

Town of Washington, New Hampshire

Master Plan 2015

11. POPULATION

HISTORIC POPULATION GROWTH:

In 1773, when the first census was taken in Washington Township, the population was 132. By 1830, the population of Washington had grown to a high of 1,135. As of the 2010 census, our population of 1,123 is nearing that high.

Table 11.1 reflects the population growth for Washington from 1960 to 2010, the most recent U.S. Census year. As indicated in the table, the population growth rate of the Town of Washington (25.5%) from 2000 to 2010 was significantly higher than that of Sullivan County (8.1%) or the state of New Hampshire (6.5%). The Town of Hillsborough (22.0%) also grew substantially during this period. These higher growth rates may be attributable to the NH Route 9 bypass that was constructed in 2001 enabling shorter commuting times to employment centers of Concord and Manchester.

Table 11.1 Population Growth, 1960 to 2010 (Source: U.S. Census, N.H. Office of Energy and Planning)

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Percent Change 2000-2010
Hillsborough County	4,188	5,849	6,910	8,569	9,317	10,526	13.0%
Antrim	1,121	2,122	2,208	2,360	2,449	2,637	7.7%
Hancock	722	909	1,193	1,604	1,739	1,654	-4.9%
Hillsborough	2,310	2,775	3,437	4,498	4,928	6,011	22.0%
Windsor	35	43	72	107	201	224	11.4%
Sullivan County	28,067	30,949	36,063	38,592	40,458	43,742	8.1%
Acworth	371	459	590	776	836	891	6.6%
Charlestown	2,576	3,274	4,417	4,630	4,749	5,114	7.7%
Claremont	13,563	14,221	14,557	13,902	13,151	13,355	1.6%
Cornish	1,106	1,268	1,390	1,659	1,661	1,640	-1.3%
Croydon	312	396	457	627	661	764	15.6%
Goshen	351	395	549	742	741	810	9.3%
Grantham	332	366	704	1,247	2,167	2,985	37.7%
Langdon	338	337	437	580	586	688	17.4%
Lempster	272	360	637	947	971	1,154	18.8%
Newport	5,458	5,899	6,229	6,110	6,269	6,507	3.8%
Plainfield	1,071	1,323	1,749	2,056	2,241	2,364	5.5%
Springfield	283	310	532	788	945	1,311	38.7%
Sunapee	1,164	1,384	2,312	2,559	3,055	3,365	10.1%
Unity	708	709	1,092	1,341	1,530	1,671	9.2%
Washington	162	248	411	628	895	1,123	25.5%
New Hampshire	606,921	737,578	920,475	1,109,117	1,235,786	1,316,470	6.5%

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Population Age Distribution:

The pie chart to the right highlights the current age distribution of the Town's population. Almost 75% of the population is under the age of 60. And a healthy portion, 49%, of the population is in the working age bracket.

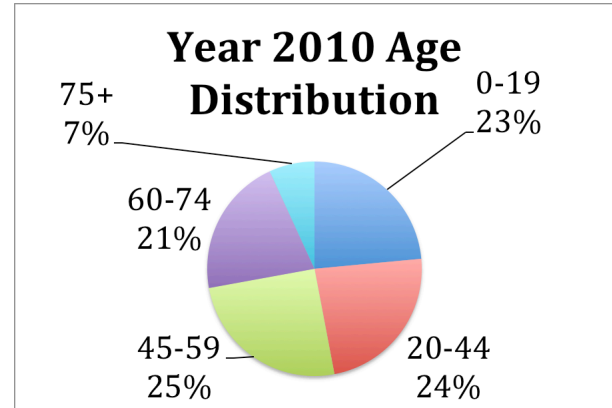


Table 11.2 below indicates the changing age demographic of Washington from 2000 to 2010. Although growth is reflected in all age brackets, the 20-44 age bracket had the slowest growth rate (11.9%) and the 75+ the highest growth rate (63.8%). This reflects the “Silver Tsunami” (coined by the NH Center for Public Policy Studies) that is occurring in Grafton, Merrimack and Sullivan Counties as reported in the UVLSRPC 2014 Regional Plan. Fortunately for Washington, our age distribution, i.e., the percent of population in each bracket, has remained relatively stable between 2000 and 2010.

