

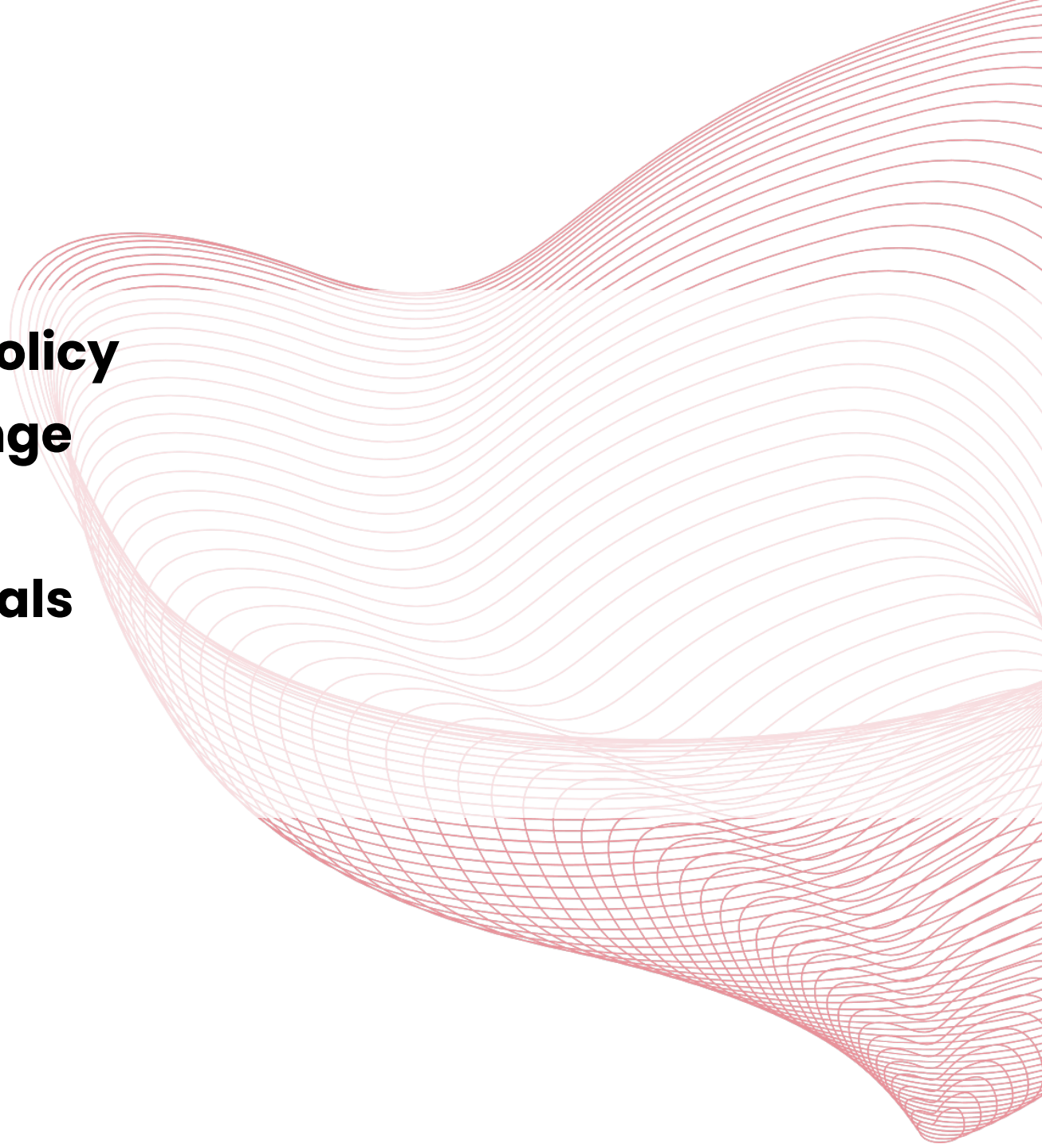
# From Information to Impact

Empowering Informed Housing Policy Decisions



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# Using Data for Evidenced- Based Policy

From Information to Impact

# USING DATA FOR EVIDENCED-BASED POLICY

## How can publicly available data be utilized to develop a more complete understanding of a community's housing market conditions?

Why Bar Harbor exemplifies a scenario in which data and surveys were crucial to understanding the housing narrative.

- Bar Harbor is surrounded by water and includes natural parks meaning developable space is limited.
- Developable space is further constrained by zoning complexity and infrastructure.
- Bar Harbor has a highly seasonal economy but also has several anchor institutions.
- Like the region, Bar Harbor has a large number of seasonal homes, short-term rentals and remote workers.
- Linked to the seasonality of Bar Harbor's economy, the town experiences large swings in population during summer months, but now peak season is extending.

Linking data to  
key housing  
policy questions

Is the population growing?

What is driving population change?

Is housing expensive for lower- and middle-income households?

Is the active vacancy rate low?

How do the characteristics of supply and demand compare for owners and renters



# Population & Employment Change

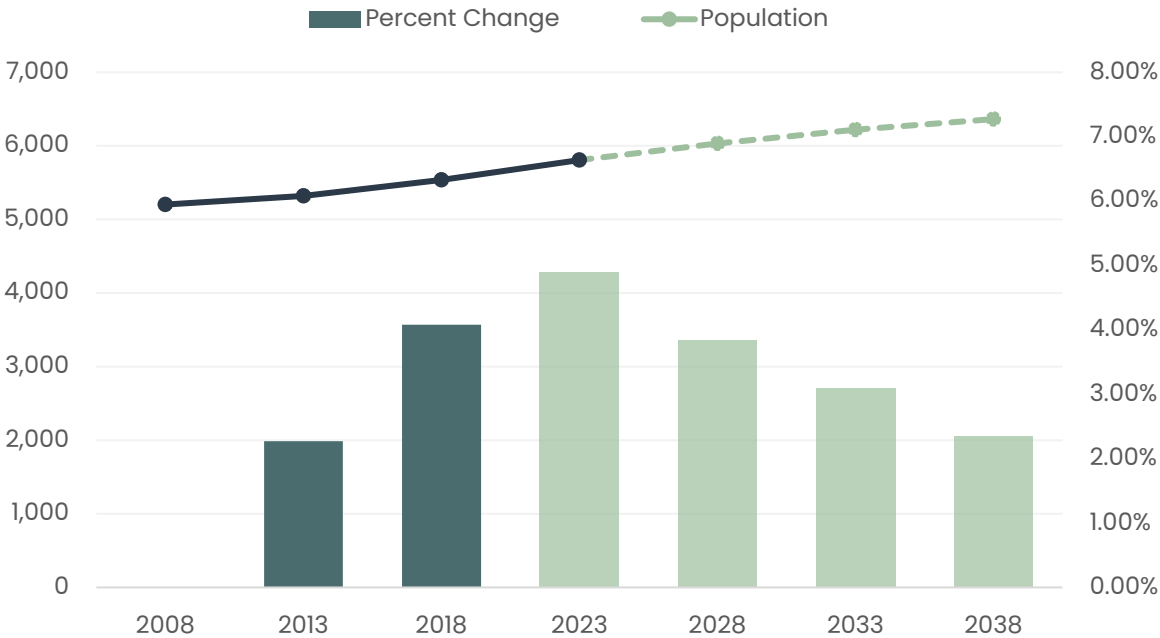
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# POPULATION & EMPLOYMENT CHANGE

Bar Harbor is continuing to see demographic shifts that are driving change in housing demand and availability.

