

3. Demographics

With the United States projected to grow to approximately 400 million people in 2040, the region’s proximity to large population centers as well as the popularity of the area as a destination for retirees will surely have a great impact on the region in the future. This section examines past, present and projected future demographic trends in the Lakes Region through an examination of available data as well as a review of key issues that will likely influence population, housing and employment trends in the future.

To begin, the idea that the Lakes Region is remote from the population base of Massachusetts and south has long faded. In fact, the U.S. Census Bureau has identified a number of Mega regions or “megapolitan areas” throughout the country, with the Lakes Region expected to be on the northern edge of the New England Megalopolis in 2050. The availability of seasonal housing stock, a wide variety of seasonal activities, accessibility to quality health care, and location close to large metropolitan areas make the Lakes Region a strong draw for those seeking to relocate in retirement or for quality of life reasons.

Figure 3.1, New England Megalopolis in 2050

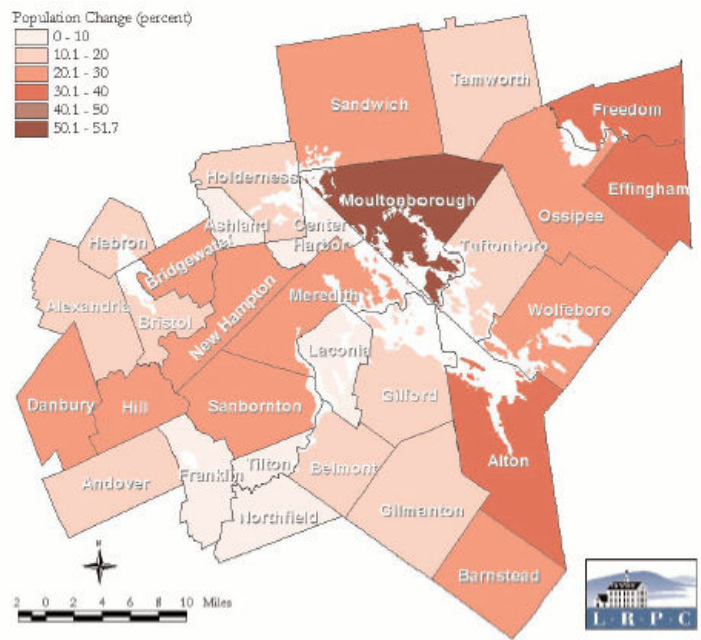


Table 3.1, Lakes Region Population Trends

Year	Population	% Chg.
1773	2,809	-
1783	5,606	99.6%
1790	12,887	129.9%
1800	22,832	77.2%
1810	30,501	33.6%
1820	38,841	27.3%
1830	43,132	11.0%
1840	44,401	2.9%
1850	44,440	1.0%
1860	44,435	0.0%
1870	40,747	-8.3%
1880	45,873	12.6%
1890	44,416	-3.2%
1900	44,369	-0.1%
1910	45,561	2.7%
1920	44,565	-2.2%
1930	45,503	2.1%
1940	48,739	7.1%
1950	50,570	3.8%
1960	53,044	4.9%
1970	60,461	14.0%
1980	78,126	29.2%
1990	91,900	17.6%
2000	106,428	15.8%

Source: U.S. Census

Figure 3.2, Changes in Population between 1990 and 2000



Population Trends

The rapid rise in the Lakes Region population began in the 1970s, growing from 60,461 in 1970 to 106,428 in 2000. This followed generally slow, steady growth over the initial seventy years of the century. Specifically, the region grew by

just more than 36% between 1900 and 1970, and then at more than twice that rate (76%) between 1970 and 2000.

Figures in Table 3.2 below outline the changes in population between 2000 and 2005, which are the most recent estimates of current population available. Communities with growth rates that are equal to or greater than the overall state increase of 6.4% over the same period are above the bold line on the table. Common denominators in those communities that increased in population by more than 300 residents between 2000 and 2005 are either a great deal of lake shoreline within its boundaries or a location in the southern tier of the region.

Table 3.2, Changes in Population since 2000

Municipality	2000 Census	2005 (NHOEP)	Change 00-05	% Change 00-05
Hebron	459	539	80	17.4%
Barnstead	3,886	4,507	621	16.0%
Gilmanton	3,060	3,430	370	12.1%
Effingham	1,273	1,425	152	11.9%
Alton	4,502	4,991	489	10.9%
Alexandria	1,329	1,472	143	10.8%
Danbury	1,071	1,179	108	10.1%
Freedom	1,303	1,431	128	9.8%
Sanbornton	2,581	2,829	248	9.6%
New Hampton	1,950	2,131	181	9.3%
Hill	992	1,083	91	9.2%
Moultonborough	4,484	4,875	391	8.7%
Center Harbor	996	1,082	86	8.6%
Ossipee	4,211	4,561	350	8.3%
Northfield	4,548	4,911	363	8.0%
Tuftonboro	2,148	2,312	164	7.6%
Belmont	6,716	7,206	490	7.3%
Gilford	6,803	7,287	484	7.1%
Meredith	5,943	6,350	407	6.8%
Wolfeboro	6,083	6,475	392	6.4%
Sandwich	1,286	1,359	73	5.7%
Bridgewater	974	1,029	55	5.6%
Andover	2,109	2,219	110	5.2%
Holderness	1,930	2,029	99	5.1%
Bristol	3,033	3,185	152	5.0%
Tilton	3,477	3,637	160	4.6%
Laconia	16,411	17,102	691	4.2%
Ashland	1,955	2,030	75	3.8%
Franklin	8,405	8,686	281	3.3%
Tamworth	2,510	2,516	6	0.2%
Lakes Region	106,428	113,868	7,440	7.0%
New Hampshire	1,235,786	1,315,000	79,214	6.4%

Source: U.S. Census, NH Office of Energy and Planning

Trends by Age

Population projections by age cohort from the NH Office of Energy and Planning estimate that the number of persons 65 years old and older in Belknap County will increase from 8,496 in 2000 to 27,081 in 2030, an increase of approximately 219%. It is especially interesting to note that the overall increase in persons 65+ is a greater number than the overall increase in population projected for Belknap County in total, with the age groups under the age of 65 projected to have a net loss in population.

