

Chapter IV **POPULATION**

"As we look for ways to guide our community into the future, it is important to understand and identify what has attracted so many people to this community. This chapter reviews characteristics of population trends of the Town from an historical basis that reflects on the values of previous generations. Also, as Loudon continues to grow, it will be important to maintain these values as the Town's population increases. A community is the product of all its people, and its people are the product of their community."

- Loudon 2001 Population Subcommittee

INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the various facets and segments of the population of Loudon, including migration patterns, historical trends, demographics, gender, and race distributions as well as projections for future growth. The information in this chapter is presented so that it may be compared with other municipalities in the Central New Hampshire Region, Merrimack County, and the State. Information presented in this chapter has been derived from the Office of State Planning, United States Bureau of Census, the New Hampshire Bureau of Vital Statistics, and the New Hampshire Bureau of Employment Security.

With an actual population of 4,114 individuals in 1990 and an estimated population of 4,635 in 1999, Loudon experienced a 12.7% increase. The average annual population increase during this time period was approximately 1.4%. However, population projections suggest that by 2010, the population will increase an additional 10% to a total of 5,082 residents.

With such daunting figures over recent time spans and their associated implications, the Population Subcommittee thoroughly researched the methodologies used to obtain these figures. As the 2000 US Census data was not yet available for the publication of this Master Plan, decennial Census data was utilized as a baseline which was supplemented by estimates from the NH Office of State Planning for the recent years in between the Census. In addition, the Community Survey results, representing nearly 37% of households and out-of-town property owners in Loudon, yielded interesting numbers for comparison purposes.

The findings in this POPULATION CHAPTER in particular, of all those in the Master Plan, have a profound effect on the rest of the chapters because it becomes the basis upon which all other chapters are written. Population growth creates pressure on Town services and facilities, the building of new homes, and the reduction of open space. Although the Recommendations stated in the end of this chapter are specific only to this chapter, they have a direct influence on each of the remaining chapters of the 2001 Master Plan.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CHAPTER

- To provide the most accurate population numbers which will influence how the Town responds to the continuing residential growth;
- To analyze the risks and benefits of the current growth rate to assist the other Chapters of this Master Plan; and
- To examine the locations of potential future residential and commercial growth and to predict their effects on the community.

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

In the spring of 2000, a community survey was mailed out to all of the households in Loudon. The 784 responding household constituted a response rate of 36.8% for the entire town. In the tables below are the survey questions and answers pertaining to population.

Table IV-1

Number of individuals in household:

People in Household	Total	Percentage	Average Number/Household	
1	86	11.0%	86	
2	280	35.7%	560	
3	113	14.4%	339	
4	125	15.9%	500	
5	51	6.5%	255	
6	15	1.9%	90	
7	6	0.8%	42	
9	1	0.1%	9	
Other town or state	94	12.0%	1881	
No answer	13	1.7%		
Grand Total	784	100.0%	Average Persons/Household	2.778

According to the survey responses, the average number of persons per household in 2000 was 2.78; the 1990 census figure is 2.99 and the 1980 figure was 3.06. The number of persons in a household has decreased over the past twenty years although the population has risen. This concept is more fully explored in CHAPTER VI, HOUSING.

Table IV-2

Are you a resident of:

Residency	Total	Percentage
Loudon	689	87.9%
Other town	46	5.9%
Other state	23	2.9%
No answer	26	3.3%
Grand Total	784	100.0%

Table IV-3

Do you reside in Loudon-

Year-round or seasonally	Total	Percentage
Year-round	668	85.2%
Seasonally	22	2.8%
No answer	94	12.0%
Grand Total	784	100.0%

The majority of the respondents to the community survey reside in Loudon year-round. Respondents who claimed other residency typically were owners of property in Loudon, some of whom resided in Loudon seasonally.

Table IV-4

How long have you lived in Loudon?

Years lived in Loudon	Total	Percentage
Less than 5	162	20.7%
5 to 10	115	14.7%
10 to 20	203	25.9%
More than 20	219	27.9%
No answer	85	10.8%
Grand Total	784	100.0%

Table IV-5

What type of housing do you live in?

Housing Type	Total	Percentage
Single Family Home	566	72.2%
Two Family Home	16	2.0%
Multifamily Home / Apartment	8	1.0%
Manufactured / Mobile Home	92	11.7%
Other	1	0.1%
(blank)	101	12.9%
Grand Total	784	100.0%

These figures show that although the majority of respondents have lived in Loudon at least ten years, at least 1/5 of the population has lived here less than five years. This is indicative of a growing population trend: people are moving to Loudon from other locales.

Table IV-6

Are you a

Own or rent home	Total	Percentage
Homeowner	650	82.9%
Renter	26	3.3%
Other	6	0.8%
No answer	102	13.0%
Grand Total	784	100.0%

Table IV-7

Please indicate the number of adults for each age group in your household:

Number of Adults in Household	Total	Percentage
Adults 18-39	303	34.1%
Adults 40-64	451	50.7%
Adults 65 and over	135	15.2%
Total Responses	889	100.0%

Table IV-6 shows that the majority of respondents are homeowners; very few respondents indicated that they are renters. Table IV-7 shows that the majority of the adults represented by the survey responses are under 65, and nearly half of the adults represented by the responses are ages 40-64.