How do we evaluate the drivers of that change and link demographics to specific types of housing segments?

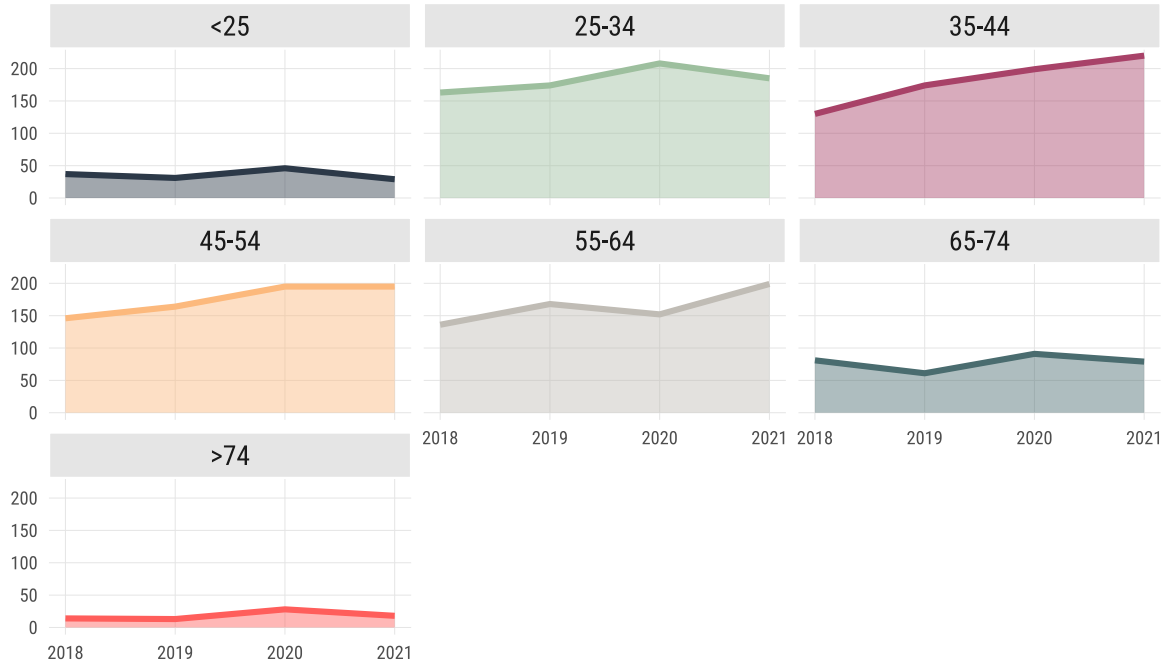
Bar Harbor Population Projections



Source: Department of Administrative and Financial Services, State Economist, State of Maine

Single Family Home Purchase Loans by Applicant Age

Hancock County (2018 - 2021), (n = 3,429)



Source: HMDA, RKG Associates



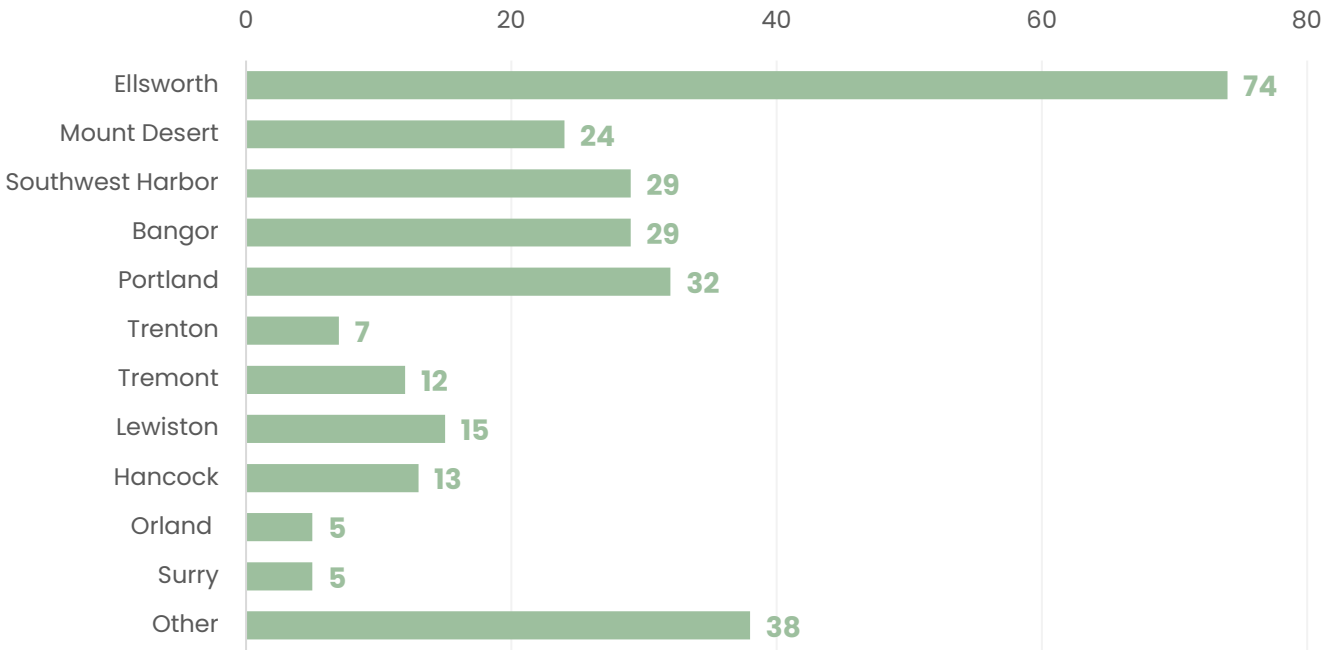
# POPULATION & EMPLOYMENT CHANGE

Labor market patterns often dictate housing needs and define the housing market.

