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Analysis of the

BROCKTON, MASSACHUSETTS HOUSING MARKET

as of December 1, 1971

A Report by the DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT• FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION WASHINGTON, D.C. 20411

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Housing Market Analysis

Brockton, Massachusetts, as of December 1, 1971

Foreword

This analysis has been prepared for the assistance and guidance of the Department of Housing and Urban Development in its operations. The factual information, findings, and conclusions may be useful also to builders, mortgagees, and others concerned with local housing problems and trends. The analysis does not purport to make determinations with respect to the acceptability of any particular mortgage insurance proposals that may be under consideration in the subject locality.

The factual framework for this analysis was developed by the Economic and Market Analysis Division as thoroughly as possible on the basis of information available on the "as of" date from both local and national sources. Of course, estimates and judgments made on the basis of information available on the "as of" date may be modified considerably by subsequent market developments.

The prospective demand or occupancy potentials expressed in the analysis are based upon an evaluation of the factors available on the "as of" date. They cannot be construed as forecasts of building activity; rather, they express the prospective housing production which would maintain a reasonable balance in demand-supply relationships under conditions analyzed for the "as of" date.

Department of Housing and Urban Development Federal Housing Administration Economic and Market Analysis Division Washington, D. C.

HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS - BROCKTON, MASSACHUSETTS AS OF DECEMBER 1, 1971

The Brockton, Massachusetts, Housing Market Area (HMA) is coextensive with the Brockton Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA). The HMA contains parts of Bristol, Norfolk, and Plymouth Counties, and is located about 25 miles south of Boston. It includes the city of Brockton, and the towns of Avon, Stoughton, Abington, Easton, Whitman, Bridgewater, East Bridgewater, and West Bridgewater. The population of the HMA was estimated to be 202,200 as of December 1, 1971, 97,600 of whom were living in the city of Brockton.

Traditionally, the area has been a center for the shoe and leather products industries, but in recent years competition from lower cost areas in the United States and from imported goods has greatly reduced production and employment in these industries in the area. The area has become increasingly a "bedroom community," with a large proportion of its resident work force employed in the Boston area.

Anticipated Housing Demand

Based on projections of household growth and on anticipated inventory losses which are expected to result from demolition and other causes, it is estimated that there will be a demand for an average of 1,600 new unsubsidized housing units annually in the HMA during the two-year forecast period ending December 1, 1973. After considering other factors such as acceptable vacancy levels, current levels of new construction, and recent shifts in tenure, it is judged that the most favorable market balance would be achieved through the construction of 900 single-family houses and 700 units in multifamily structures annually. Distributions of demand for single-family houses by price class and for multifamily units by gross monthly rents and unit size are shown in table I. Because of the large number of rental units now being built, absorption should be observed carefully and appropriate adjustments in the demand estimate should be made as experience dictates.

The estimates of demand discussed above are not intended to be predictions of short-term residential construction activity, but rather suggested levels of construction that are likely to maintain a balanced relationship between supply and demand during the forecast period.

Occupancy Potential for Subsidized Housing

Federal assistance in financing costs for new housing for low- or moderateincome families may be provided through a number of different programs administered by HUD: monthly rent supplements in rental projects financed under Section 221 (d)(3); partial payment of interest on home mortgages insured under Section 235; partial interest payment on project mortgages insured under Section 236; and federal assistance to local housing authorities for low-rent public housing.

The estimated occupancy potentials for subsidized housing are designed to determine, for each program. (1) the number of families and individuals who can be served under the program and (2) the proportion of these households that can reasonably be expected to seek new subsidized housing during the forecast period. Household eligibility for the Section 235 and Section 236 programs is determined primarily by evidence that household or family income is below established limits but sufficient to pay the minimum achievable rent or monthly payment for the specified program. Insofar as the income requirement is concerned, all families and individuals with income below the income limits are assumed to be eligible for public housing and rent supplement; there may be other requirements for eligibility, particularly the requirement that current living quarters be substandard for families to be eligible for rent supplements. Some families may be alternatively eligible for assistance under more than one of these programs or under other assistance programs using federal or state support. The total occupancy potential for federally assisted housing approximates the sum of the potentials for public housing and Section 236 housing. For the Brockton HMA. the total occupancy potential is estimated to be 625 units annually.

