

BOSTON BY THE NUMBERS

HOUSING

Produced by the Research Division, November 2013

Alvaro Lima, Director of Research

John Avault

Mark Melnik



CITY OF BOSTON
MAYOR THOMAS M. MENINO



PETER MEADE, DIRECTOR

HOUSING BY THE NUMBERS

- Boston's housing stock has grown in every decade since 1950, with the sole exception of the 1960s.
- Growth over the past decade, 2000-2010, was the strongest over the last six decades for both total and occupied units.

GROWTH OF BOSTON'S HOUSING STOCK

Year	Population	Housing Units	Housing Growth	Housing % Growth	Occupied Units	Vacant Units	Decade's Absorption ¹	Absorption Rate
1950	801,444	222,079			218,103	3,976		
1960	697,197	238,802	16,723	7.5%	224,687	14,115	6,584	3.0%
1970	641,071	232,401	(6,401)	-2.7%	217,657	14,744	(7,030)	-3.1%
1980	562,994	241,444	9,043	3.9%	218,457	22,987	800	0.4%
1990	574,283	250,863	9,419	3.9%	228,464	22,399	10,007	4.6%
2000	589,141	251,935	1,072	0.4%	239,528	12,407	11,064	4.8%
2010	617,594	272,481	20,546	8.2%	252,699	19,782	13,171	5.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Boston Redevelopment Authority Research Division Analysis

GROWTH AND CHANGE IN PLANNING DISTRICT² HOUSING

- Boston added nearly 21,000 units of housing between 2000 and 2010. Comparatively, Boston added close to 30,000 units between 1950 and 2000.
- Planning Districts with significant housing gains between 2000 and 2010 include Central (3,671), South Boston (2,592), and Roxbury (2,541).
- While each Planning District experienced some level of housing gain between 2000 and 2010, there are several where gains were less significant than during the period 1950 and 2000. This includes Back Bay/Beacon Hill, Allston/Brighton, Roslindale, West Roxbury, and Hyde Park.



¹ "Absorption" represents the increase in occupied housing units between decades.

² Planning Districts are legacy boundaries used by the BRA to organize planning and economic development.

PLANNING DISTRICT HOUSING STOCK: 1950 – 2010

PLANNING DISTRICTS	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Allston/Brighton	21,355	23,502	25,324	29,548	30,862	30,988	31,912
Back Bay/Beacon Hill	9,200	13,216	15,622	18,192	17,975	17,912	18,396
Central	10,624	9,275	9,664	11,671	13,361	14,220	17,891
Charlestown	6,957	6,443	5,119	6,121	7,752	7,755	8,648
East Boston	13,943	13,990	13,709	14,552	14,810	15,078	15,854
Fenway/Kenmore	13,095	15,404	13,243	12,468	13,619	13,159	14,390
Harbor Islands	14	20		1			
Hyde Park	7,610	9,269	10,735	11,030	11,777	11,877	12,317
Jamaica Plain	15,641	16,308	17,093	17,045	17,165	16,554	17,650
Mattapan	12,077	13,407	14,950	13,064	12,238	13,101	13,558
North Dorchester	9,357	10,412	10,466	10,106	10,218	10,311	11,081
Roslindale	9,249	10,353	12,253	12,414	12,917	13,247	13,621
Roxbury	33,519	31,199	24,958	23,194	23,158	22,423	24,964
South Boston	15,168	14,555	14,259	14,055	14,784	15,031	17,623
South Dorchester	22,025	22,433	23,261	21,808	22,364	22,615	23,608
South End	15,223	20,848	10,719	13,761	14,915	15,267	17,422
West Roxbury	7,012	8,199	11,026	12,274	12,950	12,397	13,546
TOTALS	222,079	238,833	232,401	241,304	250,865	251,935	272,481