Table IV-8

Please indicate the number of children for each age group in your household:

Number of Children in Household	Total	Percentage
Children under 5	91	25.3%
Children 5-12	158	43.9%
Children 13-17	111	30.8%
Total Responses	360	100.0%

Table IV-9

Number of Registered Loudon Voters in your household:

Registered Voters in Household	Total	Percentage
0	41	5.2%
1	116	14.8%
2	335	42.7%
3	43	5.5%
4	11	1.4%
5	1	0.1%
No answer	237	30.2%
Grand Total	784	100.0%

Table IV-8 shows that the majority of children represented by the community survey responses are school-aged. Furthermore, the table shows that just over a quarter of the children represented by the survey responses are pre-school aged, which is correspondent with the 34.1% of adults ages 18-39 (as shown in Table IV-7) who, among the age groups, are most likely to have young children.

Table IV-9 shows that more than 40 percent of the Loudon households responding to the survey have two registered voters and nearly 15 percent of responding households have at least one registered voter.

Table IV-10

Please indicate the type of employment
for each adult in your household:

Type of Employment	Total	Percentage
Agriculture/Forestry	23	2.2%
Health	90	8.5%
Professional	151	14.2%
Building Trades	95	9.0%
Manufacturing	82	7.7%
Retail	86	8.1%
Business Services	93	8.8%
Education	48	4.5%
Finance	19	1.8%
Government	103	9.7%
Homemaker	37	3.5%
Retired	98	9.2%
Student	31	2.9%
Unemployed	9	0.8%
Other	96	9.0%
Total Responses	1061	100.0%

Table IV-11

Please indicate the highest level of education
for each adult in your household:

Level of Education	Total	Percentage
Some high school or less	72	7.0%
High School Grad/GED	329	32.0%
Technical or Junior College	125	12.2%
Some College	215	20.9%
College Graduate	215	20.9%
Post Graduate	72	7.0%
Total Responses	1028	100.0%

Table IV-10 indicates the employment profile of the households that returned a Community Survey. In addition, they could also be a measure of the trend toward heavier emphasis of technologically-based jobs of the year 2000, because the demographic profile indicated during the Community Survey differs in many ways from the employment profile compiled during the 1990 US Census. This is explained more detail in CHAPTER V, ECONOMICS. Table IV-11 indicates that of the adults represented in the community survey responses, very few (seven percent) had less than a high school education, while almost a third had a high school education, and the remaining 61 percent had some college education, including almost 28 percent with a bachelor's degree or greater.

POPULATION TRENDS

An analysis of the actual population numbers from Loudon from past to present will show trends of growth and decline. The trends are indicative of recent economic booms or recessions, or in the early years of Loudon, of industrialization, war, and disease. By looking at historical and current data, predictions can be made for future population counts.

Historical Trends

Table IV-12 shows population growth in Loudon, Merrimack County, and the State of New Hampshire since 1773.

Table IV-12
Historical Population Trends 1773-1999

Year	Town of Loudon		Merrimack County		State of New Hampshire	
	population	% change	population	% change	population	% change
1773	204		6715		67500	
1790	1084	431	17972	168	141885	110
1800	1279	18	24498	36	183858	30
1810	1472	15	29032	19	214460	17
1820	1694	15	34281	18	244161	14
1830	1642	-3	36490	6	269328	10
1840	1640	0	38052	4	284574	6
1850	1552	-5	42225	11	317976	12
1860	1638	6	43273	2	326073	3
1870	1282	-22	42947	-1	318300	-2
1880	1221	-5	46300	8	346991	9
1890	1000	-18	49435	7	376530	9
1900	960	-4	52430	6	411588	9
1910	838	-13	53335	2	430572	5
1920	690	-18	51770	-3	443083	3
1930	801	16	56152	8	465293	5
1940	920	15	60710	8	491524	6
1950	1012	10	63022	4	533242	8
1960	1194	18	67785	8	606921	14
1970	1707	43	80925	19	737578	22
1980	2454	44	98302	21	920475	25
1990	4114	68	120240	22	1109117	20
1999*	4635	11	130082	8	1201000	8