The annual occupancy potentials 1/ for subsidized housing discussed below are based upon 1971 incomes, the occupancy of substandard housing, estimates of the elderly population, income limits in effect on December 1, 1971, and on available market experience. 2/

Rental Housing Under the Public Housing and Rent-Supplement Programs. These two programs serve households in essentially the same low-income group. The

2/ Families with incomes inadequate to purchase or rent nonsubsidized housing generally are eligible for one form or another of subsidized housing.

^{1/} The occupancy potentials referred to in this analysis have been calculated to reflect the strength of the market in view of existing vacancy. The successful attainment of the calculated potentials for subsidized housing may well depend upon construction in suitably accessible locations, as well as a distribution of rents and sales prices over the complete range attainable for housing under the specified programs.

principal differences arise from the manner in which net income is computed for each program and from other eligibility requirements. For the Brockton HMA, the annual occupancy potential for public housing is estimated at 200 units for families and 225 units for the elderly (see table II). In the case of the more restrictive rent-supplement program, the potential for families is reduced to 130, while the number for the elderly would be increased to 240.

There are 424 units of low-rent public housing in the Brockton HMA financed under the federal program, 224 units are for families and 200 units are for the elderly. There are also 200 units under the leased housing program.

In addition, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts provides housing under a variety of programs. There are 683 units under Massachusetts housing programs, including 445 units for the elderly, 174 units for veteran's families, and 64 units for low-income families.

All of the existing public housing units are occupied, except for vacancies that occur through normal turnover, and the local housing authorities all have substantial waiting lists.

There are 400 units of low-rent public housing for the elderly under construction, which should satisfy the occupancy potential for the elderly for the two-year forecast period.

Section 235 and Section 236. Subsidized housing for households with lowto moderate-incomes may be provided under either Section 235 or Section 236. Moderately-priced, subsidized sales housing for eligible families can be made available through Section 235. Subsidized rental housing for the same families may be alternatively provided under Section 236; the Section 236 program contains additional provisions for subsidized rental units for elderly couples and individuals. In the Brockton HMA, it is estimated (based on regular income limits) that, for the period December 1, 1971-December 1, 1973, there is an occupancy potential for an annual total of 150 subsidized family units utilizing either Section 235 or Section 236, or a combination of the two programs. In addition, there is an annual potential for about 50 units of Section 236 rental housing for elderly couples and individuals. The use of exception income limits would raise this potential by about 50 percent.

It is estimated that about 30 percent of the households which are prospective occupants of Section 235 housing are five or more person households.

As of December 1, 1971, there were 300 completed new houses in the HMA which had been financed under Section 235 and 215 units which were built under Section 236. Vacancies in these units occur only through normal turnover. There are proposals for 794 units of Section 236 housing, which if approved would be in substantial excess of the potential during the twoyear forecast period.

Sales Market

High prices and the lack of available land in the city of Brockton have limited the marketing of new homes in that city, and as a result older homes have been selling well. In the towns surrounding Brockton, however, the market for new homes has improved slightly over 1970.

There is a particularly strong demand for units priced below \$22,000, as builders find it increasingly difficult to construct homes in that price range. The average price of new homes in the HMA is around \$26,000. Existing properties sell for from \$12,500 to \$20,000.

It is estimated that there were 225 vacant units for sale in the HMA as of December 1, 1971, for a homeowner vacancy rate of 0.6 percent, the same rate reported in the 1970 Census, which reflects the tight market condition in the area.