The impact on the Lakes Region due to these projected age group changes in the region’s demographics (see Table 3.3) is anticipated to be dramatic, ranging from an increased demand for senior services to changes in the types of housing sought. With the aging of the baby boom generation and the popularity of the region as a retirement destination, the region is expected to see its senior population rise even more dramatically than that expected throughout the United States as a whole through 2030.

Table 3.3, Lakes Region Population Projections through 2030

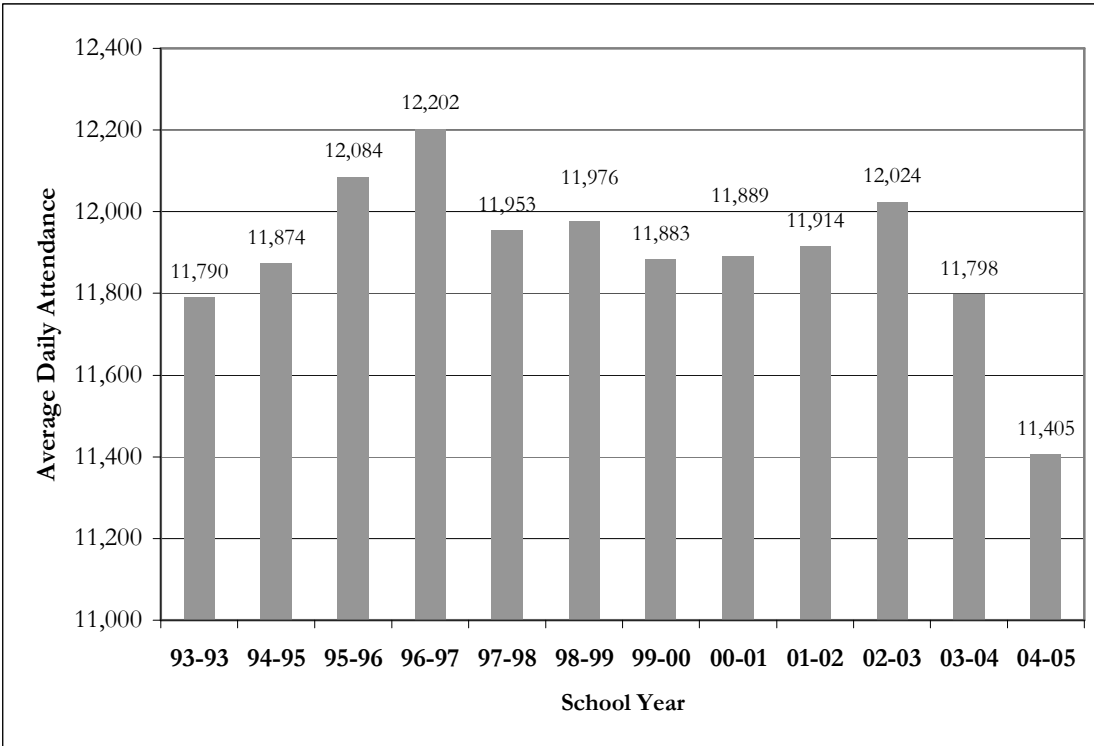
Projected Population Change by Age: 2000-2030				
Age Category	2000	2030	Belknap County % Change	New Hampshire % Change
19 and Less	14,573	14,215	-2.5%	-0.1%
20-24	2,539	2,772	9.2%	12.5%
25-34	6,377	6,264	-1.8%	7.6%
35-44	9,446	7,104	-24.8%	-15.1%
45-54	8,984	7,544	-16.0%	-11.7%
55-64	5,910	9,502	60.8%	67.9%
65+	8,496	27,081	218.8%	195.5%
Total	56,325	74,482	32.2%	26.6%

Population 25-44 Years Old: 2000 and 2030 (Projected)				
County	2000		2030	
	Total	% of Population	Total	% of Population
Belknap	15,823	28.1%	13,368	17.9%
Carroll	11,574	26.5%	10,143	16.4%
Cheshire	19,933	27.0%	21,021	23.4%
Coos	8,843	26.7%	6,059	16.9%
Grafton	22,066	27.0%	20,361	20.2%
Hillsborough	124,704	32.7%	125,868	26.6%
Merrimack	41,673	30.6%	40,886	22.5%
Rockingham	90,987	32.8%	76,618	21.8%
Strafford	34,289	30.6%	35,638	25.0%
Sullivan	11,348	28.0%	10,062	19.4%
New Hampshire	381,240	30.9%	360,024	23.0%

Source: NH Office of Energy and Planning (NH OEP)

School age population is also an important key to note when examining the region’s demographics. In the 1990s the school age population grew at a rate three times the rate of the overall population, while in the coming years it is expected that the school age population will decline. As seen on the next page in Figure 2.3, this decline has already been quantified in the Lakes Region through a review of school age population through the 2004-05 school year, where the school age population declined precipitously from 12,024 students in the 2002-03 school year to 11,405 students two years later.

Figure 3.3, Lakes Region Public School Enrollment Grades 1-8



Source: NH Department of Education

The overall aging of the Lakes Region seen is clearly demonstrated through an examination of median age figures by community as estimated by the 1980, 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census (see Table 3.5 on the following page).

A good comparison to trends within the Lakes Region are the changes in median age experienced in the state of New Hampshire between 1980 and 2000. Statewide, the median age increased by more than two years to 32.8 during the 1980s, with a much greater increase to 37.1 years in 2000. In contrast, the affect of the region’s draw for those of retirement age was already being felt in the 1980s in many communities. The aging of the region then accelerated during the 1990s as the state’s median age increased as well.

As seen in Table 3.4, the highest median age in 2000 was found in Hebron at 50.1 years. The lowest was 36.0 in Northfield. The median age in New Hampshire in 2000 according to the US Census was 37.1. The overall Belknap County median age was 40.1 in 2000.