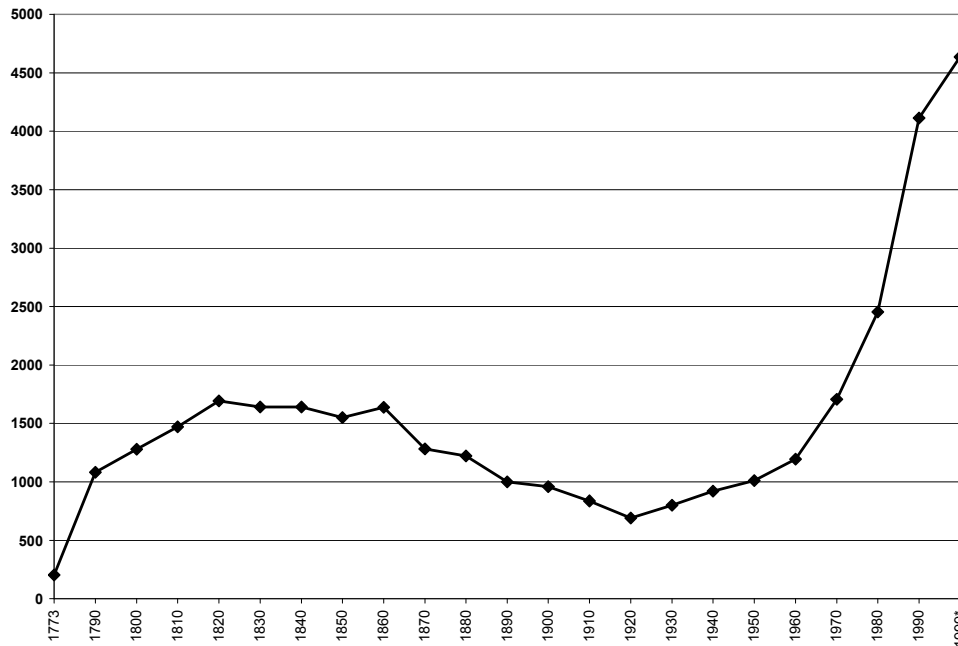
Sources: Historical US Census Data and Population Counts from Historical Record, NH Office of State Planning

*from 1999 Estimated Population of NH Cities and Towns, NH Office of State Planning

Since the 1930's, Loudon's population has steadily increased at a higher rate than both Merrimack County and New Hampshire. This marked growth is most recognizable in 1990, when the Census results showed that Loudon experienced a 68 percent increase in population during the 1980s while Merrimack County increased only 22 percent and the State 20 percent. In addition, during the 1990s, the County and State each showed eight percent growth, while Loudon's population grew 11 percent. Populations increased quickly throughout the 1980s, and extremely so in Loudon. While population growth slowed down during the 1990s, Loudon still shows growth rates larger than those of the State and County.

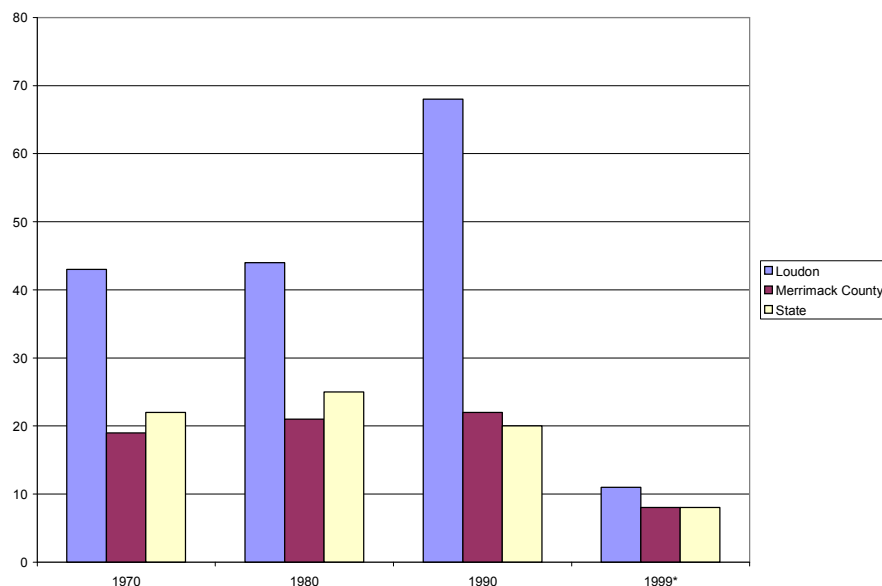
Figure IV-1 illustrates the population trends in Loudon beginning at its settlement in 1773 through present day:

Figure IV-1
Loudon Historical Population Trends 1773-1999



From 1773 to 1790, Loudon experienced tremendous growth. However, the growth stagnated and the population decreased during the years 1790 to 1950. In the past five decades, Loudon has experienced rapid growth, nearly doubling the population from 1980 to 1999. This growth has put increasing pressure on Town resources and services, as will continued growth at such a rapid rate.

Figure IV-2
Percentage of Growth, 1970 to 1999



A close-up look of 1970 to 1999 shows a more recent view of population trends in Figure IV-2. In 1970, 1980, and 1990, Loudon's population grew proportionately faster than either Merrimack County or the State of New Hampshire. In 1990 alone, Loudon grew almost three times as fast as either the County or the State.

Table IV-13 below illustrates the relative shares of population in Loudon, as part of Merrimack County and the State of New Hampshire, as well as the relative share of the population of Merrimack County as part of the State of New Hampshire, from 1773 until 1999.