Rental Market

Despite the current weakness in the economy of the Brockton area, continued in-migration from Boston and other areas has resulted in a slight drop in rental vacancies since the 1970 Census. As of December 1, 1971, it is estimated that there were 800 units for rent, for a renter vacancy rate of 4.1 percent.

The market for efficiency apartments appears to be softening, as there were several vacancies in this type of units. For example, one new apartment building in Brockton had seven vacant units, all of which were efficiencies. Rents for new units in Brockton are high ranging from \$190 to \$220 per month for new one-bedroom units, \$210 to \$250 per month for two-bedroom units and from \$260 to \$280 for units with three-bedrooms. Rents in older units are substantially lower and recently have been renting faster than new apartments in the city of Brockton. This indicates that there is some sensitivity to price in the rental market and that there may be some difficulty in marketing the more than 2,000 multifamily units now being built in the area.

Economic, Demographic, and Housing Factors

<u>Economic Factors</u>. In the first eleven months of 1971, there were an average of 64,200 persons in the Brockton area work force, representing a continuation of the steady growth which has been evident, at least since 1960 (see table III). Total employment failed to increase in 1971, however, and as a result <u>unemploy-</u> ment increased to 8.7 percent of the work force compared with 6.5 percent in 1970 and ratios below five percent in the 1966 to 1969 period.

The drop in employment between 1970 and 1971 was the result of an acceleration in the rate of decline in manufacturing employment, largely in the troubled shoe manufacturing industry, and slowed expansion in the nonmanufacturing sector. After slow growth in the early 1960's, nonagricultural wage and salary employment increased by about 1,800 jobs a year between 1963 and 1969. In these years, leather manufacturing employment declined slowly (from 5,600 to 5,000 jobs), but other manufacturing employment increased and there were significant gains in trade, services, and government. Employment grew by only 500 jobs between 1969 and 1970 and, as indicated, declined in 1971 to an average of 52,000 nonagricultural wage and salary jobs in the first eleven months of 1971.

A large portion of the residents of the Brockton HMA are employed outside the HMA, particularly in Boston, and along the "electronics belt," Route 128. It is estimated by the Massachusetts Division of Employment Security that approximately 40 percent of the residents of the HMA travel to jobs outside the HMA. This trend is expected to continue, with more and more people traveling outside the HMA to find employment.

Prospects for growth of the Brockton economy during the forecast period are somewhat better than in recent years. A dress manufacturer has plans for expanding employment by approximately 200 jobs over the next year. Also, budget increases will provide for more employment by state government agencies and state colleges in the area. In addition, as in-migration to the area increases, employment in services and retail trade will continue to expand. For example, a major shopping center is now under construction for the town of Whitman. Total employment growth is expected to approximate 900 jobs annually during the next two years.

As of December 1971, the estimated median <u>income</u> of all families in the Brockton HMA was \$8,675, after deducting federal income tax. Renter households of two or more persons had an estimated median annual after-tax income of \$7,150. In 1959, the median incomes for all families and for renter households were \$4,665 and \$3,965, respectively. Distributions of families and renter households by after-tax income are presented in table IV.

Demographic Factors. As of December 1, 1971, the <u>population</u> of the Brockton HMA is estimated at 202,200 including 97,600 persons in the city of Brockton. The total for the HMA represents an average yearly increase of about 7,400 persons (3.8 percent) between April 1, 1970 and December 1, 1971. This rate is considerably higher than the average annual rate of 4,035 persons (2.4 percent) between 1960 and 1970. The major portion of the growth since 1970 has taken place in the towns around Brockton as an increased number of in-migrants from surrounding areas settled in these towns.

Based on in-migration patterns and past trends of net natural increase it is anticipated that the population will increase by 13,100 persons, 6,550 annually (3.1 percent), during the forecast period, to a total of 215,300 in December 1973.