Table 3.4, Median Age in 2000

Rank	Highest	2000
1	Hebron	50.1
2	Freedom	48.6
3	Tuftonboro	47.7
4	Sandwich	47.2
5	Moultonborough	46.6
6	Bridgewater	45.4
7	Wolfeboro	45.3
8	Center Harbor	44.6
9	Gilford	42.9
10	Meredith	42.5

Rank	Lowest	2000
1	Northfield	36
2	Ashland	36.8
3	Franklin	37.3
4	New Hampton	38.3
5	Belmont	38.4
6	Bristol	38.5
7	Effingham	38.5
8	Hill	38.7
9	Laconia	38.8
10	Barnstead	38.8

Source: U.S. Census

Table 3.5, Median Age, 1980-2000

					% Change 80-90	% Change 90-00
	Municipality	1980	1990	2000		
Belknap	Alton	36.5	37.8	41.4	3.6%	9.5%
County	Barnstead	29.9	32.6	38.8	9.0%	19.0%
	Belmont	31.0	32.3	38.4	4.2%	18.9%
	Center Harbor	31.7	37.5	44.6	18.3%	18.9%
	Gilford	35.5	38.4	42.9	8.2%	11.7%
	Gilmanton	31.2	33.4	40.1	7.1%	20.1%
	Laconia	31.3	34.4	38.8	9.9%	12.8%
	Meredith	33.6	36.2	42.5	7.7%	17.4%
	New Hampton	31.3	34.0	38.3	8.6%	12.6%
	Sanbornton	31.6	34.9	40.1	10.4%	14.9%
	Tilton	31.5	36.8	39.6	16.8%	7.6%
Carroll	Effingham	34.2	35.2	38.5	2.9%	9.4%
County	Freedom	37.9	39.0	48.6	2.9%	24.6%
	Moultonborough	39.4	37.8	46.6	-4.1%	23.3%
	Ossipee	37.8	36.8	41.5	-2.6%	12.8%
	Sandwich	43.1	41.4	47.2	-4.2%	14.3%
	Tamworth	34.3	36.3	40.6	5.8%	11.8%
	Tuftonboro	42.0	38.8	47.7	-7.6%	22.9%
	Wolfboro	38.2	41.0	45.3	7.3%	10.5%
Grafton	Alexandria	31.3	31.6	40.3	1.0%	27.5%
County	Ashland	29.3	32.6	36.8	11.3%	12.9%
	Bridgewater	37.8	37.4	45.4	-1.1%	21.4%
	Bristol	33.0	33.1	38.5	0.3%	16.3%
	Hebron	35.9	42.3	50.1	17.8%	18.4%
	Holderness	30.8	35.2	42.1	14.3%	19.6%
Merrimack	Andover	32.3	35.7	40.1	10.5%	12.3%
County	Danbury	33.0	34.2	41.1	3.6%	20.2%
	Franklin	30.3	33.3	37.3	9.9%	12.0%
	Hill	29.7	34.6	38.7	16.5%	11.8%
	Northfield	27.8	31.2	36.0	12.2%	15.4%
New Hampshire		30.1	32.8	37.1	9.0%	13.1%

Source: U.S Census

A final illustration of past demographic trends is the comparison of the number and percentage of senior citizens in 1990 and 2000 in each Lakes Region community as well as the state of New Hampshire. In New Hampshire, approximately 11% of all residents were seniors in 1990. By 2000, this figure had increased to 12% of the overall population. In sheer numbers, the total number of seniors increased by 22,941 or 18.3%. Over the same period, the rate of increase in the number of seniors increased at a dramatically higher rate in the majority of Lakes Region communities, with notable exceptions of Andover, Franklin, Hill, Northfield and Tilton, all communities in the western section of the region with little or no lake frontage within their boundaries (see Table 3.6). A key factor

when reviewing these data is that while the baby boom generation is aging, it is not yet an *elderly* population. The changes resulting from that generation aging will likely impact the region's development patterns over the coming 20 years, perhaps causing people to choose housing in more urban areas closer to services.

Table 3.6, Number and Percentage of Senior Citizens: 1990 and 2000

	Municipality	1990		2000		Change: 1990-2000	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
Belknap	Alton	514	15.6%	695	15.4%	181	35.2%
County	Barnstead	301	9.7%	423	10.9%	122	40.5%
	Belmont	553	9.5%	764	11.4%	211	38.2%
	Center Harbor	156	15.7%	173	17.4%	17	10.9%
	Gilford	829	14.1%	1,145	16.8%	316	38.1%
	Gilmanton	274	10.5%	359	11.7%	85	31.0%
	Laconia	2,411	15.3%	2,828	17.2%	417	17.3%
	Meredith	776	16.0%	999	16.8%	223	28.7%
	New Hampton	178	11.1%	241	12.4%	63	35.4%
	Sanbornton	213	10.0%	282	10.9%	69	32.4%
	Tilton	538	16.7%	587	16.9%	49	9.1%
Carroll	Effingham	130	13.8%	160	12.6%	30	23.1%
County	Freedom	150	16.0%	313	24.0%	163	108.7%
	Moultonborough	471	15.9%	891	19.9%	420	89.3%
	Ossipee	586	17.7%	748	17.8%	162	27.6%
	Sandwich	234	22.0%	308	24.0%	74	31.6%
	Tamworth	327	15.1%	394	15.7%	67	20.5%
	Tuftonboro	354	19.2%	475	22.1%	121	34.2%
	Wolfeboro	1,094	23.1%	1,495	24.6%	401	36.7%
Grafton	Alexandria	89	7.4%	150	11.3%	61	68.5%
County	Ashland	235	12.3%	266	13.6%	31	13.2%
	Bridgewater	135	17.0%	188	19.3%	53	39.3%
	Bristol	333	13.1%	430	14.2%	97	29.1%
	Hebron	85	22.0%	129	28.1%	44	51.8%
	Holderness	173	10.2%	248	12.8%	75	43.4%
Merrimack	Andover	256	13.6%	267	12.7%	11	4.3%
County	Danbury	111	12.6%	137	12.8%	26	23.4%
	Franklin	1,282	15.4%	1,233	14.7%	-49	-3.8%
	Hill	100	12.3%	101	10.2%	1	1.0%
	Northfield	356	8.3%	397	8.7%	41	11.5%
New Hampshire		125,029	11.3%	147,970	12.0%	22,941	18.3%

Source: U.S. Census

Municipal Population Projections

Population projections for the region developed by the New Hampshire Office of Energy and Planning (January 2007) can be found on the next page in Table 3.7. These projections were developed

by estimating the growth for each county in the state and then allocating county growth by municipality using its historic county share of growth.