Table 11.2 Population by Age Group (Source: U.S. Census 2010, N.H. Office of Energy and Planning)

Age	Year 2000		Year 2010		Actual Change	% Change
0-19	211	24%	264	24%	53	25.1%
20-44	236	26%	264	24%	28	11.9%
45-59	220	25%	282	25%	62	28.2%
60-74	181	20%	236	21%	55	30.4%
75+	47	5%	77	7%	30	63.8%
Total Population	895		1,123		228	25.5%

School Age Population Growth

Included in the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission's Housing Needs Assessment Technical Report from March 2012 were data on changes in school age population in communities within UVLSRPC's region. There were only seven communities that sustained long-term (20-year) net increases of 50 or more in their school-age populations from 1990 to 2010. Washington was one of these seven communities as shown to the right.

Community	Net Increase
Hanover	+386
Grantham	+297
Springfield	+88
Washington	+88
Lyme	+77
New London	+70
Wilmot	+54

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Year-Round versus Seasonal Population:

A major factor for consideration in planning is the seasonal variation in Washington's population. The data above are based entirely on the full-time population of the Town and do not reflect the summer seasonal population. There are approximately 1,093 housing units in Town of which 591 units, or 54%, are occupied seasonally. If and when those seasonal units are all occupied full time by the average 2.5-person household size, the population grows to over 2,500. This population increase puts additional demands on public services and increases traffic on the local roads during the summer. These fluctuations in the population should be considered when the Town plans for expenditures for public services.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS:

The Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Council projects that the region, like the State of New Hampshire as a whole, will grow at a slower rate, less than 9% between 2010 and 2040. This may not necessarily apply to Washington, as we grew at a much higher rate than Sullivan County in the past decade.

The New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning predicts that by the year 2040 the population of Washington will be 1,439, which is a 28% change from the 2010 population. This is substantially higher than the Sullivan County population change, which is only predicted to increase by 13%. If these organizations are as accurate as the weather forecasters, it will be anyone's guess as to Washington's population in 2040.

Table 11.2 Population Projections (Source: N.H. Office of Energy and Planning)

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Percent Change 2010 - 2040
Sullivan County	43,742	44,511	45,492	46,650	47,840	48,724	49,249	13%
Acworth	891	900	913	937	960	978	989	
Charlestown	5,114	5,193	5,297	5,432	5,571	5,674	5,735	
Claremont	13,355	13,150	12,991	13,322	13,662	13,914	14,064	
Cornish	1,640	1,590	1,544	1,583	1,623	1,653	1,671	
Croydon	764	803	846	867	890	906	916	
Goshen	810	829	852	873	896	912	922	
Grantham	2,985	3,364	3,772	3,868	3,967	4,040	4,084	
Langdon	688	728	772	792	812	827	836	
Lempster	1,154	1,227	1,309	1,342	1,376	1,401	1,417	
Newport	6,507	6,484	6,486	6,651	6,820	6,946	7,021	
Plainfield	2,364	2,376	2,397	2,458	2,521	2,568	2,595	
Springfield	1,311	1,481	1,664	1,707	1,750	1,783	1,802	
Sunapee	3,365	3,456	3,564	3,655	3,748	3,817	3,858	
Unity	1,671	1,709	1,755	1,800	1,846	1,880	1,900	
Washington	1,123	1,222	1,329	1,363	1,398	1,424	1,439	28%

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Washington's unique proportion of seasonal versus year-round housing (54% seasonal) significantly affects the predictions of future population growth. In the **2013 Community Survey**, 26% of the respondents (approximately 52 households) indicated that they intended to become full-time residents within the next 10 years. This is yet another consideration in planning for Washington's future.

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GOALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Goal A: Ensure population growth, including seasonal population growth, is at a pace that is consistent with the Town's ability to accommodate its impacts upon transportation infrastructure, utilities, services and community facilities.

Recommendations:

1. Require impact studies for major subdivisions.
2. Continue to plan for capital facilities improvements with a Capital Improvement Plan.
3. Review road infrastructure/access to seasonal home locations to determine policy for development on Class V or VI roads.