There were 59,125 <u>households</u> estimated to be in the Brockton HMA as of December 1, 1971, indicating an average annual increase of 2,525 since April 1, 1970, and a total increase in that period of 4,230 households. During the entire 1960-1971 period, household growth generally paralleled population growth. During the two-year projection period, the number of households is expected to increase by 2,200 annually, to a total of 63,500 in December 1973.

Housing Factors. The housing inventory in the Brockton HMA totaled 60,825 units as of December 1, 1971, an increase of 4,150 since April 1, 1970. Included in the inventory were about 40,550 owner-occupied units, 18,575 renteroccupied units, and 1,700 vacant units. The addition of 4,150 units since the 1970 Census resulted from the construction of 4,450 units, and the loss of about 300 units through demolition and other causes. There were 3,775 housing units under construction, including 550 single-family houses, and 3,225 units in multifamily structures.

Despite rising construction costs, residential building activity has increased to high levels during the last few years. During the first ten months of 1971, permits were issued for 4,068 units, largest for any year in the decade. Building permit authorizations fluctuated throughout the 1960's. Construction in the early 1960's stayed fairly constant except for an increase in 1962. Permits issued declined from 1,587 in 1964 to 1,024 in 1967. Authorizations increased in 1968, and have increased every year from 1,327 in 1968 to 4,068 as of November 1, 1971. Trends in residential construction activity in the Brockton HMA between 1960 and 1970 are presented in table VI.

Throughout the 1960's, single-family unit authorizations made up the major portion of total units authorized. There was no discernable trend in the number of single-family permits issued in the HMA during the 1960's, as the number fluctuated from year to year. The average number of single-family permits issued from 1960 to 1970 was 980. In the first ten months of 1971, 968 permits were issued.

Construction of multifamily units in the HMA gradually increased from 30 units authorized in 1960 to 506 units in 1964. After a decline to 85 units in 1965, the number of multifamily units authorized increased steadily. As of November 1, 3,100 multifamily units had been authorized in 1971.

Table I

Estimated Annual Demand for New Nonsubsidized Housing Brockton, Massachusetts, Housing Market Area December 1971 - December 1973

A. Single-family Houses

	Number of units	Percent of total
Under \$22,500	100	11
\$22,500 - 24,999	240	27
25,000 - 29,999	300	33
30,000 - 34,999	140	16
35,000 and over	120	13
Total	900	100

B. Multifamily Units

Gross monthly rent	<u>One-bedroom</u>	<u>Two bedrooms</u>	Three or more bedrooms
Under \$200	125	-	_ · _
\$200 - 209	85	-	-
210 - 219	60	125	-
220 - 229	-	95	<u> </u>
230 - 239	-	70	-
240 - 249		50	
250 - 259	-	_ · · ·	
260 - 269	_	-	40
270 - 279	-	-	30
280 and over		-	20
Total	270	340	90

a/ Includes shelter rent plus the cost of utilities.

Source: Estimated by Housing Market Analyst.

Estimated Annual Occupancy Potential for Subsidized Housing Brockton, Massachusetts, Housing Market Area December 1, 1971-December 1, 1973								
	Sec. 235 & 236 ^a / <u>exclusively</u>	Public housing exclusively	Total					
A. <u>Families</u>								
One bedroom Two bedrooms Three bedrooms Four bedrooms or more Total	20 80 40 <u>10</u> 150	30 90 55 <u>25</u> 200	50 170 95 <u>35</u> 350					
B. <u>Elderly</u>								
Efficiency One bedroom Total	20 <u>30</u> 50	180 <u>45</u> 225	200 <u>75</u> 275					

Table II

a/ Estimates are based upon regular income limits.

Source: Estimated by Housing Market Analyst.