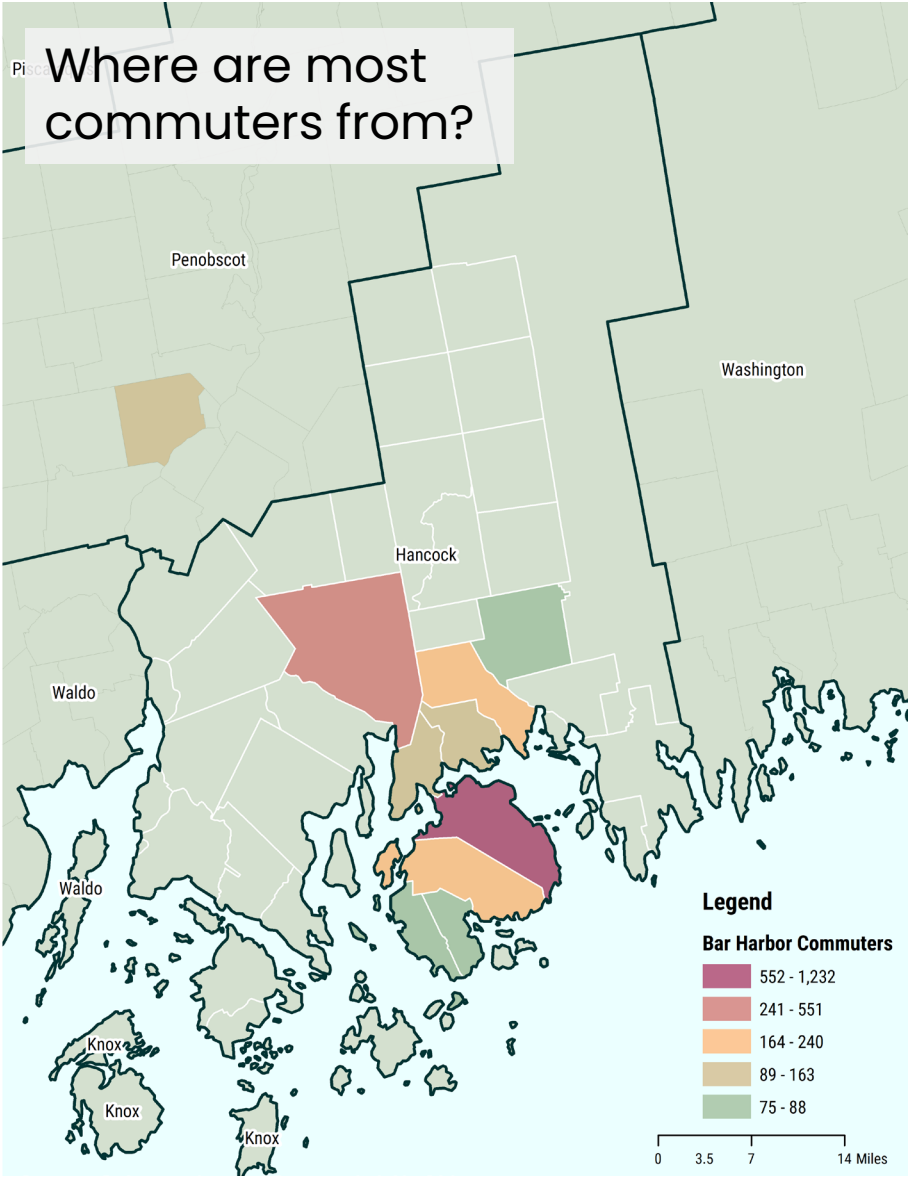
How have commuting patterns and changes in the local economy impacted housing within Bar Harbor and across the region? How do these dynamics impact local businesses?

If you work in Bar Harbor but live elsewhere, where do you live?