Table IV-13
Relative Shares of Population, 1773-1999

	Loudon	Loudon	Loudon	County
Year	Population	as % of County	as % of State	as % of State
1773	204	3.0	0.3	9.9
1790	1084	6.0	0.8	12.7
1800	1279	5.2	0.7	13.3
1810	1472	5.1	0.7	13.5
1820	1694	4.9	0.7	14.0
1830	1642	4.5	0.6	13.5
1840	1640	4.3	0.6	13.4
1850	1552	3.7	0.5	13.3
1860	1638	3.8	0.5	13.3
1870	1282	3.0	0.4	13.5
1880	1221	2.6	0.4	13.3
1890	1000	2.0	0.3	13.1
1900	960	1.8	0.2	12.7
1910	838	1.6	0.2	12.4
1920	690	1.3	0.2	11.7
1930	801	1.4	0.2	12.1
1940	920	1.5	0.2	12.4
1950	1012	1.6	0.2	11.8
1960	1194	1.8	0.2	11.2
1970	1707	2.1	0.2	11.0
1980	2469	2.5	0.3	10.7
1990	4114	3.4	0.4	10.8
1999*	4635	3.6	0.4	10.8

Source: Historical US Census Data and Population Counts from Historical Record, NH Office of State Planning
*from 1999 Estimated Population of NH Cities and Towns, NH Office of State Planning

Loudon's population as a share of the County's population grew fairly regularly during most of the 20th century. However, during the 1980s, Loudon's population grew and in 1990, Loudon's share of the County's population grew nearly one percent. During the 1990s, Loudon's population grew to make up slightly more of the County's population in 1999, showing that other municipalities in the County have grown at a similar, but slightly slower rate. During most of the 20th century, Loudon's population constituted the same percentage of the State's population. However, this began to change during the 1970s, when Loudon's percentage of the State population grew 0.1 percent, and then another 0.1 percent during the 1980s. During the 1990s, the population growth rate in Loudon slowed down, as well as in other growing towns, and Loudon's share of the State's population remained constant.

Over the last twenty-nine years, Loudon's population has grown by 172% while the number of housing units has increased by 210% as illustrated in Table IV-14.

Table IV-14
Growth Trends, 1970-1999

GROWTH	Population	Net Change		Housing Units	Net Change	
		#	%		#	%
1970 (US Census)	1707	N/A	N/A	568	N/A	N/A
1980 (US Census)	2454	+747	+ 43.8	880	+312	+ 54.9
1990 (US Census)	4114	+1660	+ 67.6	1476	+596	+ 67.7
1999 Population & 1999 Housing (NHOSP)	4635	+521	+ 12.7	1762	+286	+ 16.2
TOTAL CHANGE FROM 1970 - 1999		+2928	+ 171.5%		+1194	+ 210.2%

Sources: US Census, 1970, 1980, 1990; NH Office of State Planning Population Estimates 1999;
NH Office of State Planning Household Estimates 1999

The extreme growth Loudon has seen over the past three decades has some unintended consequences. Larger populations create a greater demand for Town services and resources, meaning that unanticipated growth can render some services inadequate and ineffective. In addition, fewer people could be living in any given household in Loudon because the Net Change of Households grew more quickly than the population increased. In order to mitigate potential impacts, it is important that measures to manage growth and encourage socialization are enacted.

Current Trends

Table IV-15 shows current population trends in Loudon and the communities that border it. All areas have experienced growth in the last decade.

Table IV-15
Current Population Trends, 1990-1999
Loudon and Abutting Communities

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Canterbury	1687	1708	1700	1717	1730	1748	1771	1800	1800	1847
Chichester	1942	1955	1972	1992	2010	2021	2046	2072	2115	2159
Concord	36006	36059	36364	36762	37010	37290	37850	37925	38180	38318
Gilmanton	2609	2628	2630	2640	2676	2696	2703	2740	2748	2774
Loudon	4114	4239	4246	4300	4340	4358	4437	4504	4553	4635
Pembroke	6561	6533	6542	6600	6619	6636	6688	6724	6733	6777
Pittsfield	3701	3712	3752	3812	3834	3856	3916	3930	3961	3996
Merrimack County	120240	120473	121013	122018	123130	124165	125927	127292	128223	130082

Source: NH Office of State Planning 1991-1999 Population Estimates of NH Cities and Towns
*1990 US Census STF1A (P1)

Excluding the City of Concord and Merrimack County, Loudon has seen the largest population increase in sheer numbers during the last decade.

On a percentage basis, Loudon has seen the largest population growth between 1990 and 1999 of its abutting municipalities and the County, as evidenced in Table IV-6.

Table IV-16
Population Increase, 1990-1999
Loudon and Abutting Communities

	% Increase, 1990-99
Canterbury	9.5%
Chichester	11.2%
Concord	6.4%
Gilmanton	6.3%
Loudon	12.7%
Pembroke	3.3%
Pittsfield	8.0%
Merrimack County	8.2%

During the 1990s, Loudon grew faster than its abutting communities. In proportion to its size, it appears that Loudon has been more attractive to new residents. Loudon has a lower tax rate than its abutting communities, explained in CHAPTER V, ECONOMICS, and Loudon has numerous recreational opportunities and amenities within town. In addition, Loudon is geographically close to Concord and the Lakes Region, via Route 106, for employment opportunities. Moreover, some of the population boom could be attributed to the fact that Loudon has a relatively young population who, during the 1990s, would have been starting families. This is discussed in more detail later in this Chapter, and is demonstrated in Tables IV-18 and IV-22.

