 2009 recession, homebuilding began to increase slightly around 2018. The plantation would benefit from employing a full-time Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) and Local Plumbing Inspector (LPI), but due to its small size and remote location, it has not been feasible to do so. As a result, permit tracking is managed by the Planning Board and plantation administration, traditionally through paper files. The town has recently begun transitioning to an Excel-based system to improve recordkeeping, though the number of permits issued annually remains very low.

Projections

Population and Housing Projections

Referring to the population projections in the Community Profile and Existing Land Use chapter, it is difficult to anticipate significant future demand for housing.

The **State Economist’s Office** predicts a population of 54 people by 2040- a decrease of 8 people since 2020 (13 percent decrease).

Brighton’s average household size has been fluctuating and increasing since 2000. In fact, Brighton’s average household size increased nearly 18 percent between 2000 and 2023, reaching a peak of 3.33 in 2020 then falling to 3.07 in 2023.

TABLE 11: POPULATION PROJECTIONS AND HOUSING NEEDS, BASED ON HOUSEHOLD SIZE

| | Population Projection | Total Current Housing Units (minus seasonal) | Average Household Size | Amount of Housing Needed | Deficit? |
|--|-----------------------|--|------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| Current | 86 | 28 | 3.07 | 28 | N/A |
| State Economist’s Population Projection (at current average household size) | 54 | 28 | 3.07 | 18 | No |
| State Economist’s Population Projection (at a 5% decrease in | 54 | 28 | 2.92 | 18.5 | No |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| average household size) | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|

Table 11 Highlights:

- **Highlighted in Green:** With Brighton's current population of 86 people and the current average household size of 3.07, the existing, year-round housing stock of 28 housing units is adequate for accommodating this population.
- **Highlighted in Gold:** Based on the State Economist's population project of a decreased population to 54 people, combined with the current average household size of 3.07, Brighton's current housing stock would be at a surplus. This population decrease would require approximately 18 housing units and Brighton's existing housing stock is 28 housing units, leaving 10 housing units unoccupied.
- **Highlighted in Orange:** Based on the State Economist's population project of a decreased population to 54 people, combined with a (hypothetical) decreased average household size of 2.92 people per household, Brighton's current housing stock would still have a surplus of 10 housing units.
- Based on Table 11 and the State Economist's population projection, there is no immediate need for additional housing in Brighton, even if the average household declines by five percent. In fact, if the State Economist's population projections hold true, there will be a surplus of housing.

Population projections are based on past trends, not current conditions. While Brighton's population has been steadily increasing, even limited growth will bring demographic shifts that affect housing needs.

An aging population and smaller household sizes will drive demand for different housing types. Smaller households require more units, while seniors will need accessible, one-story homes or retirement living options. Though not always considered "affordable housing," these options will be in high demand within the next 15 years.

Rising numbers of both younger and older individuals living alone will also increase demand for smaller, more affordable homes. Even without major growth, demographic changes alone will require more—and different—housing options.

The greatest need will likely be for "right-sized housing": smaller, single-level homes on compact lots suitable for downsizing seniors and younger single residents alike.

Regardless of projections or current housing stock, new homes will continue to be built in Brighton Plantation. This growth will increase land use, with minimum lot sizes and zoning standards determining how much land is needed. See the Existing Land Use chapter for details.

Finally, an expected housing surplus may make it difficult to reach the goal of 10% of new homes being classified as affordable.

Current Housing Regulations

Brighton's Land Use Zoning Ordinance was written and adopted in 1995. It has not been updated since that time. This Ordinance divides the plantation into five separate zoning districts which fall under the umbrella of the subdistricts detailed more thoroughly in the Existing Land Use chapter, each with its own intended purpose.

Although it needs to be updated to reflect the most recent versions, the Land Use Zoning Ordinance includes the state-required Shoreland Zoning language, as well as the requirements of the State's Subdivision statute (see below).

Under Article 4- Performance Standards Applicable to Land Use Districts, Section 4.7, Subdivisions- Subdivisions are only permitted in the General Development District, Shoreland Development District, or Residential Development District. The subdivision of land is only permitted in these three districts in Brighton. The Planning Board is the reviewing authority for all proposed subdivisions.

Also, under Article 4- Performance Standards Applicable to Land Use Districts, Section 4.7, Subdivisions- the Planning Board shall follow the procedures of 30-A M.R.S.A Section 4551 when acting on subdivision proposals.

One of the objectives in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan was to make Brighton a community of single-family homes with suitable recreational development. The Plan detailed three locations intended for development: one at the village center (intersection of Rts 151 and 154); a second along Rt 154 near Trout Pond; and a third in the vicinity of the intersection of Bunker Hill Road, the Brighton Road, and Rt 151.

The Ordinance specifies the designated growth areas as the General Development District, the Residential Development District, and the Shoreland Development District by making them the most permissive for development and other land uses.

Overall, Brighton's Land Use Zoning Ordinance was well written for its time, it needs to be updated to reflect current practices and standards. It does not promote the development of affordable or workforce housing, but those types of housing were not considered at the time this Ordinance was written.

Brighton has adequate growth areas within its existing built-up areas; however, the lack of public sewer and water provides little incentive to concentrate development there. One of the primary challenges to developing affordable or workforce housing in the plantation is that, without public utilities, each property must be able to support both a well and a septic system. As part of the building permit process, applicants are required to have at least a septic design in place. This need for on-site infrastructure often necessitates larger lot sizes, which can drive up property costs and make smaller or more affordable housing

less feasible. While the plantation could consider increasing its minimum lot size to better regulate development and protect groundwater resources, such a change would need to balance environmental concerns with the potential for limiting housing availability.

However, even in the growth area, the minimum lot size is 'no less than 1 acre', which increases building costs. One potential way to encourage affordable/workforce housing development would be reduce lot sizes in a certain area to the state's minimum, depending on the viability of the soil for supporting a well and septic.

Due to Brighton's location in central northern Somerset County, there are no workforce housing coalitions locally or regionally. The plantation staff does not have the capacity to participate in these efforts, nor does there appear to be interest amongst residents.

Analysis and Key Issues

- Brighton's housing stock consists of 87 total housing units with 28 occupied by year-round residents and 59 seasonal housing units.
- There are no year-round homes that are vacant.
- The State Economist predicts Brighton's population will be 54 by 2040- a reduction of 8 residents.
- Currently, all homes in Brighton are single-family homes.
- Brighton's 2023 average household size is 3.07 people per household.
- Brighton's median house price is estimated at 152,500 and the median household income is \$52,500.
- There were 8 households paying 35 percent or more of their household income in rent, which is considered unaffordable.
- Based on the population projection by the State Economist, Brighton's housing stock, and average household size, there will not be a need for more housing to accommodate the population.
- There will likely be a need for 'right-sized housing' for more people living alone, and elderly housing, though.
- Brighton's Land Use Zoning Ordinance does not promote the development of workforce/affordable housing, as it is currently written.