n = 283



Source: Bar Harbor Area Worker Survey 2022



Source: US Census LODS 2020



# Housing Supply & Demand

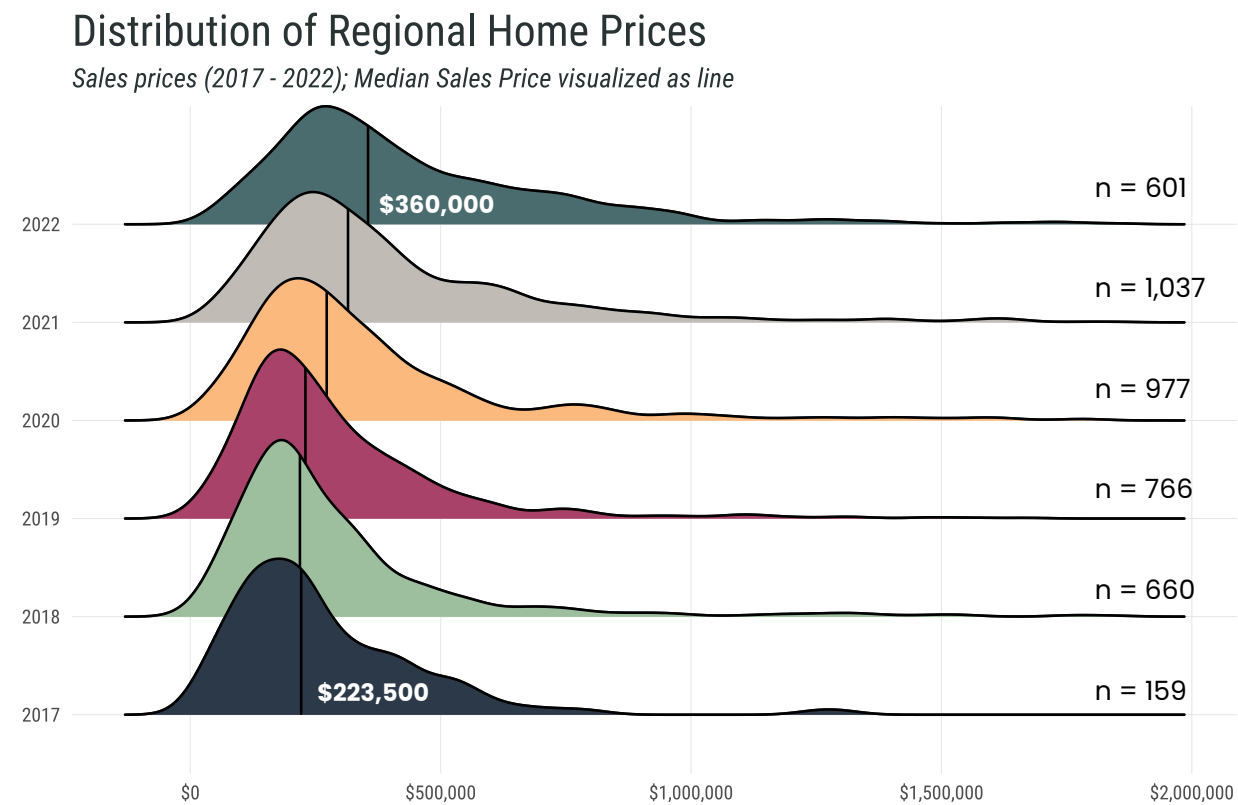
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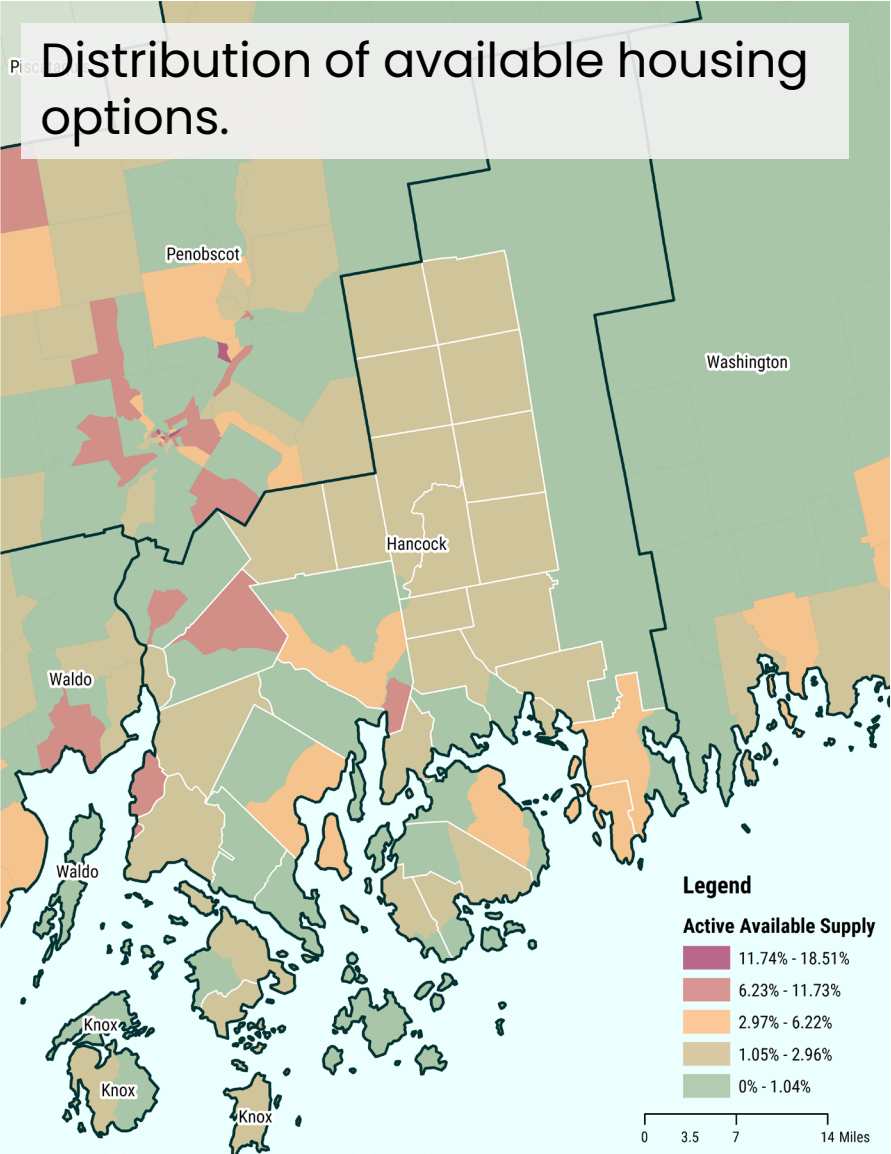
# HOUSING SUPPLY & DEMAND

During, and in the years following the COVID-19 pandemic, housing markets saw a surge in prices and record low inventories.

How did these nationwide trends play out within Hancock County and how has that impacted housing in Bar Harbor?



Source: Redfin



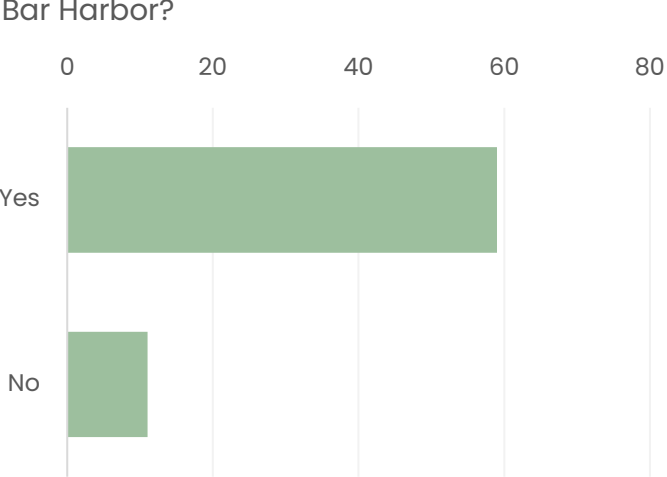
Source: ACS Estimates 2020

# HOUSING SUPPLY & DEMAND

Remote work, excess household savings, and outdoor related recreation drove home buying and visitation to Hancock County.

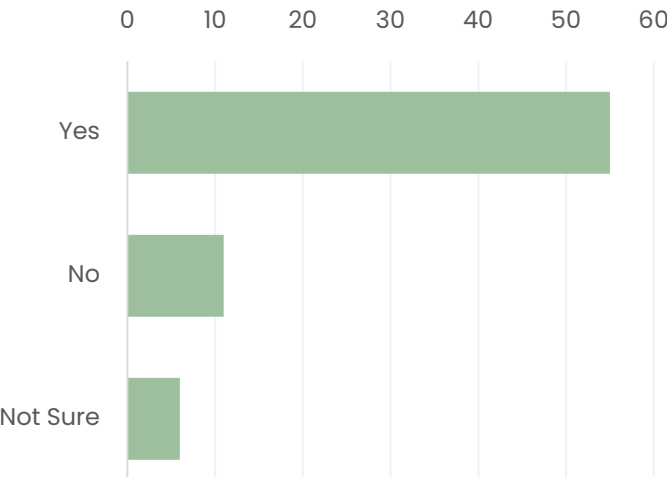
## How did these trends change the available housing stock and what impact did these drivers have on local businesses?

For your employees that do not live in Bar Harbor, do they have difficulty finding housing that meets their needs (size, location, price, etc.) in Bar Harbor?