Table IV-17 shows the population density in the Town of Loudon and its neighboring towns from 1960-1998.

Table IV-17
Population Density in Loudon and Abutting Communities, 1960-1998

Community	1990 Population	Area in Square Miles	Persons per square mile				
			1960	1970	1980	1990	1999*
Canterbury	1687	44.4	15.2	20.2	31.8	38.0	42.0
Chichester	1942	21.2	38.7	51.1	70.4	91.6	101.9
Concord	36006	64.1	452.3	468.4	474.3	561.7	599.1
Gilmanton	2609	57.6	12.7	17.5	33.7	45.3	48.2
Loudon	4114	46.0	26.0	37.1	53.3	89.4	100.7
Pembroke	6561	22.5	156.2	189.4	216.0	291.6	299.4
Pittsfield	3701	24.3	99.5	103.6	118.9	152.3	165.6

Source: 1960-1990 US Census STF1A (P1)

*NH Office of State Planning 1999 Population Estimates of NH Cities and Towns

Despite its large population growth from 1990 to 1999, the density of persons residing in Loudon has increased proportionally to the increases in abutting towns. Compared to Canterbury, which has a similar *Area in Square Miles* but has less than half of the population, the *Persons Per Square Mile* in Loudon grew around 13% from 1990-1999 while Canterbury's density grew 11%.

Population grows and declines with births, deaths, and migrations into and out of an area. Table IV-18 below lists the births and deaths experienced in Loudon during the years of 1960-1999. The growth not attributed to the natural increase (number of births minus number of deaths) can be attributed to growth from migrations, or people moving into Loudon.

Table IV-18
Births and Deaths
1960-1999

Year	Births	Deaths	Natural Increase	Year	Births	Deaths	Natural Increase	Year	Births	Deaths	Natural Increase
1960	35	16	19	1974	33	25	8	1987	48	18	30
1961	31	27	4	1975	38	26	12	1988	47	15	32
1962	32	12	20	1976	35	18	17	1989	65	16	49
1963	30	17	13	1977	29	13	14	1990	58	15	43
1964	29	14	15	1978	29	11	18	1991	75	20	55
1965	20	18	2	1979	29	24	5	1992	36	13	23
1966	30	15	15	1980	38	20	18	1993	48	22	26
1967	28	14	14	1981	46	14	32	1994	50	18	32
1968	36	12	24	1982	41	10	31	1995	39	17	22
1969	24	12	12	1983	45	9	36	1996	46	20	26
1970	36	18	18	1984	40	15	25	1997	37	26	11
1971	40	26	14	1985	61	13	48	1998	44	24	20
1972	30	16	14	1986	52	15	37	1999	52	15	37
1973	31	23	8								

Source: Loudon Town Reports, 1960-1999

Population Projections

In Table IV-19, projected future population growth was calculated based upon the community's historical share of the County's population. It shows the projected population for Loudon and abutting communities.

Table IV-19
Population Projections, 2000-2020

Loudon and Abutting Communities					
Towns	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Canterbury	1826	1915	1967	2058	2158
Chichester	2116	2234	2302	2425	2326
Concord	39095	41095	42330	44193	46382
Gilmanton	2819	2963	3048	3233	3386
Loudon	4601	4900	5082	5420	5795
Pembroke	6903	7250	7450	7801	8187
Pittsfield	4037	4231	4342	4537	4752

Source: NH Office of State Planning Municipal Population Projections 2000-2020

As shown in Table IV-20, Loudon's population is expected to grow 10 percent between 2000 and 2010, and then another 14 percent between 2010 and 2020. The overall increase between 1990 and 2020 is predicted to be 29 percent.

Table IV-20

Population Growth and Projections, 1960-2020

	Town of Loudon		Merrimack County		State of New Hampshire	
Year	population	% increase	population	% increase	population	% increase
1960	1194	--	67785	--	606921	--
1970	1707	43	80925	19	737681	22
1980	2454	44	98302	21	920610	25
1990	4114	68	120005	22	1109117	20
2000	4601	12	130476	9	1228794	11
2010	5082	10	141326	8	1358750	11
2020	5795	14	156115	10	1527873	12

Source: 1960-1990 US Census STF1A (P1) and
NH Office of State Planning Municipal Population Projections 2000-2020

Loudon is anticipated to grow proportionately faster than Merrimack County and the State by both 2010 and 2020. Despite this anticipation, Loudon is expected to grow far more slowly in the future than the growth boom between 1970 and 1990.

Table IV-21 shows the projected population density in the Town of Loudon and its neighboring towns from 1999-2020.

