

Town of



AMHERST

Massachusetts

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Amherst Planning Board and Housing & Sheltering Committee
FROM: David Ziomek, Assistant Town Manager *DZ*
RE: Amherst Housing Market Study
DATE: March 16, 2015

I am pleased to announce the completion of the Housing Market Study by RKG Associates, Inc. and to present the final Study to the Planning Board and Housing and Sheltering Committee.

The Study contains a thorough analysis of Amherst's housing market and demographics, and makes recommendations for the Town to consider regarding policies and regulations. Similar to the Housing Production Plan completed in 2013, the Housing Market Study concludes that Amherst needs more housing for a range of incomes and populations; the Study concludes that there is a strong local and regional market for non-student housing even though the student population is a significant factor that needs to be addressed in the community's housing strategies.

The Study has taken longer to complete than initially anticipated, in part because of the complexities of Amherst's housing market, and also because of consistent challenges with the consultant to make timely changes that incorporated the feedback and suggestions from town residents, boards and committees, and staff. Much of the report has been complete for some time, available to the public and reviewed at the public forums co-sponsored by the Planning Board and Housing & Sheltering Committee. The final Housing Market Study has been refined by RKG to be a more approachable document that accurately reflects the regional nature of Amherst's housing market and the current and projected enrollment at UMass, and offers recommendations tailored to the community.

Amherst is a proactive community willing to work towards its Master Plan goals, including a mix of housing that meets the needs of a broad spectrum of people. This effort is now bolstered by the Housing Market Study.