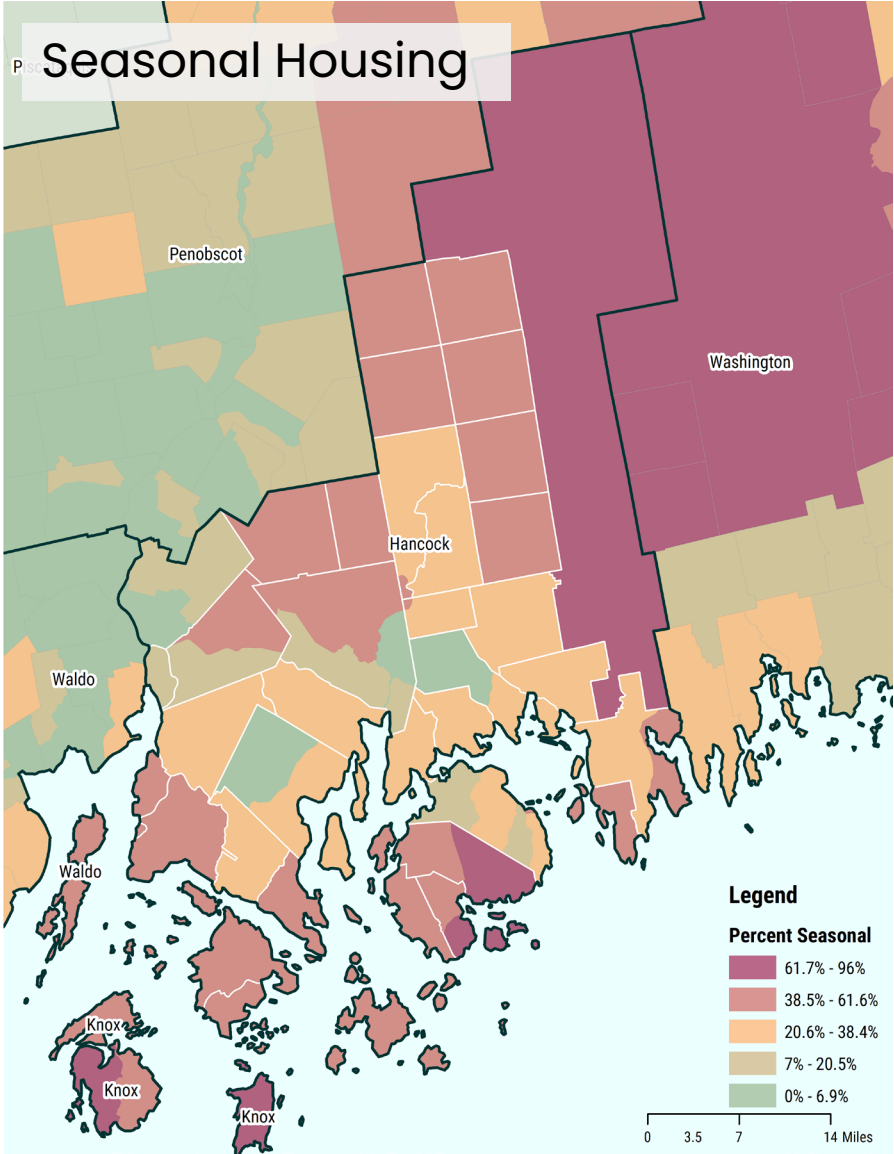


Source: Bar Harbor Employer Survey 2022, n = 70

Have you ever lost an employee(s) due to lack of housing or issues with housing affordability in Bar Harbor?



Source: Bar Harbor Employer Survey 2022, n = 72





# Second Homes & Short-Term Rentals

From Information to Impact



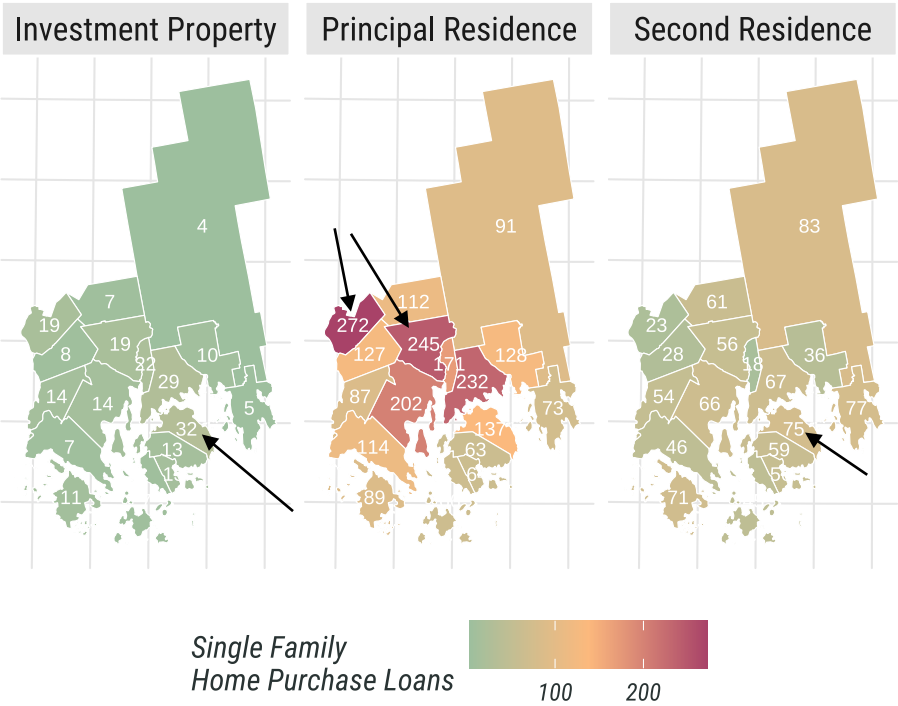
# SECOND HOMES & SHORT-TERM RENTALS

The rise in short-term vacation rentals and second homes has caused an even tighter housing market in Bar Harbor and across Hancock County.

What has been the impact of second home and investment property purchases across the region?