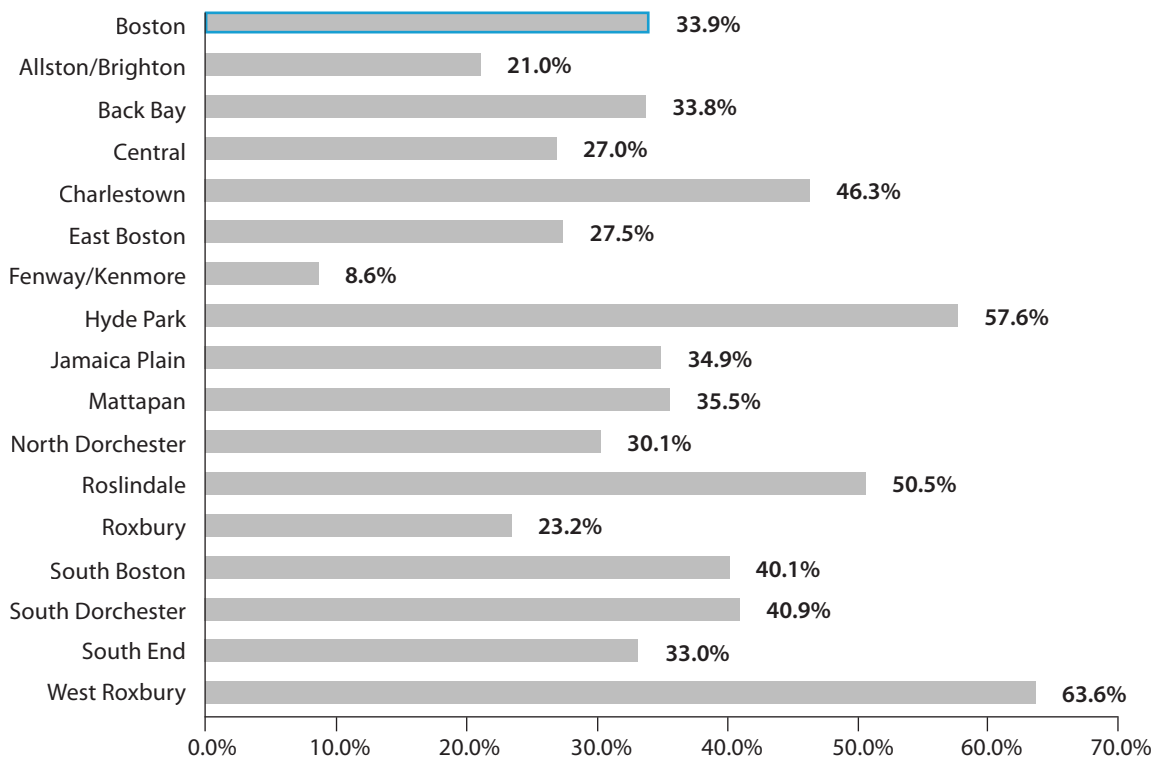
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Boston Redevelopment Authority Research Division Analysis

RENTER/OWNER

- Approximately one third of Boston's households are owner occupied.
- Boston's homeownership rate increased from 25% in 1950 to 27% between 1960 and 1980. Over the last three decades Boston's homeownership rate has steadily increased to nearly 34%.
- The lowest homeownership rates are in the Fenway-Kenmore District (8.6%) and Allston-Brighton (21%).
- The highest homeownership rates are found in West Roxbury (63.6%) and Hyde Park (57.6%).



HOMEOWNERSHIP RATES IN BOSTON PLANNING DISTRICTS: 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Boston Redevelopment Authority Research Division Analysis

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Boston has the highest concentrations of “affordable” (subsidized) housing among major U.S. cities.
- Data from Boston’s Department of Neighborhood Development (DND) show 19%³ of the city’s housing stock is dedicated to low- and moderate-income families.
- The American Housing Survey (AHS) reported that 22% of Boston’s housing was reserved for low- or moderate-income households. This includes “floating certificates” (i.e. Section 8 vouchers) that are not permanently attached to any particular unit.
- By comparison: The U.S. average is 5% while cities like Chicago (7%), Seattle (7%) and San Francisco (8%) lag far behind Boston in terms of affordable units.
- Back Bay/ Beacon Hill (5.7%) and Hyde Park (7.2%) have the lowest concentration of affordable units, while Roxbury (44.9%) and the South End (41%) have the highest concentration.
- One third of Boston’s affordable housing is in either Roxbury or the South End.