Communities with expected growth rates that are equal to or greater than the overall state increase over the same period (19%) are above the bold line in Table 3.7. It is projected that a majority of towns in the Lakes Region are expected to grow at a rate in excess of the state’s overall rate, with Alton projected to grow at a rate more than double the state’s rate of growth. In contrast to the high rates of growth expected in the majority of municipalities within the Lakes Region (especially those located in Carroll County), growth in Franklin and Laconia is projected to be much lower.

Table 3.7, Population Projections

NH Office of Energy & Planning							
Municipality	Est. 2005	I-----I	Projections -----I				Est. Chg. 05-30
		2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	
Alton	4,990	5,630	6,030	6,420	6,810	7,120	42.7%
Moultonboro	4,880	5,270	5,680	6,120	6,480	6,730	37.9%
Effingham	1,430	1,540	1,660	1,780	1,890	1,960	37.1%
Tamworth	2,520	2,730	2,930	3,140	3,320	3,440	36.5%
Freedom	1,430	1,540	1,660	1,780	1,880	1,940	35.7%
Ossipee	4,560	4,920	5,280	5,650	5,960	6,180	35.5%
Wolfeboro	6,480	6,980	7,480	7,990	8,420	8,710	34.4%
Tuftonboro	2,310	2,490	2,660	2,820	2,970	3,060	32.5%
Sandwich	1,360	1,460	1,560	1,650	1,730	1,790	31.6%
Meredith	6,350	6,990	7,360	7,720	8,070	8,340	31.3%
Belmont	7,210	7,880	8,310	8,720	9,130	9,460	31.2%
Gilford	7,290	7,970	8,400	8,810	9,230	9,560	31.1%
Gilmanton	3,430	3,740	3,940	4,130	4,320	4,480	30.6%
New Hampton	2,130	2,330	2,440	2,560	2,680	2,770	30.0%
Sanbornton	2,830	3,090	3,250	3,400	3,550	3,680	30.0%
Barnstead	4,510	4,910	5,160	5,400	5,650	5,850	29.7%
Center Harbor	1,080	1,180	1,230	1,290	1,340	1,380	27.8%
Danbury	1,180	1,230	1,290	1,360	1,420	1,470	24.6%
Northfield	4,910	5,140	5,370	5,610	5,860	6,050	23.2%
Hill	1,080	1,130	1,180	1,240	1,290	1,330	23.1%
Andover	2,220	2,320	2,430	2,540	2,650	2,730	23.0%
Bridgewater	1,030	1,060	1,110	1,150	1,190	1,240	20.4%
Tilton	3,640	3,880	4,020	4,140	4,260	4,360	19.8%
Alexandria	1,470	1,510	1,590	1,640	1,700	1,760	19.7%
Bristol	3,190	3,270	3,410	3,530	3,650	3,780	18.5%
Holderness	2,030	2,080	2,180	2,250	2,310	2,390	17.7%
Ashland	2,030	2,080	2,170	2,240	2,300	2,370	16.7%
Hebron	540	550	570	590	610	620	14.8%
Franklin	8,690	8,790	8,890	8,990	9,110	9,200	5.9%
Laconia	17,100	17,240	17,310	17,390	17,460	17,520	2.5%
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Lakes Region	113,900	120,930	126,550	132,050	137,240	141,270	24.0%
New Hampshire	1,315,000	1,365,140	1,420,000	1,470,010	1,520,310	1,565,040	19.0%

Source: NH Office of Energy and Planning

Seasonal Housing Trends

An important trend related to the housing market is the number of seasonal units in each community and the percentage of seasonal housing in relation to the overall housing stock. As to be expected, seasonal housing accounts for a large percentage of the housing base in many communities, but this percentage has been decreasing since 1990. Table 3.8 below highlights this trend, identifying the change between 1990 and 2000 relative to the number of total housing units and seasonal units as well as the percentage of seasonal units in 2000.