## Single Family Home Purchase Loans

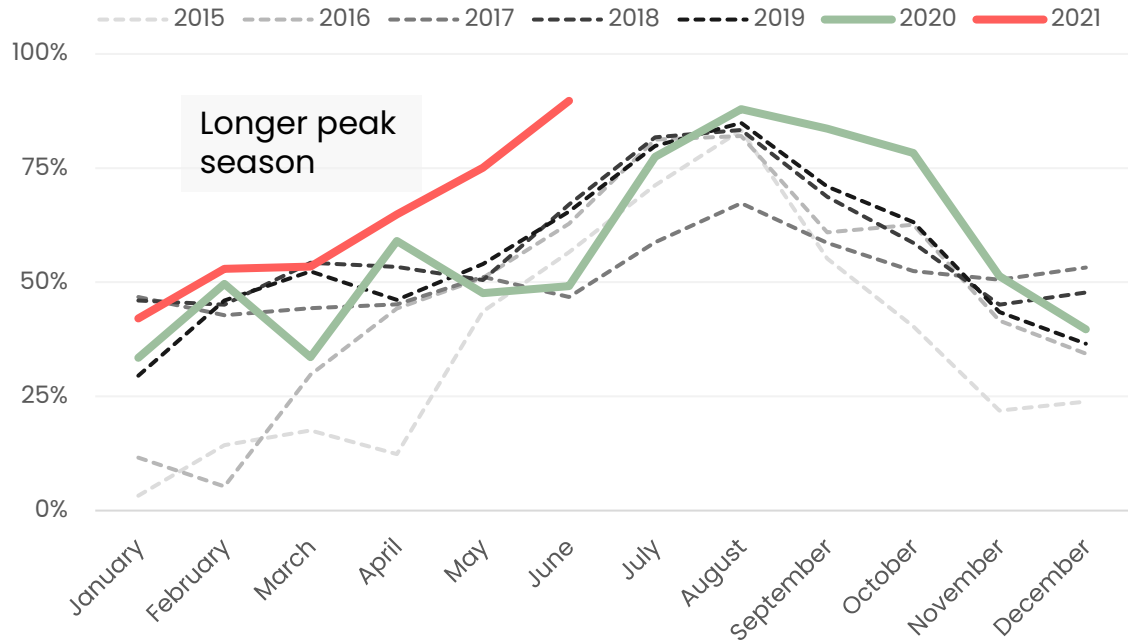
Hancock County, ME (n = 3,429)



Source: HMDA 2018 - 2021, RKG Associates

## Percent Booked

Out of Available Rentals



Source: AirDNA, Bar Harbor 2015 - 2021

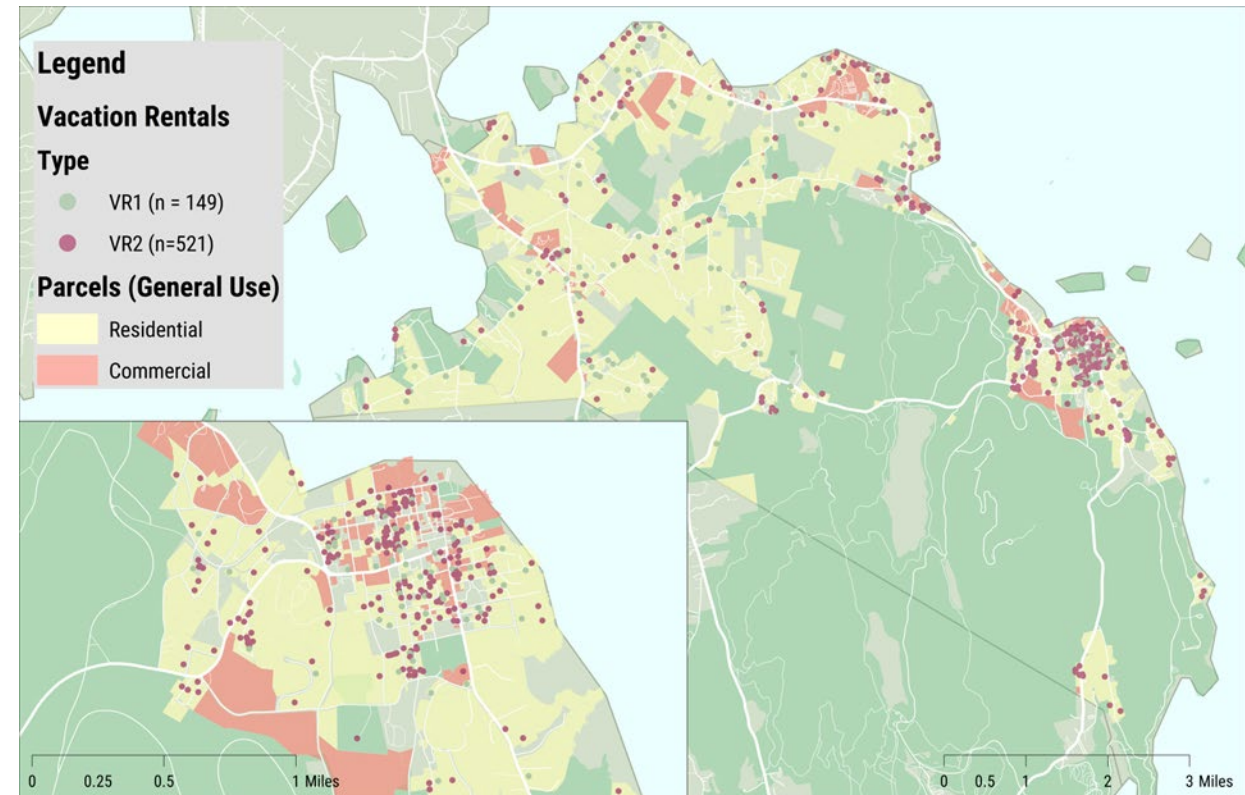
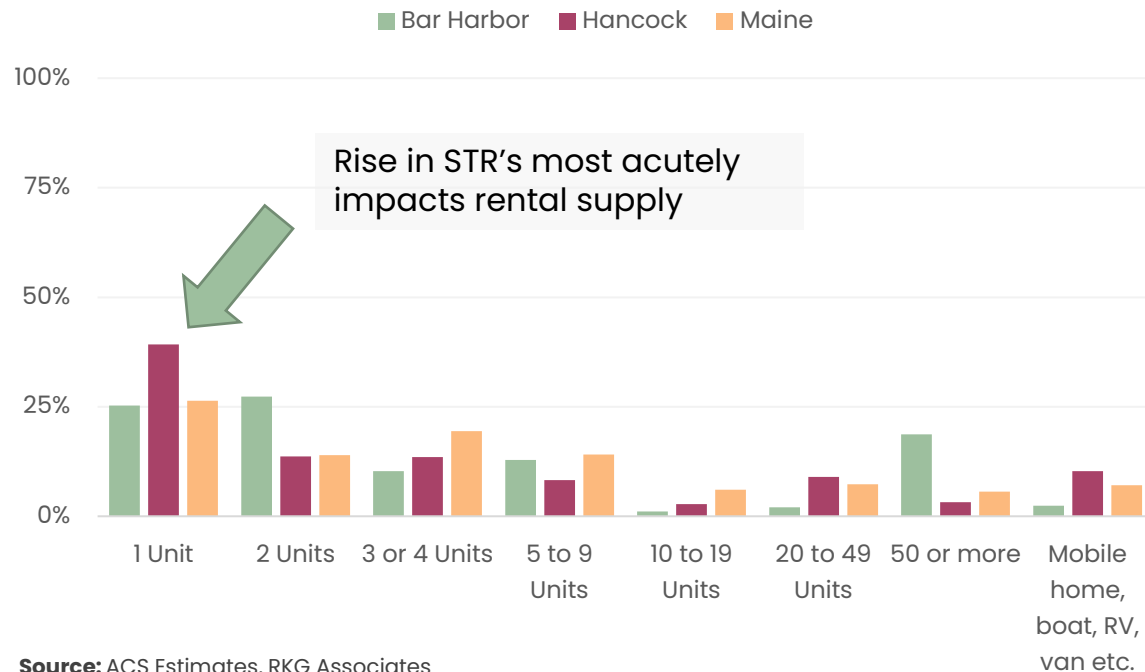
# SECOND HOMES & SHORT-TERM RENTALS

Research has shown that year-round rentals are at the greatest risk of conversion to short-term rentals especially single-family and two-family rental units.