Table IV-21

Projected Population Density, 1999-2020
Loudon and Abutting Communities

	Persons per Square Mile					
	Projected					
	1999	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Towns						
Canterbury	42.0	41.1	43.1	44.3	46.4	48.6
Chichester	101.9	99.8	105.4	108.6	114.4	116.8
Concord	599.1	609.9	641.1	658.7	689.4	723.6
Gilmanton	48.2	48.9	51.4	52.9	56.1	58.8
Loudon	100.7	100.0	106.5	110.5	117.8	126.0
Pembroke	299.4	306.8	322.2	331.1	346.7	363.9
Pittsfield	165.6	166.13	174.1	178.7	186.7	195.6

Source: NH Office of State Planning 1999 Population Estimates for NH Cities and Towns and
Municipal Population Projections 2000-2020

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Knowing not only the numbers of people living in Loudon but also the characteristics of our residents is the key to adequately planning for Loudon's future needs. These needs will include recreational opportunities, Town services, education, and support services.

Population by Age

The age of a population group is important in determining if sufficient means for daycare, schooling, housing, employment, and senior services exist within a community. Although the Census 2000 statistics are not yet available, it is anticipated that an aging population is found in Loudon. Recent new home development will also bring school-aged children to the Town, further pressuring existing facilities.

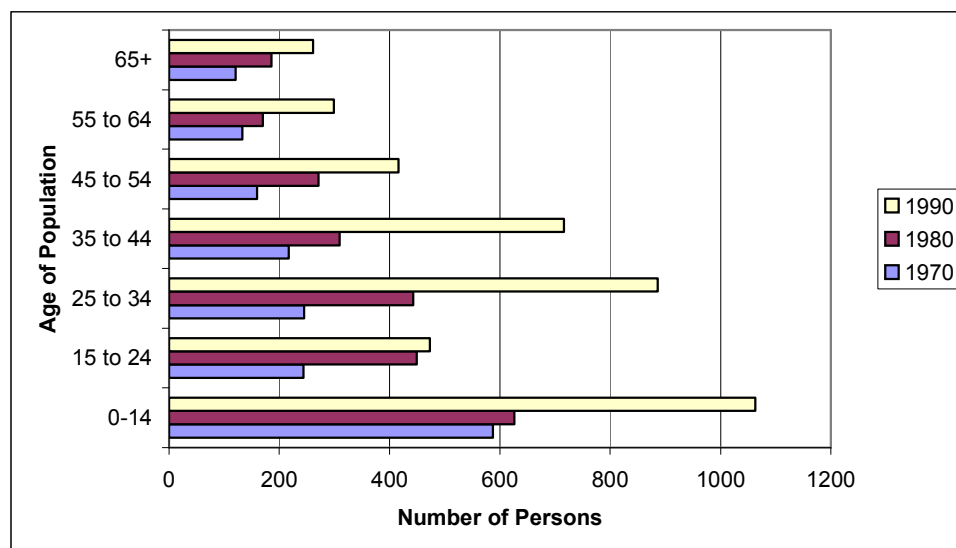
Table IV-22
Loudon Population by Age

Age Group	Number of Persons by Age		
	1970	1980	1990
0 to 4	185	193	377
5 to 14	402	433	686
15 to 24	244	449	473
25 to 34	245	443	886
35 to 44	217	309	716
45 to 54	160	271	416
55 to 64	133	170	299
65 to 74	72	121	160
75+	49	65	101
Total	1707	2454	4114

Source: 1970-90 US Census STF1A (P11 and P12)

Based on Table IV-22, Figure IV-3 indicates the population trends of different age groups between 1970 and 1990:

Figure IV-3
Loudon Population Trends by Age Group, 1970-1990



A clear growth pattern has emerged from Figure IV-3, particularly between 1980 and 1990. Children under the age of 14, as well as adults between the ages of 35 and 44, grew simultaneously, indicating that many young families moved to Loudon in the 1980's. As residents grew older during that decade, they tended to remain within Town as evidenced by the growth of the senior population. As the 1999 populations of residents in Loudon have also grown, it is anticipated that when the 2000 Census data becomes available, other distinct leaps may become evident. Although the Town is projected as of this writing to have grown only 12.7% since the last Census in 1990, as indicated by Table IV-16, knowing which age groups have grown the most will have a direct effect on the school and other community services provided by the Town.