Table 3.8, Housing Units in 1990 and 2000

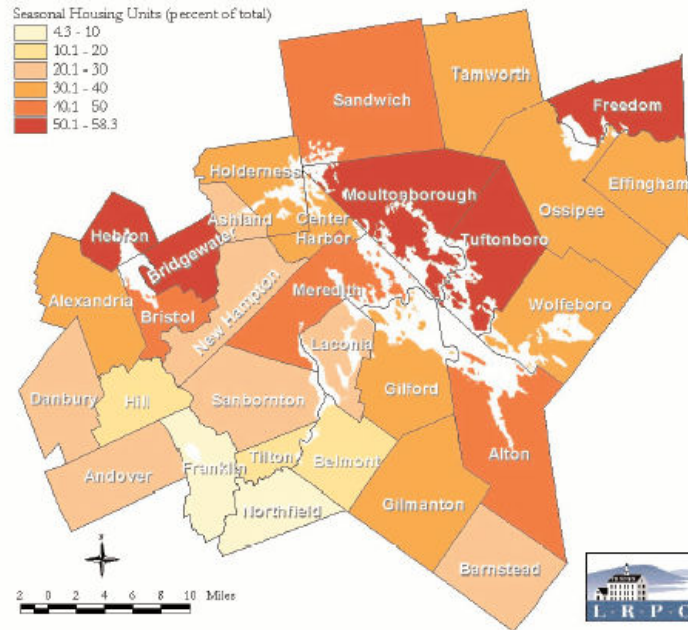
		All Housing Units		Seasonal Units		All Units % Chg.	Seasonal Units % Chg. 90-00	% Seasonal 2000
	Municipality	1990	2000	1990	2000	90-00	Chg. 90-00	2000
Belknap	Alton	3,267	3,522	1,834	1,610	7.8%	-12.2%	45.7%
County	Barnstead	1,861	1,994	679	528	7.1%	-22.2%	26.5%
	Belmont	2,869	3,113	525	351	8.5%	-33.1%	11.3%
	Center Harbor	649	653	239	208	0.6%	-13.0%	31.9%
	Gilford	4,397	4,312	1,833	1,427	1.9%	-22.1%	33.1%
	Gilmanston	1,744	1,848	752	648	6.0%	-13.8%	35.1%
	Laconia	8,201	8,554	1,216	1,477	4.3%	21.5%	17.3%
	Meredith	3,720	4,191	1,603	1,611	12.7%	0.5%	38.4%
	New Hampton	855	944	182	180	10.4%	-1.1%	19.1%
	Sanbornton	1,131	1,359	311	343	20.2%	10.3%	25.2%
	Tilton	1,612	1,631	145	186	1.2%	28.3%	11.4%
Carroll	Effingham	682	791	287	260	16.0%	-9.4%	32.9%
County	Freedom	1,359	1,406	890	771	3.5%	-13.4%	54.8%
	Moultonborough	3,850	4,523	2,526	2,519	17.5%	-0.3%	55.7%
	Ossipee	2,617	2,742	1,069	920	4.8%	-13.9%	33.6%
	Sandwich	864	965	352	360	11.7%	2.3%	37.3%
	Tamworth	1,523	1,662	524	526	9.1%	0.4%	31.6%
	Tuftonboro	2,027	2,019	1,236	1,043	-0.4%	-15.6%	51.7%
	Wolfeboro	3,631	3,903	1,345	1,194	7.5%	-11.2%	30.6%
Grafton	Alexandria	721	783	245	260	8.6%	6.1%	33.2%
County	Ashland	1,162	1,149	292	249	-1.1%	-14.7%	21.7%
	Bridgewater	839	850	472	420	1.3%	-11.0%	49.4%
	Bristol	2,250	2,073	1,086	772	-7.9%	-28.9%	37.2%
	Hebron	452	517	267	294	14.4%	10.1%	56.9%
	Holderness	1,136	1,208	417	404	6.3%	-3.1%	33.4%
Merrimack	Andover	855	1,038	123	176	21.4%	43.1%	17.0%
County	Danbury	541	596	166	121	10.2%	-27.1%	20.3%
	Franklin	3,744	3,676	191	215	-1.8%	12.6%	5.8%
	Hill	360	436	48	47	21.1%	-2.1%	10.8%
	Northfield	1,671	1,782	65	41	6.6%	-36.9%	2.3%
New Hampshire		503,904	547,024	57,135	56,413	8.6%	-1.3%	10.3%

Source: U.S. Census

A key factor in the declining percentage of seasonal units has been the conversion of seasonal use homes to year round housing, further emphasizing the concept that the draw of the Lakes Region as desirable retirement area where previously seasonal residents are relocating after upgrading their seasonal homes. In addition, the use of homes for longer periods during the year due to close proximity to population centers cannot be discounted.

It is also interesting to observe the patterns of communities with high rates of seasonal housing in 2000 as shown in Figure 3.4. As to be expected, the highest rates are found in a number of rural communities with frontage on Lake Ossipee, Newfound Lake and Lake Winnepesaukee.

Figure 3.4, Seasonal Housing as a Percentage of Housing



Median Purchase Price of Homes

A crucial indicator of the health of the housing market is the recent trend in median purchase price. As shown in Table 3.9, the median price of all housing types increased dramatically between 2000 and 2006, with the median price of all new homes as well as non-condominiums more than doubling in cost over the period. These trends fuel a concern in the Lakes Region that the overall value of housing affects the ability of the region to attract younger workers due to the overall high cost of housing.

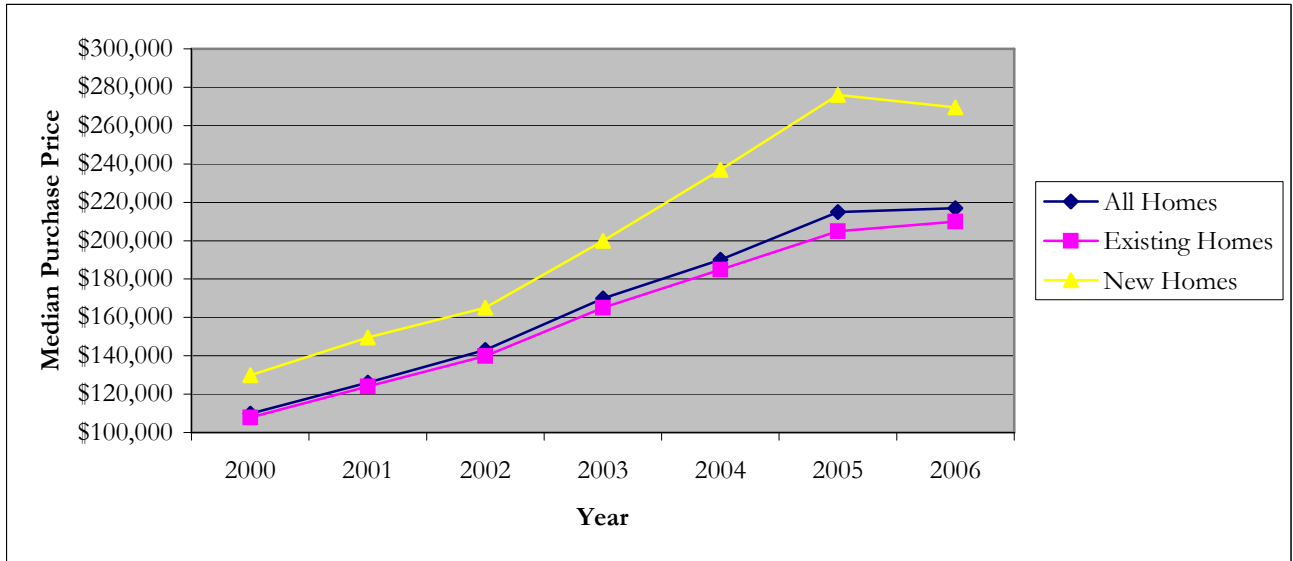
Table 3.9, Median Purchase Price of Homes by Type: 2000-2006