**With a high share of smaller rental unit sizes, how has short-term rentals impacted the local workforce?**

## Renter Occupied

Housing Composition Comparison



Source: Town of Bar Harbor, Assessor's Database



# Home Costs & Affordability

From Information to Impact

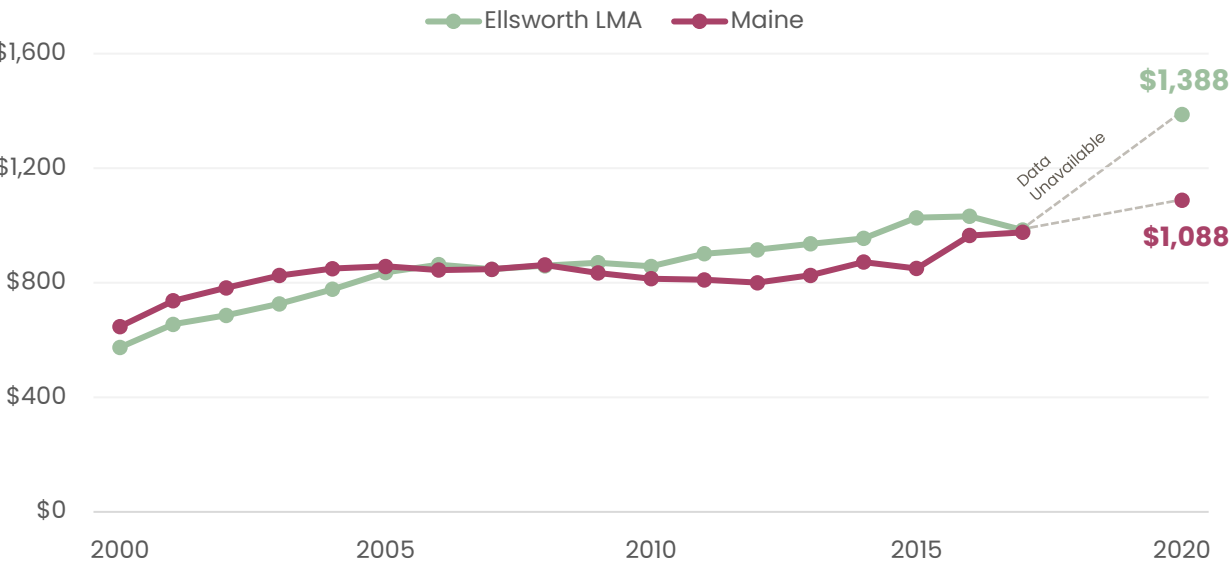


# HOUSING COSTS & AFFORDABILITY

Bar Harbor and Hancock County have seen an acceleration in home buying over the last five years.

**Rents are strongly tied to changes in the for-sale market as well as increases in short-term rental markets so what does this mean for Bar Harbor and affordability in Hancock County?**

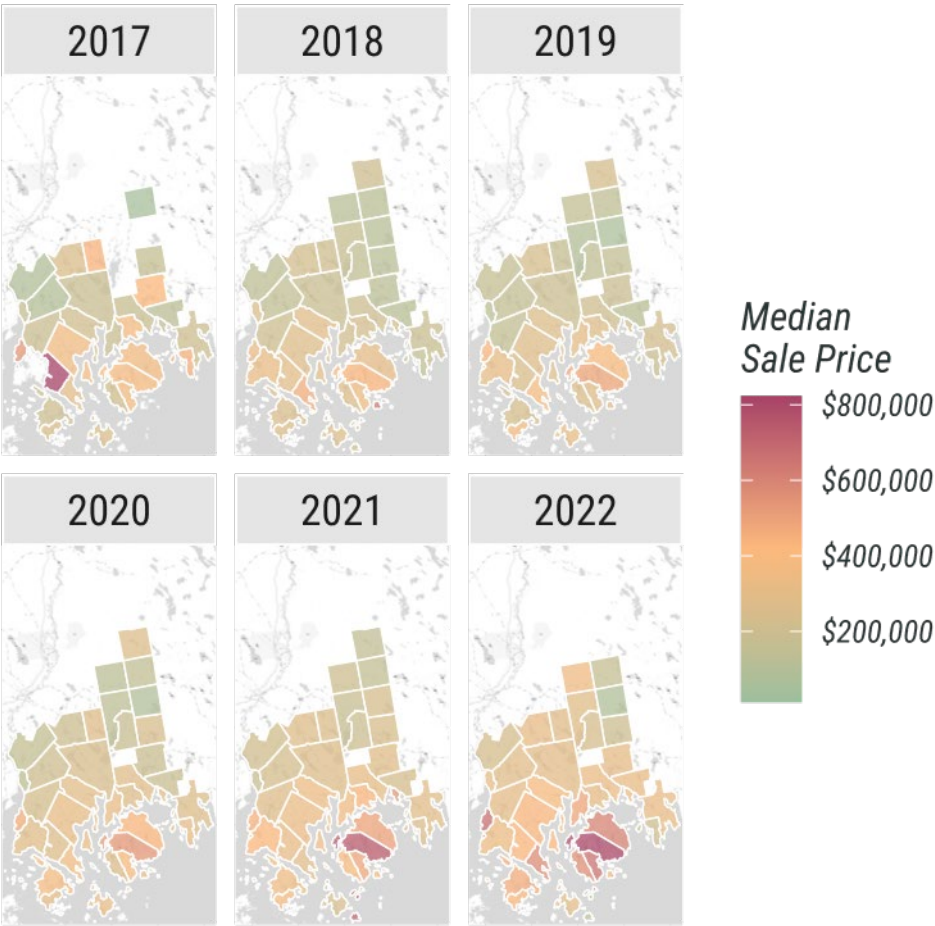
**Median 2BR Rent**  
With Utilities



Source: Maine State Housing Authority, Rental Affordability Index

## Median Home Price by Town

Sales Prices (2017 - 2022)