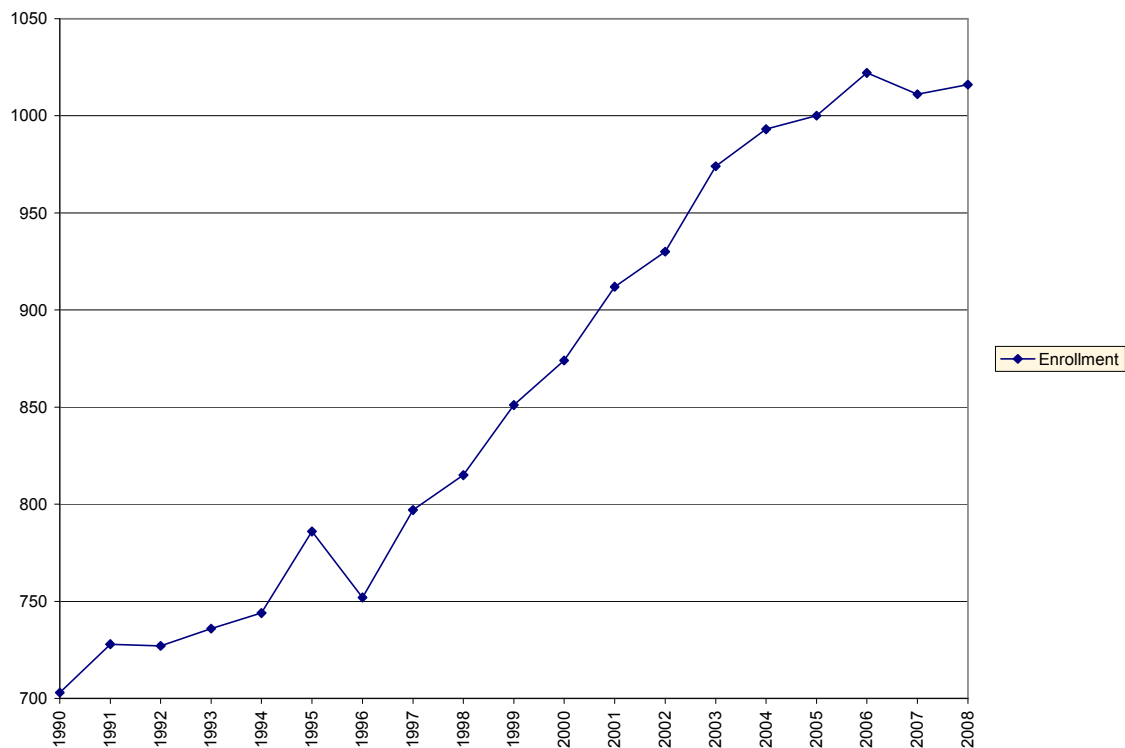
Table IV-23 below lists actual and projected school enrollments for the Town of Loudon from 1990 to 2008.

Table IV-23
Current and Projected School Enrollment K-12, 1990-2008

Year	Population	Growth %	Enrollment	Growth %	Pop/Pupil %
1990	4114	1.47%	703	--	17.09%
1991	4175	1.47%	728	3.43%	17.44%
1992	4238	1.47%	727	-0.14%	17.16%
1993	4301	1.47%	736	1.22%	17.11%
1994	4365	1.47%	744	1.08%	17.05%
1995	4430	1.47%	786	5.34%	17.74%
1996	4437	0.16%	752	-4.52%	16.95%
1997	4504	1.49%	797	5.65%	17.70%
1998	4542	0.84%	815	2.21%	17.94%
1999	4585	0.94%	851	4.23%	18.56%
Growth	471	11.46%	148	21.05%	31.05%
Projected					
2000	4601	0.34%	874	2.68%	19.00%
2001	4654	1.14%	912	4.12%	19.60%
2002	4707	1.14%	930	1.94%	19.76%
2003	4762	1.14%	974	4.52%	20.46%
2004	4816	1.14%	993	1.91%	20.62%
2005	4900	1.71%	1000	0.70%	20.41%
2006	4956	1.14%	1022	2.15%	20.62%
2007	5013	1.14%	1011	-1.09%	20.17%
2008	5071	1.14%	1016	0.49%	20.04%
Growth	486	10.55%	165	19.39%	33.98%

Source: T.R.A.C.E Report—Town of Loudon Alternative School Study

Figure IV-4
Loudon School Enrollment, 1990-2008



Loudon is part of the Merrimack Valley School District. Currently, Loudon students comprise more than 30% of the students enrolled at Merrimack Valley Middle School and High School. Projected school enrollments predict more than 1,000 students in 2008, increasing current enrollment by nearly 20 percent. Of the 1,016 students projected for 2008, 438 will be in grades K-5 and the other 578 will be in grades 6-12. This topic is further discussed in CHAPTER VIII, COMMUNITY FACILITIES.

Household Size

The number of persons per household is indicative of sprawl patterns, social constructs, and economic circumstances. The trend since 1970 seems to indicate that the number of persons per household in Loudon is decreasing.

Table IV-24
Average Household Size

	1970	1980	1990	1998	2000
Average persons per household	3.01	2.98	2.99	2.93	2.78

*Source: 1970, 1980 and 1990 figures from US Census data.
1998 figure from 1998 Household Estimates, NH Office of State Planning
2000 figure from March 2000 Community Survey responses*

Although a thirty-year timespan is merely one generation, this decreasing number of individuals in Loudon households may be indicative of a general trend toward smaller and younger families.

Educational Attainment

Table IV-25 shows the educational attainment of Loudon residents and the residents of the communities that abut Loudon, as well as the entire county.