Year	All Homes	Existing Homes	New Homes	Non- Condominiums	Condominiums
2000	\$109,900	\$107,900	\$129,900	\$110,000	\$91,000
2001	\$126,000	\$124,000	\$149,500	\$128,000	\$112,000
2002	\$143,000	\$139,900	\$165,000	\$145,000	\$121,153
2003	\$169,900	\$165,000	\$199,900	\$170,000	\$150,000
2004	\$190,000	\$184,900	\$237,000	\$195,000	\$161,000
2005	\$215,000	\$205,000	\$276,000	\$218,000	\$185,000
2006	\$216,900	\$210,000	\$269,500	\$222,000	\$165,000

Source: NH Housing Finance Authority Purchase Price Database

The increase in median purchase price of new homes is further illustrated in Figure 3.5 on the following page, although the median price in new homes had begun to decline in 2006 from a high of \$276,000 in 2005. The median price of condominiums also declined in 2006 following a steady increase from 2000 to 2005. However, the median price of existing homes actually had a small increase from 2000 to 2005.

Figure 3.5, Median Purchase Price of Homes by Type: 2000-2006



Source: NH Housing Finance Authority Purchase Price Database

Rental Affordability

Other measures of the housing market in the Lakes Region are the cost of gross rents and the overall issue of rental affordability. Table 3.10 below compares median monthly gross rents (contract rent plus the cost of utilities and fuel) in each New Hampshire county between 2000 and 2006. These data are not available by community, but it is interesting to review the county figures.

With an increase of approximately 44% over the period, Carroll County experienced the highest increase on a county basis in seven years, rising from \$615 in 2000 to \$883 in 2006. Belknap County experienced the third highest rate over the same seven years, rising to \$856 in 2006.

Table 3.10, Median Monthly Gross Rent: 2000-2006

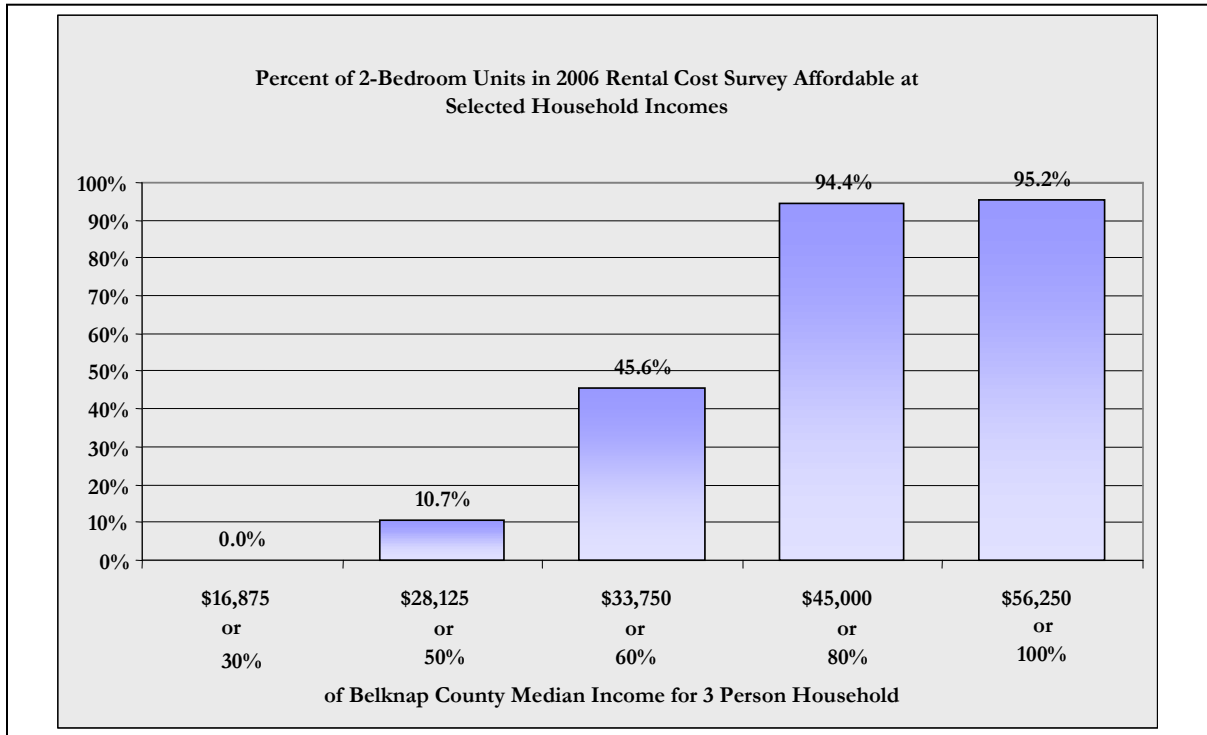
Counties	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Change 00-06	Percent Change 00-06
Belknap	\$619	\$628	\$704	\$737	\$786	\$801	\$856	\$237	38.3%
Carroll	\$615	\$703	\$693	\$729	\$811	\$800	\$883	\$268	43.6%
Cheshire	\$684	\$712	\$740	\$789	\$813	\$923	\$960	\$276	40.4%
Coos	\$464	\$453	\$459	\$477	\$500	\$549	\$591	\$127	27.4%
Grafton	\$634	\$693	\$694	\$733	\$786	\$769	\$829	\$195	30.8%
Hillsborough	\$834	\$940	\$990	\$1,007	\$1,036	\$1,046	\$1,060	\$226	27.1%
Merrimack	\$814	\$832	\$868	\$919	\$935	\$946	\$950	\$136	16.7%
Rockingham	\$842	\$938	\$1,009	\$1,009	\$1,046	\$1,058	\$1,086	\$244	29.0%
Strafford	\$717	\$782	\$830	\$857	\$902	\$899	\$929	\$212	29.6%
Sullivan	\$629	\$693	\$651	\$689	\$734	\$752	\$794	\$165	26.2%

Source: NH Housing Finance Authority

As gross rents have risen, the issue of rental housing affordability has become increasingly important. Figure 3.6 on the following page demonstrates the percentage of two bedroom homes that were

affordable at specific incomes in 2006 according to analysis performed by the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority. In 2006, only 45.6% of all two-bedroom apartments were affordable to three family households with a family income of \$33,750. This figure declined to 10.7% for a family with an income of \$28,125 or 50% of the Belknap County median income for a three-person household.