Table III

					Force							
Brockton, Massachusetts, Housing Market Area												
	<u>1960–1971</u>											
				((in 1,0	00's)						.
									· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·			JanNov.
	<u>1960</u>	<u>1961</u>	<u>1962</u>	<u>1963</u>	1964	<u>1965</u>	1966	<u>1967</u>	1968	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>
Civilian work force	49.4	<u>51.0</u>	<u>51.7</u>	52.5	53.6	55.4	57.5	58.6	59.8	61.4	63.5	64.2
Unemployment, number	3.5	3.7	3.7	4.0	3.6	3.1	2.6	2.7	2.4	2.5	4.1	5.6
Pct. of work force	7.1	7.3	7.2	7.6	6.7	5.6	4.5	4.6	4.0	4.1	6.5	8.7
Total employment	<u>45.9</u>	47.3	48.0	48.3	50.0	52.3	<u>54.9</u>	55.9	<u>57.3</u>	<u>58.9</u>	<u>59.3</u>	58.6
Nonag. wage & salary	<u>39.0</u>	40.1	41.0	<u>41.4</u>	43.0	<u>45.3</u>	<u>47.8</u>	<u>49.0</u>	50.6	<u>52.3</u>	52.8	52.0
Manufacturing	15.3	15.7	15.8	15.2	16.1	16.8	18.1	18.1	17.6	17.6	16.8	$\frac{15.1}{5.0}$
Durable goods	4.2	4.5	4.9	4.6	4.7	5.0	5.7	5.8	5.9	6.2	5.5	5.0
Nondurable goods	11.1	11.2	10.9	10.6	11.4	11.8	12.4	12.3	<u>11.7</u>	<u>11.4</u>	<u>11.3</u>	10.1
Leather & leather												
prods.	6.1	6.1	6.0	5.6	5.7	5.8	5.9	5.7		5.0	4.7	3.7
Other nondurable goods	5.0	5.1	4.9	5.0	5.7	6.0	6.5	6.6	6.3	6.4	6.6	6.4
Nonmanufacturing - total	23.7	24.4	25.2	26.2	26.9	28.5	29.7	30.9	33.0	34.7	36.0	36.9
Contract construction	$\frac{23.7}{1.7}$	$\frac{1.3}{1.8}$	$\frac{1.9}{1.9}$	$\frac{1.8}{1.8}$	1.9	2.0	2.1	1.8	2.0	2.1	2.1	1.9
Trans., comm., & utils.	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.9	3.1	3.1	3.4	3.9	4.0
Trade (wholesale & retail)	9.2	9.5	9.8	10.0	10.0	10.7	11.2	11.5	12.1	12.7	12.9	13.1
Fin., ins., & real estate	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.5
Services, misc. mining	3.3	3.4	3.6	4.3	4.7	4.9	5.3	5.8	6.7	7.2	7.3	7.6
Government	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.2	6.3	6.6	6.9	7.4	7.8	7.9	8.3	8.8
	0.0	0.1	U									
All other nonag.	5.8	6.1	5.9	5.8	5.9	5.8	5.9	5.8	5.6	5.5	5.4	5.5
Agriculture	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1

Source: The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Employment Security.

	Percentage Distribution of All Families and Renter Households										
		<u>b</u>				luction of Federa					
			Bro	ckton, Massa		ousing Market Are	ea				
	1959 and 1971										
	1070										
<u> </u>											
				A11	Renter	A11	Renter a/				
	Annu	a1	income	families	household	is ^a / families	households ^a				
	Under		\$ 2,000	9	11	3	21				
Ś	2,000	_	2,999	11	7	3	13				
Ŧ	3,000	_	3,999	16	6	4	16				
	4,000	_	4,999	21	7	7	18				
	5,000	_	5,999	15	9	7	12				
	6,000	_	6,999	11	10	9	9				
	-,										
	7,000	-	7,999	7	8	11	6				
	8,000		8,999	3	8	9	1				
	9,000	_	9,999	1	8	9	1				
	10,000	_	12,499	3	13	11	1				
	12,500	-	14,999	1	7	16	1				
	15,000	and	•	2	6	11	1				
	-	'ota		100	100	100	100				
	М	ſedi	an	\$4,665	\$3,965	\$8,675	\$7,150				

Table IV

<u>a</u>/ Excludes one-person renter households.