³ The difference between the AHS and the DND percentages on affordable housing are the floating certificates, such as Section 8 vouchers.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN AMERICA'S 25 LARGEST CITIES

CITY (& Survey year)	Affordable Housing Units	Total Housing Units	Affordable Share of Housing Stock
Boston (2007)	50,900	227,200	22%
Atlanta (2004)	31,100	163,500	19%
New York City (2009)	529,100	3,024,500	17%
St. Louis (2004)	22,500	143,800	16%
Detroit (2009)	39,300	266,600	15%
Minneapolis (2007)	21,200	153,300	14%
Miami (2007)	20,200	148,100	14%
Denver (2004)	30,900	229,800	13%
Cleveland (2004)	23,000	173,700	13%
Buffalo (2002)	14,700	119,000	12%
Philadelphia (2009)	62,800	531,500	12%
Tampa (2007)	14,200	123,700	11%
Milwaukee (2002)	24,100	224,200	11%
New Orleans (2009)	13,400	129,500	10%
Memphis (2004)	18,700	200,000	9%
Houston (2007)	63,300	707,400	9%
Sacramento (2004)	13,600	163,100	8%
San Francisco (1998)	24,600	307,300	8%
Indianapolis (2004)	20,200	257,900	8%
Los Angeles (2003)	87,400	1,123,200	8%
Portland (2002)	14,400	202,000	7%
Chicago (2009)	66,300	943,300	7%
Phoenix (2002)	24,000	342,400	7%
Charlotte (Mechlenburg Co. 2004)	19,400	280,000	7%
Seattle (2009)	17,600	257,100	7%
U.S. (2009)	5,852,000	111,806,000	5%

NOTE: Covers occupied rental units only, based on survey of residents, as well as tenants covered by certificates not attached to fixed units. Affordable Housing is the sum of "Owned by Public Housing Authorities", "Government Subsidy" and "Other Income Verification."

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Boston Redevelopment Authority Research Division Analysis



AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN BOSTON PLANNING DISTRICTS

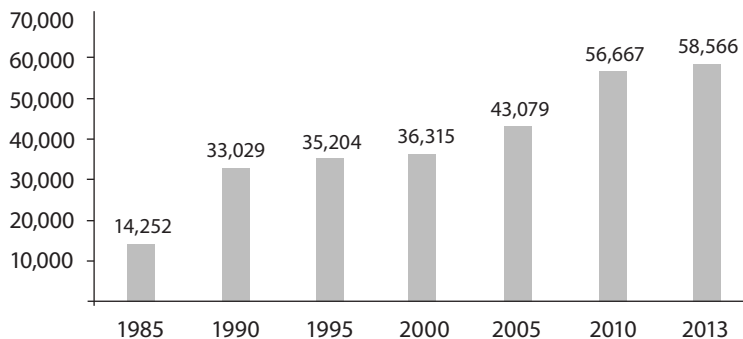
Planning District	Total Affordable Units	2010 Census Count	% Affordable
Allston/Brighton	4,010	31,912	12.6%
Back Bay/Beacon Hill	1,046	18,396	5.7%
Central	2,849	17,891	15.9%
Charlestown	2,326	8,648	26.9%
Dorchester	4,796	34,689	13.8%
East Boston	2,435	15,854	15.4%
Fenway/Kenmore	2,060	14,390	14.3%
Hyde Park	892	12,317	7.2%
Jamaica Plain	4,570	17,650	25.9%
Mattapan	2,588	13,588	19.1%
Roslindale	1,485	13,621	10.9%
Roxbury	11,220	24,964	44.9%
South Boston	3,434	17,623	19.5%
South End	7,139	17,422	41.0%
West Roxbury	1,349	13,546	10.0%
Scattered ⁴	614		
TOTAL	52,813	272,481	19.4%

Source: Boston Department of Neighborhood Development, 2013

CONDOMINIUMS

- 21.5% of Boston’s housing units are condominiums.
- The number of condominiums increased more than four fold since 1985.
- Boston’s condominiums are closely split between owner and renter occupancy.

RESIDENTIAL CONDOMINIUM UNITS IN BOSTON



Source: Boston Assessing Department. Years are Fiscal Years.



⁴DND currently lacks geographic information on these units. These are mainly Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Units.