Table IV-25
Educational Attainment, 1990

	Population	Responses		less than 9th grade		9th-12th grade (no diploma)		H.S. diploma or GED	
		number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Canterbury	1687	1231	73.0%	29	2.4%	109	8.9%	349	28.4%
Chichester	1942	1381	71.1%	60	4.3%	132	9.6%	557	40.3%
Concord	36006	27657	76.8%	1285	4.6%	3236	11.7%	8956	32.4%
Gilmanton	2609	N/A	N/A	103	5.4%	241	12.6%	758	39.6%
Loudon	4114	2996	72.8%	175	5.8%	441	14.7%	1158	38.7%
Pembroke	6561	4708	71.8%	381	8.1%	455	9.7%	1479	31.4%
Pittsfield	3701	2574	69.5%	164	6.0%	551	21.4%	1128	43.8%
Merrimack County	120005	89589	74.7%	4980	5.6%	10883	12.1%	29077	32.5%

	Some College (no degree)		Associate's Degree		Bachelor's Degree		Graduate Degree	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Canterbury	214	17.4%	106	8.6%	235	19.1%	189	15.4%
Chichester	262	19.0%	89	6.4%	199	14.4%	72	5.2%
Concord	5416	19.6%	2003	7.2%	4442	16.1%	2877	10.4%
Gilmanton	282	14.7%	141	7.4%	259	13.5%	131	6.8%
Loudon	579	19.3%	255	8.5%	260	8.7%	96	3.2%
Pembroke	915	19.4%	448	9.5%	826	17.5%	254	5.4%
Pittsfield	364	14.1%	97	3.8%	215	8.4%	55	2.1%
Merrimack County	17137	19.1%	7006	7.8%	13807	15.4%	6879	7.7%

Source: 1990 Census STF3A (P60)

According to the results of the 1990 Census, 81.2 percent of Loudon residents 25 years old and over had a high school education or higher, and 11.9 percent had a Bachelor's Degree or higher. As indicated in the Community Survey responses, 93.0 percent of Loudon's adults represented in the survey responses had at least a high school education. Nearly 28 percent of the adults represented in the survey reported to hold a Bachelor's Degree or higher. The greater educational attainment indicated in the survey could be a product of the increasing emphasis on education in the contemporary society and the labor market, or it could be indicative of the demographic profile of the survey respondents. Moreover, the statistics are only roughly comparable, since the Census indicated the educational attainment of adults over 25 years of age, while the community survey inquired about the educational attainment of all adults (over 18) in the household.

SUMMARY

The efforts of this Chapter have exposed many areas of concern for our Town to consider in the immediate future. Loudon has the fastest growing population in Merrimack County. One-quarter of our population is under the age of 12, and the elderly resident population is steadily increasing. Baby-boomers are middle-aged and are approaching advanced age. A strong sense of community and belonging will be essential to maintain the rural and neighborly atmosphere that many residents now enjoy.

After examining and analyzing the population statistics and comparisons to other municipalities, four particular areas of concern within Loudon became apparent:

- 1) The need to plan for a rising population of retired residents who are choosing to stay in Loudon in lieu of relocating;
- 2) The need for a solid plan for commercial development, requiring uncompromising commitment backed by tough decisions from our townspeople and local boards, to establish controlled growth in areas of the Town which can be more community friendly;
- 3) The need to closely examine the future capacity of our school system; and
- 4) The need to examine community services in order to manage the projected growth.

The Population Chapter sets the stage for the remaining Chapters of the Master Plan. Growth is inevitable and proper planning is essential to maintain the quality community services the Town provides. Without a skilled workforce, good local jobs, and a sense of community, Loudon will be unable to produce the essential quality of life, within the next few years, that initially attracted residents here. We should all applaud ourselves for the many selfless contributions we as residents have made so this Town should be attractive to so many. We should also take care as we move forward through the years to preserve all the characteristics that keep us here today.

RECOMMENDATIONS**Objective**

To provide the most accurate population numbers which will influence how the Town responds to the continuing residential growth.

- ◆ Form a Committee to monitor the population growth of the Town to do the following:
 - ◆ Incorporate the 2000 Census data into this Chapter.
 - ◆ Compare the population data with the data found in other Chapters and provide recommendations to the Planning Board on how to retain rural character, encourage socialization, and retain a sense of community.
- ◆ Review with Town Officials the increased need for services to prepare for the effect of population projections on the police, fire, and highway departments.

Objective

To analyze the risks and benefits of the current growth rate to assist the other Chapters of this Master Plan.

- ◆ Evaluate the costs and facilities required to properly educate the children of Loudon, with the goals of producing better-educated Loudon residents who will choose to live and work in Town and of having more control over the school system.
- ◆ Encourage the economic development required to sustain a growing, increasingly educated population.
- ◆ Encourage the evaluation of community facilities and services to serve the growing the population.
- ◆ Encourage the development of senior housing within the Village District.
- ◆ Encourage the development of commercial property to increase our tax base and provide good-paying local jobs.

Objective

To examine the locations of potential future residential and commercial growth and to predict their effects on the community.

- ◆ Direct future population growth to selected areas of Loudon capable of sustaining the population increase.
- ◆ Direct future population density, through regulatory means, to deter sprawl.
- ◆ Continue to examine the needs of our school system, the first step of which may be the purchase of a quality piece of land for the future.
- ◆ Examine the need for recreational facilities, a Community Center, and socialization opportunities for our increasing population.