Source: Estimated by Housing Market Analyst.

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Demographic Trends Brockton, Massachusetts, Housing Market Area									
			1960-1971						
<u>Population</u>	April 1,	April 1,	December 1,	Average annu	<u>11 change</u>				
	1960	<u>1970</u>	1971	1960-1970	1970-1971				
HMA total	<u>149,458</u>	189,820	202,200	4,035	7,400				
City of Brockton	72,813	89,040	97,600	1,625	5,125				
Remainder HMA	76,645	100,780	104,600	2,410	2,275				
<u>Households</u>									
HMA total	43,629	54,895	59,125	<u>1,125</u>	2,530				
City of Brockton	22,877	27,688	30,265	480	1,550				
Remainder of HMA	20,752	27,207	28,860	645	980				

Sources: 1960 and 1970 Censuses of Population and Housing, and estimates by Housing Market Analyst.

Table VI

Housing Units Authorized by Building Permits Brockton, Massachusetts, Housing Market Area 1960-November 1971

	1960	1961	1962	1963 [°]	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	10 <u>mos.</u> 1971
HMA total Single-family Multifamily	$\frac{1,233}{1,203}$ 30	<u>1,207</u> 940 267	<u>1,604</u> 1,329 275 <u>a</u> /		1,587 1,081 506	<u>1,331</u> 1,246 85	<u>1,025</u> 807 218c/	<u>1,024</u> 765 259 <u>d</u> /	786	1,398 920 478	2,094 706 1,388	4,068 968 3,100
Brockton total	773	<u>941</u>	<u>1,041</u>	<u>534</u>	<u>962</u>	<u>579</u>	<u>483</u>	<u>529</u>	<u>510</u>	<u>746</u>	<u>1,513</u>	<u>3,169</u>
Single-family	751	699	797	368	518	555	344	328	225	424	344	513
Multifamily	22	242	244 <u>a</u> /	166 <u>b</u> /	444	24	139 <u>c</u> /	201 <u>d</u> /	285	322	1,169	2,656
Remainder total	<u>460</u>	266	<u>563</u>	750	<u>625</u>	752	<u>542</u>	495	<u>817</u>	<u>652</u>	<u>581</u>	<u>899</u>
Single-family	452	241	532	636	563	691	463	437	561	496	362	455
Multifamily	8	25	31	114	52	61	79	58	256 <u>e</u> /	156	219	444

Includes 120 units of public housing. <u>a</u>/

Includes 100 units of public housing.

Includes 100 units of public housing.

Includes 186 units of public housing.

b/ c/d/ e/ Includes 64 units of public housing.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Construction Reports, C-40 and C-42.

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Table VII

Housing Inventory	, Tenure, an	d Vacancy Tr	ends
Brockton, Massach		ing Market A	rea
	<u>1960–1971</u>		
Component	April 1, 1960	April 1, <u>1970</u>	December 1, 1971
Total housing inventory	45,983	56,669	60,825
Total occupied units Owner-occupied Percent Renter-occupied Percent	43,629 29,144 66.8 14,485 33.2	54,895 37,597 68.5 17,298 31.5	59,125 40,550 68.6 18,575 31.4
Total vacant units Available vacant For sale Homeowner vacancy rate For rent Rental vacancy rate Other vacant ^a /	2,354 1,279 445 1.5 834 5.4 1,075	$ \begin{array}{r} 1,774 \\ 1,106 \\ 223 \\ 0.6 \\ 783 \\ 4.3 \\ 668 \\ \end{array} $	<u>1,700</u> <u>1,025</u> 225 0.6 800 4.1 675

- <u>a</u>/ Includes dilapidated units, seasonal units, units rented or sold and awaiting occupancy, and units held off the market for absentee owners or other reasons.
- Sources: 1960 and 1970 Censuses of Housing, and estimates by Housing Market Analyst.