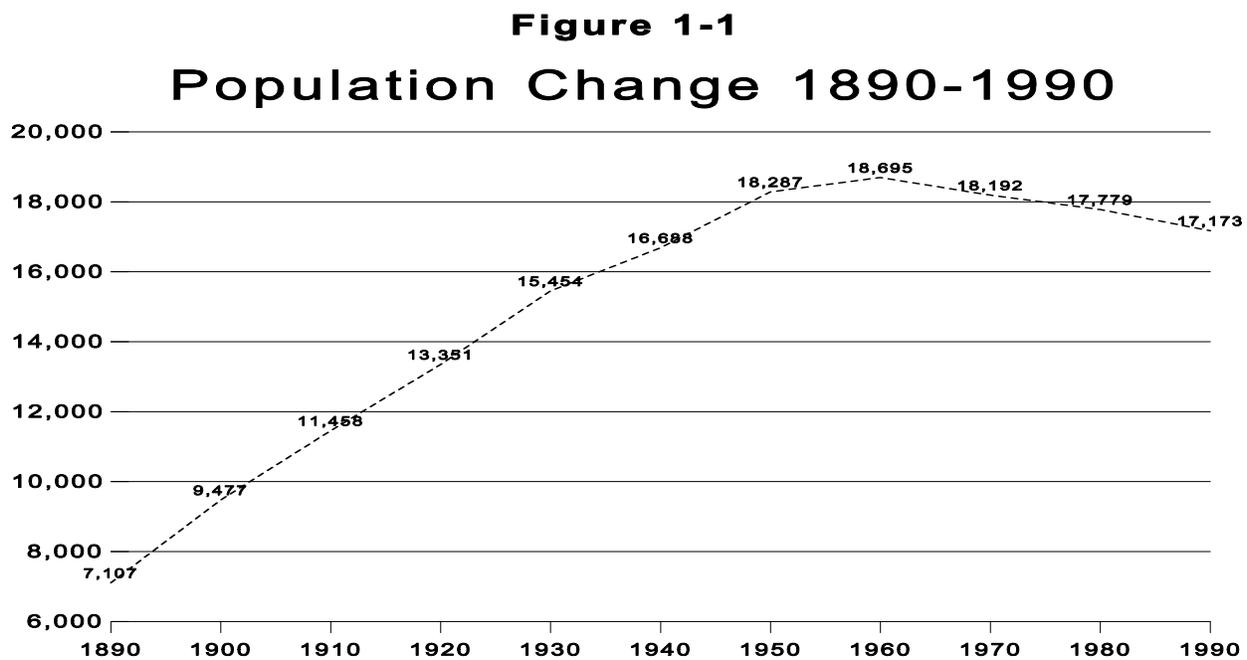

CHAPTER 1. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Waterville's future will be shaped in part by regional, and even statewide and national trends. An understanding of the growth and change occurring within the population of a community is essential to developing a realistic direction for its future. For instance, a community whose growth is fueled by the immigration of retirees will face different issues and have different needs than a community with a large immigration of young families with children. This Chapter provides a summary of the demographic forces at work in Waterville and the implications of these factors for the future of the City.

Population Trends

Just over 100 years ago (1890), Waterville had a population of 7,107 people, or about 41% of the 1990 population (17,173). From 1890 to 1960, Waterville's population grew from 7,107 to 18,695 people, albeit at a smaller and smaller rate each decade. The City's growth during this period reflects the movement of people from rural areas to urban areas in much of the nation as family-farming declined. From 1960 on, the population of the City has been declining, a trend that has continued through 1990. This decline also reflects a national trend, this time of movement away from urban areas into the surrounding countryside. Increased migration from American cities is due to ease of commuting and people's desire to be close to amenities like lakes and open space, larger house lots, and lower property taxes. Figure 1-1 illustrates the City's growth trends over the past 100 years, while Table 1-1 compares the City's growth to



County and State population changes.

TABLE 1-1
OVERALL POPULATION LEVELS AND CHANGES

	Waterville	Kennebec County	State of Maine
1890	7,107	57,012	661,087
1900	9,477	59,117	694,466
1910	11,458	62,863	742,371
1920	13,351	63,944	768,014
1930	15,454	70,691	797,423
1940	16,688	77,231	847,226
1950	18,287	73,831	914,950
1960	18,695	89,150	970,689
1970	18,192	95,247	993,722
1980	17,779	109,889	1,124,660
1990	17,173	115,904	1,227,928
60-70 Change	-2.7%	6.8%	2.4%
70-80 Change	-2.3%	15.4%	11.6%
80-90 Change	-3.4%	5.5%	13.1%

Source: U.S. Census Data, State Planning Office.

Population Comparisons

Based on 1990 Census figures, Waterville is the tenth largest community in the State (see Table 1-2). Despite the City's population losses since 1960, it is still by far the largest community in the region, as shown in Table 1-3.

TABLE 1-2
POPULATION OF MAINE'S LARGEST CITIES
1990

City	Population
Waterville	17,173
Portland	64,358
Lewiston	39,757
Bangor	33,181
Auburn	24,309
South Portland	23,163
Augusta	21,325
Brunswick	20,906
Biddeford	20,710
Sanford	20,463

Source: US Census, 1990.

TABLE 1-3**WATERVILLE AREA POPULATION CHANGE
1960 - 1990**

Community	1960	1970	% Change 1960-70	1980	% Change 1970-80	1990	% Change 1980-90
Waterville	18,695	18,192	-2.7	17,779	-2.3	17,173	-3.4
Albion	974	1,056	8.4	1,551	46.9	1,736	11.9
Belgrade	1,102	1,302	18.1	2,043	56.9	2,375	16.2
Benton	1,521	1,729	13.7	2,188	26.5	2,312	5.7
China	1,961	1,850	-5.7	2,918	57.7	3,713	27.2
Clinton	1,729	1,971	14.0	2,696	36.8	3,332	23.5
Fairfield	5,829	5,684	-2.5	6,113	7.5	6,718	9.9
Oakland	3,075	3,535	15.0	5,162	46.0	5,595	8.4
Rome	367	362	-1.4	627	73.2	758	20.9
Sidney	988	1,319	33.5	2,052	55.6	2,593	26.4
Smithfield	382	527	3.8	748	41.9	865	15.6
Vassalboro	2,446	2,618	7.0	3,410	88.2	3,679	7.9
Winslow	5,891	7,299	23.9	8,057	10.4	7,997	-0.7
TOTAL	44,960	47,444	5.5	55,344	16.6	58,846	6.3

Source: US Census, Elizabeth A. Della Valle, AICP

Population Estimates and Projections

Since 1990, the Maine Department of Human Services, Office of Data Resources (DHS), indicates that Waterville's population has continued to decline. DHS estimates that Waterville's 1995 population was 16,371, a loss of 802 people or about 4.7 % since 1990. If this rate of population loss continues, Waterville's population will decline to 15,602 people by the year 2000, and 14,869 by the year 2005.

Between 1980 and 1990, 2,547 children were born in Waterville while 2,220 residents died, resulting in a natural population increase of 327 over ten years. Since Waterville's population declined by 606 people between 1980 and 1990, 933 people moved away from the area during the same period.

Seasonal Population

With 27 seasonal housing units (1990 Census), Waterville clearly does not have a significant influx of summer residents in seasonal dwellings. The City does, however, host a significant number of college students each year at Colby College and Thomas College. The 1990 Census indicates that 1,814 residents are housed in college dormitories.

While neither Colby nor Thomas offer summer sessions, they both offer special programs to visiting groups. Colby schedules over 50 summer programs, including refresher courses for doctors and

athletic camps for children, and attracts approximately 7,000 persons to Waterville over the course of the summer. Thomas College offers Elder Hostel. At the same time, some Waterville residents move to houses on nearby lakes. Some rent their Waterville homes to persons attending Colby's special programs, while others leave their winter homes empty.

Household Change

The 1970's saw a dramatic change in the composition of households. Overall, household size dropped significantly. In Waterville, the average household had just under three people (2.95) in 1970. By 1980, the average household size had decreased to 2.5 people. This decrease is typical of national trends and was caused by a variety of factors including lower birth rates, increased longevity among the elderly, higher divorce rates, and more elderly and young people living independently in their own homes. This trend in decreasing household size continued into the 80's, but at a slower rate. The 1990 Census indicates a continued decline in Waterville to 2.27 people per household. Household size is not expected to continue to decline significantly, although some slight additional reduction may occur over the rest of the decade.

The decrease in household size has had a substantial impact on residential development in Maine communities in general and on Waterville in particular. Between 1980 and 1990, the year round population of Waterville declined by 606. During this same period, the number of households in the community grew from 6,201 to 6,583, an increase of 382 households. Consequently, more dwelling units are needed to house fewer people. Since 1990, according to the Assessor's Office, an additional 131 housing units have been constructed in Waterville (as of November 1995), bringing the total to 6,714 housing units.

Household Composition

In 1990, single person households represented almost a third (33.2%) of Waterville's households. Nearly another third (32.7%) had two members, resulting in almost two-thirds (65.9%) of households having one or two members. Nearly sixteen percent (15.8%) of households had three members while just over 18 percent (18.3%) had four or more members.

Age Distribution

As shown in Table 1-4, in 1990, 20% of Waterville's population were under 18 years of age. Just under 20 percent were in the 18-24 year old age group, while approximately a quarter were in the 25-44 year old age group. Just over 16 percent were middle aged (45-64), while 17 percent were elderly (65 years and older). The median age of all Waterville residents in 1990 was 31.7.

Comparisons can be made with other communities in the North Kennebec Region, Kennebec County, other cities, and the State of Maine. In 1990, as might be expected, Waterville had a significantly higher percentage of young college-aged adults (18-24) than any other jurisdiction, and a median age well below that of all jurisdictions shown except Brunswick. These statistics reflect the presence of Colby College and Thomas College. The City also had a higher percentage of elderly (65 and older), than any other jurisdiction except Augusta (also 17 percent), explained in part by its numerous nursing and boarding homes and elderly housing. However, Waterville had one of the lowest percentages of preschool children and the lowest percentage of school age

children and adults in their childbearing years (24-44), which suggests that people in their household formation and child-rearing years have moved elsewhere. These figures support the trend of movement from the city center to surrounding, more rural communities.

TABLE 1-4

AGE DISTRIBUTION COMPARISONS 1990

	Total Population Under 5	% Under 5	Total Population 5-17	% 5-17	Total Population 18-24	% 18-24	Total Population 25-44	% 25-44	Total Population 45-64	% 45-64	Total Population Over 65	% Over 65	Median Age
Waterville	1,046	6	2,408	14	3,406	20	4,537	26	2,866	17	2,910	17	31.7
Albion	112	6	382	22	137	8	557	32	323	19	225	13	33.5
Belgrade	165	7	475	20	148	6	821	35	505	21	261	11	35.4
Benton	177	7	425	18	217	9	763	33	479	21	251	11	34.8
China	298	8	875	24	288	8	1,280	34	653	18	319	9	32
Clinton	234	7	771	23	324	10	1,112	33	615	18	276	8	31
Fairfield	509	8	1,353	20	695	10	2,188	33	1,187	18	786	12	31.9
Oakland	432	8	1,132	20	528	9	1,849	33	1,077	19	577	10	32.8
Rome	51	7	143	19	54	7	251	33	166	22	93	12	37
Sidney	197	8	586	23	180	7	917	35	482	19	231	9	32.9
Smithfield	71	8	180	21	63	7	298	34	170	20	83	10	32.8
Vassalboro	309	8	693	19	297	8	1,303	35	693	19	384	10	33
Winslow	490	6	1,586	20	693	9	2,475	31	1,689	21	1,064	13	35.4
TOTAL	4,091	7	11,009	19	7,030	12	18,351	31	10,905	19	7,460	13	-
Kennebec County	7,802	7	21,450	19	11,827	10	36,923	32	22,358	19	15,544	13	34.2
Auburn	1,743	7	4,411	18	2,390	10	7,723	32	4,285	18	3,757	15	33.8
Augusta	1,367	6	3,314	15	2,155	10	6,541	31	4,279	20	3,669	17	36.2
Biddeford	1,487	7	3,314	16	2,655	13	6,273	30	3,784	18	3,197	15	32.8
Brunswick	1,539	7	3,306	16	3,320	16	6,589	32	3,402	16	2,750	13	31
Lewiston	2,782	7	6,271	16	5,496	14	11,223	28	7,467	19	6,518	16	33.4
Sanford	1,700	8	4,190	20	1,799	9	6,530	32	3,421	17	2,823	14	32
State of Maine	85,722	7	223,280	18	123,772	10	398,580	32	233,201	19	163,373	13	33.9

Source: U.S. Census, 1990, RotheAssociates.

(Percentages may not add up to 100 because of rounding)

Table 1-5 shows the population change in Waterville between 1980 and 1990 by age group. The largest loss is in the 5-24 age group which includes school age and young adults. The largest gain is in the 25-44 age group. Both of these changes can be explained, in part, by the shift in the younger half of the baby boom generation, born between 1946 and 1964, from one age cohort to the next. In 1990, the entire baby boom was in the 25-44 age group. The next decennial census will show that the older half of the baby boom has reached middle age.

TABLE 1-5
WATERVILLE POPULATION CHANGE BY AGE GROUP
1980 - 1990

Age Group	1980	1990	Change	Percent Change
Under 5	990	1,046	+56	5.6
5-24	7,001	5,814	-1,187	-17.0
25-44	3,680	4,537	+857	23.3
45-64	3,505	2,866	-639	-18.2
65+	2,603	2,910	+307	11.8

Source: US Census; Elizabeth A. Della Valle, AICP

Educational Attainment

As shown in Table 1-6, Waterville had one of the smallest percentages of people 25 years and older with at least a high school diploma (74.5 percent). This figure was lower than all other communities in the region except Clinton (74.4 percent), also lower than the County and State averages (78.9 and 78.8 percent, respectively), but on a par with or even higher than figures for the other comparison communities in the State. However, the percentage of Waterville residents with a Bachelor's Degree or higher (22.2%) was higher than all communities in the region except Belgrade (23.4 percent) and Rome (24.8%), and it was higher than Kennebec County (18.1 percent) and the State (18.8 percent). This relatively high percent probably reflects the influence of Colby and Thomas Colleges and the City's medical facilities.

TABLE 1-6**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
PERSONS 25 YEARS AND OLDER**

	Total	Percent - High School Graduate or Higher	Percent With Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Waterville	10,381	74.5	22.2
Albion	1,060	78.5	12.0
Belgrade	1,564	84.8	23.4
Benton	1,493	80.5	9.4
China	2,278	86.4	20.0
Clinton	2,011	74.4	9.5
Fairfield	4,160	78.0	13.1
Oakland	3,519	80.5	14.9
Rome	509	81.5	24.8
Sidney	1,630	82.1	16.4
Smithfield	550	77.5	16.5
Vassalboro	2,380	80.5	18.1
Winslow	5,177	75.8	13.9
 Kennebec County	 74,858	 78.9	 18.1
 Auburn	 15,876	 76.7	 19.1
Augusta	14,489	74.4	16.3
Biddeford	13,254	66.9	10.7
Brunswick	12,738	83.5	26.5
Lewiston	25,208	63.7	9.7
Sanford	12,825	72.6	11.6
 State of Maine	 795,613	 78.8	 18.8

Source: U.S. Census, 1990.

Income Characteristics

By almost any measure, incomes in Waterville lag behind those of most other comparison communities. Table 1-7 shows that Waterville's 1990 per capita income (\$12,002) was less than that of Kennebec County (\$12,885) and the State average (\$12,957). Moreover, the City's rate of growth in the per capita income figure between 1980 and 1990 (109%) lagged behind that of all jurisdictions shown in the table except that of Vassalboro (99%) and Augusta (108%). The percentage of people below the poverty level was the same in both 1980 and 1990 (16.0 percent) and in 1990 was the highest of any jurisdiction shown in the table.

The median family income in Waterville in 1990 (\$29,054) was less than that of any other jurisdiction shown in Table 1-8 except Albion (\$27,687). Moreover, the growth in median family income in Waterville between 1980 and 1990 (76%) was less than that of all jurisdictions shown except Vassalboro (61%).

**TABLE 1-7
INCOME CHARACTERISTICS**

	Per Capita Income			Median Family Income			% of Persons Below Poverty	
	1980	1990	% Change	1980	1990	% Change	1980	1990
Waterville	\$5,741	\$12,002	109%	\$16,513	\$29,054	76%	16.0%	16.0%
Albion	\$4,593	\$10,584	130%	\$14,919	\$27,687	86%	19.0%	11.0%
Belgrade	\$6,734	\$14,633	117%	\$17,843	\$38,724	117%	10.7%	8.1%
Benton	\$5,606	\$11,938	113%	\$16,649	\$32,589	96%	6.9%	7.5%
China	\$5,682	\$14,836	161%	\$16,838	\$36,729	118%	10.9%	7.3%
Clinton	\$5,556	\$11,694	110%	\$16,705	\$30,942	85%	15.5%	15.0%
Fairfield	\$5,077	\$10,913	115%	\$15,573	\$30,952	99%	13.2%	10.3%
Oakland	\$5,465	\$11,786	116%	\$16,549	\$31,682	91%	12.6%	10.6%
Rome	\$4,757	\$14,121	197%	\$13,207	\$32,946	149%	13.5%	9.8%
Sidney	\$5,706	\$12,877	126%	\$18,156	\$36,075	99%	9.2%	6.2%
Smithfield	\$4,919	\$10,657	117%	\$16,484	\$30,417	85%	13.8%	7.6%
Vassalboro	\$5,903	\$11,770	99%	\$19,402	\$31,300	61%	11.6%	9.1%
Winslow	\$6,196	\$13,737	122%	\$18,132	\$36,149	99%	7.1%	8.8%
Kennebec County	\$5,966	\$12,885	116%	\$17,057	\$33,375	96%	11.8%	10.2%
Auburn	\$5,980	\$13,511	126%	\$16,567	\$32,735	98%	12.5%	10.9%
Augusta	\$6,354	\$13,209	108%	\$16,991	\$33,288	96%	12.6%	12.8%
Biddeford	\$5,717	\$12,382	117%	\$17,110	\$33,984	99%	9.5%	11.5%
Brunswick	\$6,357	\$14,343	126%	\$17,981	\$36,577	103%	12.0%	7.7%
Lewiston	\$5,600	\$12,277	119%	\$15,650	\$30,903	97%	13.3%	13.9%
Sanford	\$5,416	\$12,053	123%	\$16,564	\$32,943	99%	13.5%	10.4%
State of Maine	\$5,768	\$12,957	125%	\$16,167	\$32,422	100%	13.0%	10.8%

Source: U.S. Census, 1990.