Source: Redfin Market Data

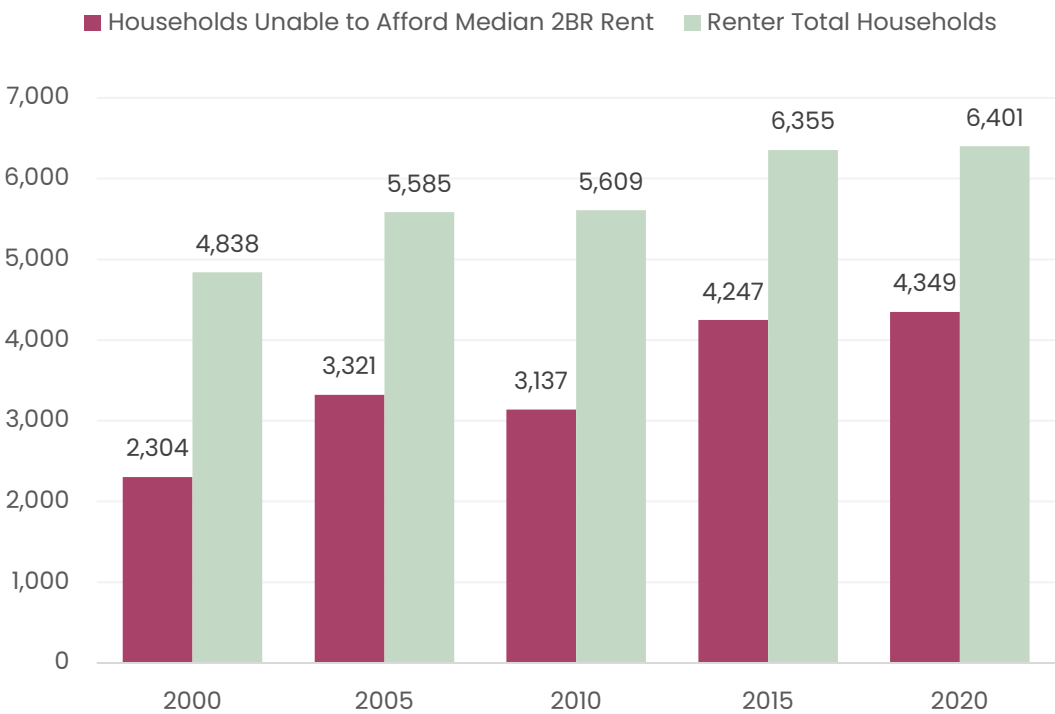
# HOUSING COSTS & AFFORDABILITY

For Bar Harbor, rising rents have meant greater cost burdening for both year-round and seasonal workers to live and work in town.

## How has rising costs impacted local businesses? How have local businesses responded to these trends?

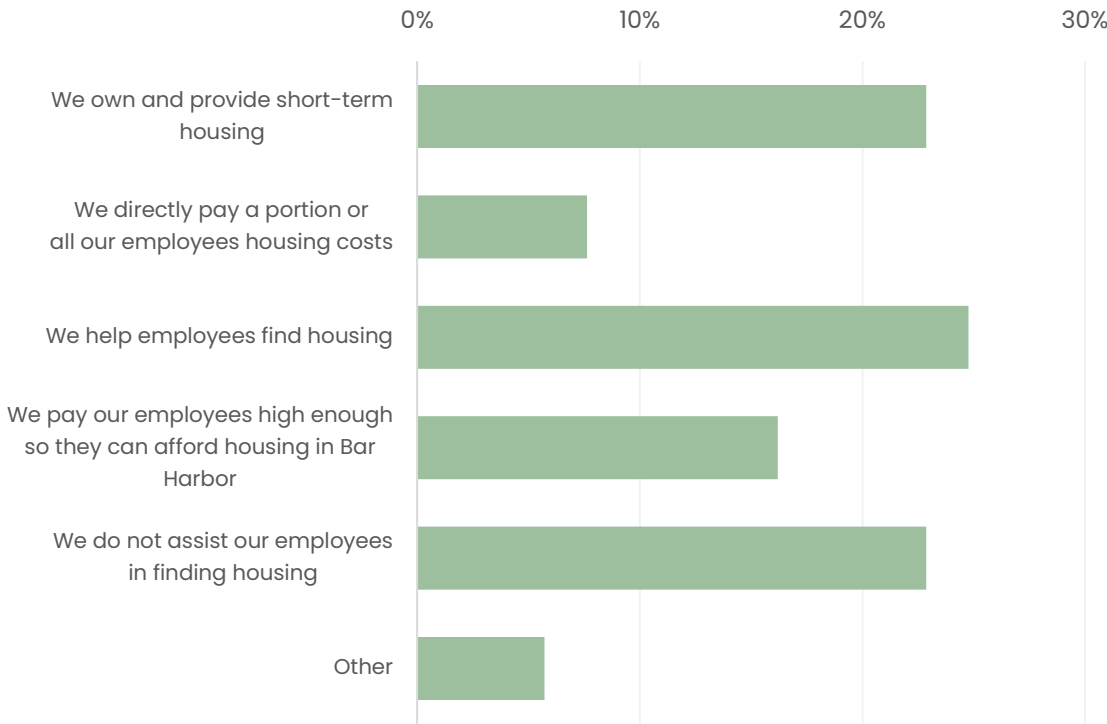
### Ellsworth LMA

#### Family Size Rental Affordability



Source: Maine State Housing Authority, Rental Affordability Index

### Do you help your employees find or access housing? If so, in what ways?



Source: Bar Harbor Employer Survey 2022, n = 73

# HOW CAN LOCAL AND REGIONAL DATA INFORM HOUSING POLICY?

## What housing policy insights can be drawn from the local-regional approach to Bar Harbor?

- Comparative analysis of housing stock, affordability and labor market dynamics informed the broader narrative around the choices households are making, the challenges workers and small businesses owners face.
- Displacement due to increasing rental costs and a reduction in available year-round units from a rise in seasonal homes and STR's impacts local workers. The lack of broader regulation could result in STRs throughout the county to the detriment of local workers currently commuting to Bar Harbor.
- The shifting economic landscape, changing labor markets and expensive local housing could negatively impact economies across Hancock County. Particularly in places like Bar Harbor, where the economy is heavily reliant on seasonal economic activity.
- Local housing and labor markets are influenced by regional dynamics, which are themselves an aggregate of numerous local level decisions. For Bar Harbor, understanding how local socioeconomic trends ripple out into the county and vice-versa, played a critical role in understanding and defining the housing challenges faced by residents and workers.