Figure 3.6, Rental Affordability at Selected Household Incomes



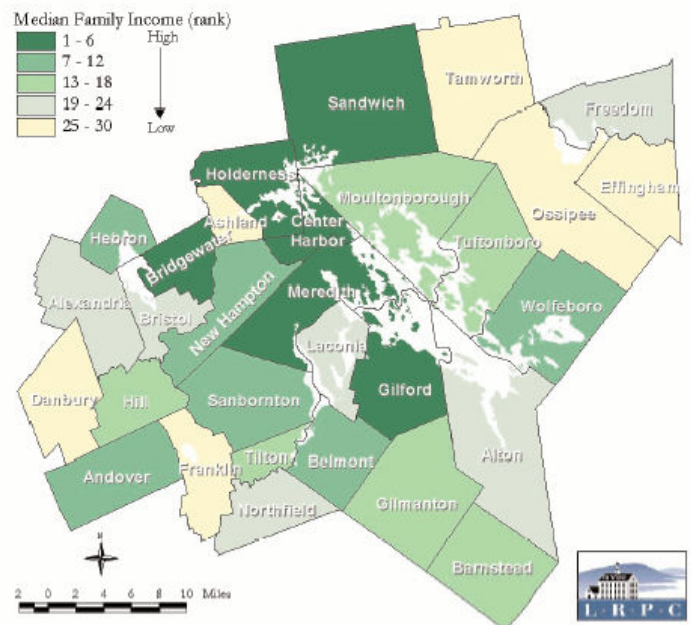
Source: NH Housing Finance Authority

Median Family Income

Median family income according to the U.S. Census increased substantially between 1990 and 2000 throughout the Lakes Region, although not to the degree seen in New Hampshire as a whole.

Only Gilford exceeded the state median family income figure in 1990, with no community exceeding the 2000 total. As seen in Table 3.11, Gilford had the highest median family income in both 1990 and 2000. Major increases in ranking between 1990 and 2000 were found in Hebron, Holderness, Meredith, and Tuftonboro, all

Figure 3.7, Median Family Income Rank in the Lakes Region: 2000



Source: U.S. Census

communities with a high percentage of seasonal housing.

Table 3.11, Median Family Income: 1989 and 1999

		1989		1999	
		Med. Family Income	Lakes Region Rank	Med. Family Income	Lakes Region Rank
	Municipality				
Belknap County	Alton	\$34,924	12	\$46,467	21
	Barnstead	\$33,259	19	\$49,404	18
	Belmont	\$37,554	5	\$53,125	9
	Center Harbor	\$41,250	2	\$55,938	2
	Gilford	\$43,207	1	\$56,554	1
	Gilmanton	\$38,583	4	\$51,712	15
	Laconia	\$35,658	10	\$45,307	23
	Meredith	\$33,137	20	\$54,764	5
	New Hampton	\$35,976	8	\$52,366	10
	Sanbornton	\$36,042	7	\$52,179	12
	Tilton	\$31,563	24	\$50,143	16
Carroll County	Effingham	\$27,656	29	\$38,000	30
	Freedom	\$32,115	23	\$49,167	19
	Moultonborough	\$33,716	17	\$51,729	14
	Ossipee	\$26,932	30	\$38,790	28
	Sandwich	\$36,417	6	\$55,417	4
	Tamworth	\$29,635	28	\$41,121	26
	Tuftonboro	\$32,188	22	\$51,875	13
	Wolfboro	\$36,640	14	\$53,269	8
Grafton County	Alexandria	\$35,521	11	\$45,938	22
	Ashland	\$29,856	27	\$38,487	29
	Bridgewater	\$32,434	21	\$54,722	6
	Bristol	\$30,797	25	\$44,766	24
	Hebron	\$34,531	15	\$54,688	7
	Holderness	\$34,861	13	\$55,526	3
Merrimack County	Andover	\$38,816	3	\$52,212	11
	Danbury	\$30,635	26	\$40,809	27
	Franklin	\$33,630	18	\$41,698	25
	Hill	\$34,417	16	\$50,000	17
	Northfield	\$35,739	9	\$48,787	20
New Hampshire		\$41,628		\$57,575	

Source: U.S. Census

Annual Employment and Wages

Annual average wage and employment figures for 2000 and 2005 can be found in Table 3.12 on the following page. In 2000 the state of New Hampshire's average weekly wage exceeded the average wage in each of the Lakes Region's communities, while in 2005 only Sanbornton exceeded the state's average weekly wage of \$780. Despite the lower overall figures, a number of communities experienced increases in annual average wage considerably greater than the changes in the state.

Table 3.12, Annual Employment and Wages: 2000 and 2005

County	Municipality	2000		2005		Change: 2000-2005		
		Annual Average Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Annual Average Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Annual Average Employment	Average Weekly Wage	
Belknap	Alton	688	\$386	912	\$569	224	\$183	
	Barnstead	445	\$455	384	\$450	-61	-\$5	
	Belmont	2,215	\$573	2,298	\$716	83	\$143	
	Center Harbor	476	\$403	521	\$505	45	\$102	
	Gilford	3,121	\$488	3,254	\$584	133	\$96	
	Gilmanton	326	\$427	316	\$540	-10	\$113	
	Laconia	11,108	\$556	10,662	\$680	-446	\$124	
	Meredith	2,993	\$579	3,153	\$649	160	\$70	
	New Hampton	450	\$461	622	\$636	172	\$175	
	Sanbornton	316	\$605	287	\$804	-29	\$199	
	Tilton	3,752	\$462	4,532	\$564	780	\$102	
	Carroll	Effingham	n	n	52	\$300	-	-
Freedom		210	\$426	229	\$473	19	\$47	
Moultonborough		1,001	\$533	1,198	\$603	197	\$70	
Ossipee		1,900	\$452	2,267	\$571	367	\$119	
Sandwich		287	\$522	258	\$594	-29	\$72	
Tamworth		650	\$413	719	\$492	69	\$79	
Tuftonboro		383	\$546	412	\$588	29	\$42	
Wolfboro		3,185	\$507	3,514	\$611	329	\$104	
Grafton	Alexandria	49	\$392	66	\$417	17	\$25	
	Ashland	733	\$450	704	\$500	-29	\$50	
	Bridgewater	44	\$269	76	\$671	32	\$402	
	Bristol	2,064	\$567	1,410	\$593	-654	\$26	
	Hebron	90	\$385	143	\$384	53	-\$1	
	Holderness	517	\$461	560	\$561	43	\$100	
Merrimack	Andover	534	\$527	581	\$609	47	\$82	
	Danbury	n	n	155	\$631	-	-	
	Franklin	3,482	\$590	2,884	\$685	-598	\$95	
	Hill	n	n	86	\$655	-	-	
	Northfield	761	\$642	1,035	\$632	274	-\$10	
New Hampshire		605,931	\$668	620,909	\$780	14,978	\$112	

Source: NH New Hampshire Employment Security, Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau

Total employment grew in many Lakes Region communities between 2000 and 2005. Noticeable exceptions were Laconia (11,108 to 10,662), Bristol (2,064 to 1,410) and Franklin (3,482 to 2,884). Where the data are complete for 2000 and 2005, 19 Lakes Region communities increased their annual average employment. The leaders were Tilton (780), Ossipee (367), and Wolfboro (329). Declines in average annual employment occurred in eight communities, with Bristol (-654), Franklin (-598), and Laconia (-446) the most affected.

Unemployment Trends

Trends in unemployment rates between 2003 and 2006 in the Lakes Region followed overall state trends. Monthly figures for each July were used in the comparison.

While the overall trend was similar, the majority of Lakes Region communities had lower unemployment rates throughout the period. Only Danbury (4.5%) and Franklin (3.6%) had higher rates of unemployment than the state rate of 3.4% in July 2006. These relatively low unemployment trends underscore the issue that jobs in the service sector can sometimes be difficult to fill in the Lakes Region, especially in light of housing costs in the area.

Table 3.13, Unemployment Rate Trends

County	Municipality	July-03	July-04	July-05	July-06
Belknap	Alton	3.1%	3.0%	2.4%	2.4%
	Barnstead	3.4%	3.0%	2.8%	3.2%
	Belmont	3.2%	3.0%	2.9%	2.9%
	Center Harbor	3.8%	3.4%	3.7%	2.3%
	Gilford	3.4%	2.7%	2.5%	2.7%
	Gilmanton	3.8%	3.9%	2.9%	3.2%
	Laconia	4.2%	3.2%	3.0%	3.2%
	Meredith	3.1%	2.9%	2.7%	2.8%
	New Hampton	3.2%	2.8%	2.5%	2.6%
	Sanbornton	4.0%	2.8%	3.0%	3.2%
	Tilton	4.3%	3.5%	3.1%	2.9%
Carroll	Effingham	3.1%	2.6%	2.4%	2.7%
	Freedom	3.2%	3.3%	2.6%	3.3%
	Moultonborough	2.6%	2.7%	2.2%	2.2%
	Ossipee	3.7%	3.2%	3.6%	3.5%
	Sandwich	3.2%	3.0%	2.6%	2.3%
	Tamworth	2.5%	2.9%	2.8%	3.1%
	Tuftonboro	2.1%	2.5%	2.8%	3.1%
	Wolfboro	3.5%	2.8%	2.9%	2.5%
Grafton	Alexandria	4.0%	3.1%	3.3%	3.1%
	Ashland	3.0%	2.9%	2.5%	2.3%
	Bridgewater	4.7%	2.7%	2.5%	3.2%
	Bristol	5.5%	3.7%	3.6%	3.1%
	Hebron	2.7%	3.9%	2.3%	3.0%
	Holderness	3.4%	2.2%	2.6%	2.1%
	Merrimack	Andover	3.4%	2.4%	2.6%
Danbury		3.2%	3.0%	3.3%	4.5%
Franklin		4.2%	3.4%	3.7%	3.6%
Hill		4.7%	2.4%	2.9%	2.7%
Northfield		3.2%	2.9%	3.0%	2.7%
New Hampshire		4.4%	3.8%	3.5%	3.4%

Source: NH New Hampshire Employment Security, Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau

Employment by Sector

As to be expected, the retail sector and accommodation and food sector both play important roles in the Lakes Region economy, although the Retail sector declined slightly in the Lakes Region between 2003 and 2005. The manufacturing sector also showed its strength over the three years, rising to a higher percentage of total employment in the Lakes Region than found in the state as a whole. Health care and social assistance is another significant employment sector in the Lakes Region.

The current mix of employment in the Lakes Region is further examined in the *Lakes Region Industry Cluster Analysis*.

Table 3.14, Percent of Total Employment by Sector: 2003-2005

Sector	Lakes Region			New Hampshire		
	2003	2004	2005	2003	2004	2005
Accommodation and Food	11.4%	11.4%	11.5%	8.3%	8.5%	8.4%
Administrative and Waste Services	3.2%	3.5%	3.6%	3.9%	4.0%	4.0%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	2.3%	2.7%	2.4%	1.9%	1.9%	1.7%
Construction	6.9%	6.7%	6.4%	4.8%	4.8%	4.7%
Educational Services	n	n	1.2%	2.7%	2.7%	2.7%
Finance and Insurance	2.3%	1.9%	2.0%	4.5%	4.5%	4.7%
Health Care and Social Assistance	11.1%	11.1%	10.9%	11.8%	11.9%	12.0%
Information	1.3%	1.2%	1.2%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Manufacturing	12.8%	13.2%	13.5%	13.3%	13.1%	12.9%
Professional and Technical	2.4%	2.4%	2.6%	4.1%	4.2%	4.3%
Real Estate and Leasing	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%
Retail	19.9%	19.6%	19.1%	15.9%	15.8%	15.7%
Transportation and Warehousing	2.2%	1.8%	1.9%	2.1%	2.0%	2.1%
Wholesale Trade	1.7%	2.3%	2.3%	4.4%	4.5%	4.4%

Source: NH New Hampshire Employment Security, Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau