

CHAPTER III

POPULATION AND ECONOMICS

INTRODUCTION

When updating a master plan it is important to have a thorough understanding of the demographics and economic strengths and weaknesses of a town. Understanding population trends and other demographics can help a community plan for future needs of the population. Understanding what drives a community's economy can help the town make decisions about development that further community goals. While growth is a challenge for small towns, Bradford is fortunate to be a desirable, well educated, and generally wealthy community. In the following chapter the demographics and economic forces in Bradford will be described in order to provide a base of knowledge to guide Bradford in the future.

Bradford, like many other towns in the region, has experienced rapid growth. Between 1970 and 1990, Bradford's population swelled from 679 to 1,405 people. Between 1990 and 2000, the rate of growth slowed dramatically to 3.5%, which was the lowest of all the surrounding towns. However, state projections indicate that a continued steady rise in population is likely.

Bradford was once a self sufficient town, but it has become, over time, primarily a residential community. Most Bradford residents commute to other towns such as Concord and New London for work and services. Unemployment in Bradford is relatively low, 3.2%, and household income is high. Almost fifty percent, 49.1%, of households in Bradford had an income of \$50,000 or more in 1999 according to the US Census. The US Census also indicates that just under 25% of people 16 years or older in Bradford were not in the workforce in 2000. This most likely means that Bradford is becoming an appealing place to retire. This assertion is supported by the fact that the age group that increased the most between 1990 and 2000 was people between 45 and 54 years of age. In 2000, people between 45 and 64 made up 18% of the population of Bradford, as did people under 19.

Overall, Bradford's residents are well educated and have higher level jobs. Ninety-two percent (92.4%) of Bradford residents have a high school degree or higher, and thirty-two percent (32.3%) have a Bachelor's degree or higher. Thirty-one percent (31.5%) are employed in managerial, professional, or related occupations. However, as mentioned, there are relatively few jobs in Bradford. On average in 2003, there were 327 jobs in Bradford paying a weekly average wage of \$488. When compared to seven surrounding communities, Bradford has the third lowest weekly wage and the second lowest number of jobs.

At the Community Visioning Session held in May 2004, many people expressed an interest in keeping Bradford a rural, residential community over promoting commercial development and jobs. In the February 2004 Community Survey, respondents indicated an interest in having home based, agricultural related businesses, and small shops and restaurants rather than industrial development.

In the following pages, more information about Bradford's demographics and economic indicators is provided. In addition, objectives and recommendations for influencing Bradford's future demographic and economic changes are outlined.

OBJECTIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**1. To use a scientific approach to identify future growth areas**

- a. Document best locations for future growth areas based on development characteristics such as slopes, soils, wetlands, watersheds, view sheds, transportation, town services and other considerations.
- b. Future residential and retail services should be planned in consolidated locations in town (a new village).
- c. Specific commercial services permitted should be listed and all others would be allowed by special exception.
- d. Locate future roadway networks or upgrade existing ones to serve new growth area in a plan created by the Town.
- e. Integrate small (convenience) services into residential planning.
- f. Develop architectural design guidelines for commercial development outside of the Main Street area.
- g. Continue to investigate alternative solutions to the water and sewer problems in the Main Street area.

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

In February 2004, a community survey was distributed to all postal patrons, households and out of town property owners in Bradford. The Community Survey was designed by a subcommittee of the Planning Board to facilitate a better understanding of the desires and feelings of the residents of Bradford. The survey was also designed to gain demographic information from those who completed it. The following are survey questions and responses specific to population characteristics or economics in Bradford.

Table III-1 shows the responses to a question concerning how long the survey respondent has lived in Bradford. The largest number of respondents have lived in Bradford for 1-5 years (24.7%), followed closely by the number of people who have lived in town for 11-20 years (23.2%). This indicates that many people who answered the survey have been residents for quite a while, but there are also many new residents who responded.

Table III-1
How long have you lived in Bradford?

Years	Total	Percent
1-5 years	65	24.7%
11-20 years	61	23.2%
Over 30 years	52	19.8%
21-30 years	41	15.6%
6-10 years	30	11.4%
Less than 1 year	14	5.3%
Grand Total	263	100.0%

Bradford has a mix of year round residents and people who own second homes in the town. It is important to understand how many people are full time residents, how many are part-time (for example, they come to Bradford every weekend), and how many are seasonal residents. Having a sense of this breakdown can provide a background understanding of someone's responses to other questions, and it can aid in planning for future needs. For example, people who are seasonal residents may perceive a need for different public services or different community goals than year round residents. As shown in Table III-2, 81% of the survey respondents are year round residents of Bradford.

Table III-2
Which describes your residency in Bradford?

	Total	Percent
Year round	218	81.0%
Seasonal	33	12.3%
Part-time	18	6.7%
Grand Total	269	100.0%

When gauging the state of the economy of a town, it is helpful to know whether people work full time, part time, or are self employed. These statistics can be correlated to other demographics or economic indicators. For example, a town with a large population of older people may find that more people work part time because they are semi-retired. Or a large number of self employed people or part time employees could be an indication that there are few traditional full time jobs available in town. Of the

households that responded to the survey question about employment characteristics, the majority had at least one person in the house who works full time. Approximately 26% indicated that at least one person in the house is self-employed.

Table III-3

Please write in the following work characteristics for all employed persons in your household.

Employment	Total	Percent
Full time	255	n/a
Part time	75	n/a
Grand Total	330	n/a
Self Employed	88	26.7%

Residents were also asked about the professions in which they worked. As shown in Table III-4, the largest number responded that they are retired. The least common professions were forestry and real estate.

Table III-4

Please indicate the number of people in your household that are employed in the following professions.

Profession	Total	Percent
Retired	63	17.2%
Construction	39	10.7%
Other	39	10.7%
Education	31	8.5%
Health Care	31	8.5%
Retail	23	6.3%
Government	22	6.0%
Computers/High Tech	16	4.4%
Manufacturing	16	4.4%
Non-profit	16	4.4%
Sales	14	3.8%
Arts	12	3.3%
Recreation	10	2.7%
Agriculture	10	2.7%
Tourism/Hospitality	7	1.9%
Finance	6	1.6%
Unemployed	4	1.1%
Real estate	4	1.1%
Forestry	3	0.8%
Grand Total	366	100.0%

With the spread of Internet access and the reduction in other communications costs, the opportunities for residents to have a home based business have increased over the last two decades. As shown below, of the 366 residents who responded, 12.8% have one person in the household with a home business. Approximately 2% of respondents live in households in which two people have home businesses.

Table III-5
How many members of your household have a home business?

Persons	Total	Percent
0	311	85.0%
1	47	12.8%
2	8	2.2%
Grand Total	366	100.0%

Residents were also asked about what kind of services they would like to have in Bradford. As Table III-6 shows, agricultural related businesses, restaurants, and a health/medical office were ranked the highest.

Table III-6
Which of the following enterprises and/or services would you like to see in Bradford?

Type	Total	Percent*
Agricultural related businesses	147	44.5%
Restaurants	139	42.1%
Health / medical office	138	41.8%
Home-based businesses	121	36.7%
Arts and craft galleries	118	35.8%
Tourism related businesses	110	33.3%
Recreational businesses	102	30.9%
Day care center (children/adult)	91	27.6%
Light industry park	90	27.3%
Major grocery store	67	20.3%
Professional office park	65	19.7%
Retail shopping center	49	14.8%
Hotels / motels	39	11.8%
Other (see write-in responses)	32	9.7%
No new businesses	26	7.9%
Heavy industrial park	23	7.0%
Conference center	18	5.5%

*based on total returned surveys

Bradford and the surrounding area have long been a tourist destination. Residents who are business owners were asked to estimate what portion of their business comes from tourism. As shown below, the majority (66.1%) said that none of their business comes from tourism. Another 16.1% estimated that less than 20% of their business comes from tourism. However, it should be pointed out that a business owner may not have a sense of how tourism may impact him/her in a secondary way. For example, a building supply company would not know if someone were buying supplies to build something that serviced tourists. In addition, it should be noted that the survey only went to residents of Bradford, so business owners who do not live in Bradford were not able to comment.

Table III-7

If you are a Bradford business owner, approximately what percentage of your business comes from tourists staying or passing through Bradford?

Tourist Business	Total	Percent
0%	37	66.1%
Less than 20%	9	16.1%
Over 75%	5	8.9%
20 to 50%	3	5.4%
51 to 75%	2	3.6%
Grand Total	56	100.0%

POPULATION

When updating or creating a town master plan, understanding population trends is paramount. A town must have a sense of whether it's growing or not and how its growth relates to regional growth. Moreover, having an understanding of the characteristics of population growth, such as age distribution, can help assess future needs. Other information such as educational attainment and the number of housing units in a town can shed light on recent physical or social changes.

Population Trends

Table III-8 provides a historical and regional context for Bradford's population growth over the last 200 years. Bradford has experienced radical population changes over this period. Between 1800 and 1850, the population almost doubled. This was primarily due to the development of railroads that connected Bradford to the north and south. However, the population later dropped significantly to a low of 606 people in 1950. In the last 30 years the population has grown again, topping the past high of 1,341 people. Between 1970 and 1990, Bradford grew faster than both the County and the State, but between 1990 and 2000 Bradford's growth slowed.

Table III-8
Historical Population Trends 1767-2000

Year	Town of Bradford		Merrimack County		State of New Hampshire	
	Population	% change	Population	% change	Population	% change
1800	740	NA	24,319	NA	183,858	NA
1850	1,341	81.2%	42,225	73.6%	317,976	72.9%
1900	805	-40.0%	52,430	24.2%	411,588	29.4%
1950	606	-24.7%	63,022	20.2%	533,242	29.6%
1970	679	12.0%	80,925	28.4%	737,681	38.3%
1980	1,115	64.2%	98,302	21.5%	920,610	24.8%
1990	1,405	26.0%	120,005	22.1%	1,109,252	20.5%
2000	1,454	3.5%	136,225	13.5%	1,235,786	11.4%

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

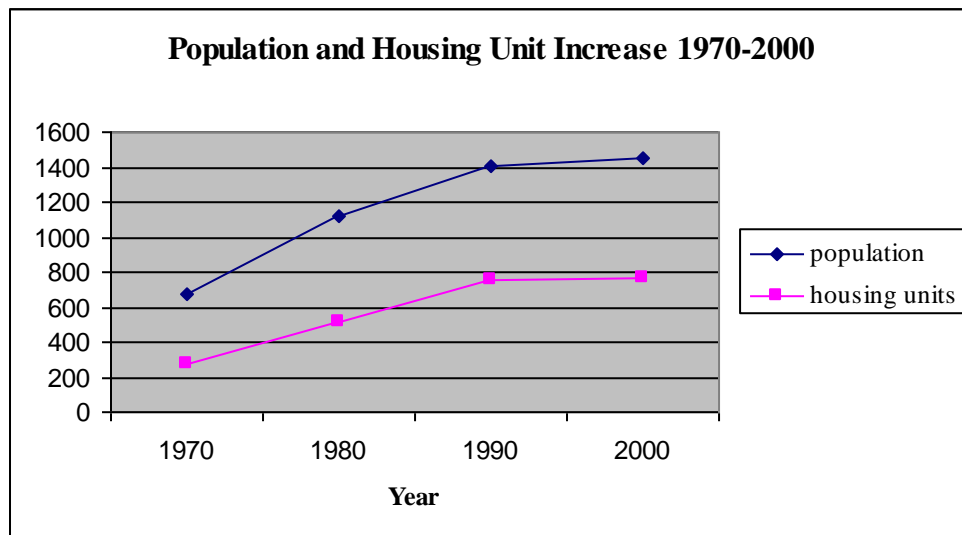
Sometimes population increases at a different rate than the number of housing units. If there is a difference, a housing shortage or surplus may exist. As shown in Table III-9, in Bradford between 1970 and 1900 the number of housing units grew at a greater rate than the population. However, between 1990 and 2000 this trend slowed. Generally speaking, between 1990 and 2000 overall growth in housing kept pace with the growth in population, as show in Figure III-1.

Table III-9
Overall Population and Housing Growth Trends, 1970 - 2000

Growth	Population	Net Change		Housing Units	Net Change	
		#	%		#	%
1970	679	NA	NA	277	NA	NA
1980	1,115	436	64.2%	520	243	87.7%
1990	1,405	290	26.0%	757	237	45.6%
2000	1,454	49	3.5%	762	5	.01%
Total Change 1970 – 2000	---	775	93.7	---	485	133.3%

Sources: 1970 - 2000 US Census

Figure III-1



Current Trends

Today, Bradford is smaller than most of its neighboring towns. Only Washington is smaller. Sutton is very similar in population, but just a bit larger than Bradford. Warner, Henniker, and Hillsborough are all quite a bit bigger. Bradford also experienced a slower growth rate between 1990 and 2000 than the surrounding towns, as shown in Table III-11.

Table III-10
Current Population Trends, 1980-2000
Bradford and Abutting Communities

	1980	1990	2000
Bradford	1,115	1,405	1,454
Henniker	3,246	4,151	4,433
Hillsborough	3,437	4,498	4,928
Newbury	961	1,347	1,702
Sutton	1,091	1,457	1,544
Warner	1,963	2,250	2,760
Washington	411	628	895

Source: 1980, 1990 & 2000 US Census

Table III-11
Population Increase, 1990-2000
Bradford and Abutting Communities

	% Increase, 1990-2000
Bradford	3.5%
Henniker	6.8%
Hillsborough	9.6%
Newbury	26.4%
Sutton	6.0%
Warner	22.7%
Washington	42.5%

Source: 1990 & 2000 US Census

Population density has increased over the last 30 years in Bradford, as it has in Bradford's neighboring communities. As shown below, Bradford a similar population density to Newbury, Sutton, and Warner.

Table III-12
Population Density in Bradford and Abutting Communities, 1960-2000

Community	2000 Population	Area in Square Miles*	Persons per square mile			
			1970	1980	1990	2000
Bradford	1,454	35.2	19	32	40	41
Henniker	4,433	44.1	53	74	94	101
Hillsborough	4,928	43.7	64	79	103	113
Newbury	1,702	38.1	13	25	35	45
Sutton	1,544	45.6	14	24	32	34
Warner	2,760	55.2	26	36	41	50
Washington	895	45.5	5	9	14	20

Source: 1970-1990 US Census and 2000 NH OSP Total Land Area Figures for NH Cities and Towns

**Newbury's and Washington's area includes water, but the others do not*

***Figures are rounded*

Population Projections

While no one can predict the future, population can be projected based on past trends, regional shares of growth, and economic expectations. As shown in Tables III-13 and III-14 below, the NH Office of Energy and Planning expects Bradford's population to increase at a higher rate between 2000 and 2010. During this time period, it is expected that Bradford's population will increase at a higher rate than that of the County or the State. Between 2010 and 2020, Bradford's growth is expected to be similar to that of the County and State. Bradford is expected to stay the second smallest town when compared to abutting communities.

Table III-13
Population Projections, 2005-2020
Bradford and Abutting Communities

Town	2005	2010	2015	2020
Bradford	1,650	1,790	1,900	1,990
Henniker	4,750	5,040	5,340	5,630
Hillsborough	5,280	5,620	5,910	6,200
Newbury	1,820	1,950	2,090	2,230
Sutton	1,680	1,810	1,940	2,070
Warner	2,960	3,210	3,450	3,700
Washington	1,010	1,120	1,240	1,330

Source: NH Office of Energy and Planning Municipal Population Projections 2005-2020

Table III-14
Actual Population Growth and Projections, 1960-2020

Year	Town of Bradford		Merrimack County		State of New Hampshire	
	Population	% change	Population	% change	Population	% change
1960	508	---	67,785	---	606,921	---
1970	679	33.7%	80,925	19.4%	737,681	21.5%
1980	1,115	64.2%	98,302	21.5%	920,610	24.8%
1990	1,405	26.0%	120,005	22.1%	1,109,252	20.5%
2000	1,454	3.5%	136,225	13.5%	1,235,786	11.4%
2010	1,790	23.1%	155,280	14.0%	1,385,210	12.1%
2020	1,990	11.2%	173,780	11.9%	1,523,680	10.0%

Sources: 1960-1990 US Census; NH Office of Energy and Planning Municipal Population Projections 2005-2025 and Historical Estimates, 1960-1980

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

As mentioned earlier, in addition to understanding past, present, and future population changes, it is important to understand population characteristics such as age and educational attainment. Understanding these characteristics can help a town plan for future needs.

Population by Age

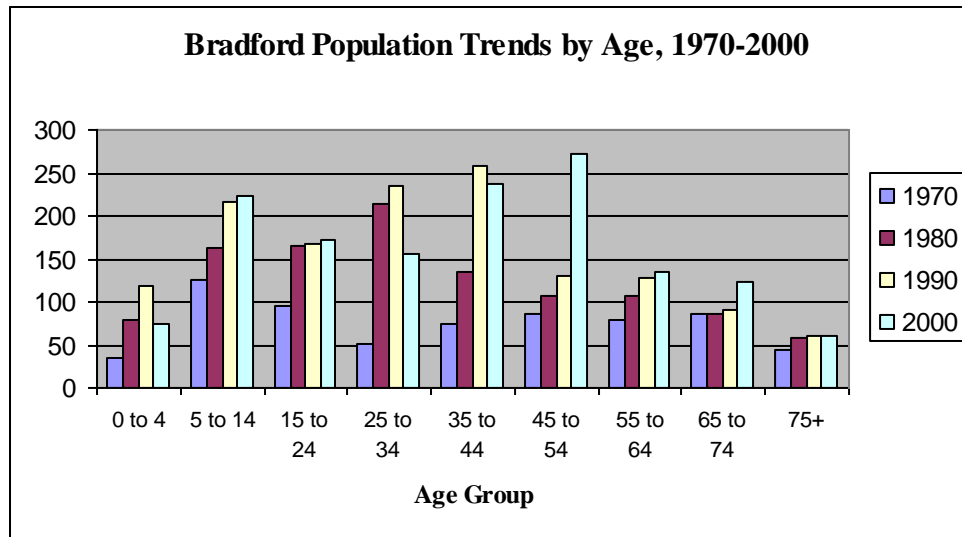
As shown in Table III-15 and Figure III-2 below, the age group that increased the most between 1990 and 2000 was people between 45 to 54 years of age. There was a drop in the number of children 0 to 4 and a slight increase in 5 to 14 year olds and 15 to 24 year olds. The next age groups, 25 to 34 and 35 to 44 year olds, both decreased in number. There was a sharp increase in 45 to 54 year olds and slight increase in the number of people 55 to 64 and 65 to 74. The number of people 75 years and older remained the same.

The increase in people between the ages of 45 and 74 is due in part to a natural progression in age, but the high increase in 45 to 54 year olds may indicate that people are moving to Bradford after living most of their adult life elsewhere. In the community survey, a large percentage of people indicated that they are retired, so it follows that Bradford is becoming a destination for people retiring early.

Table III-15
Bradford Population by Age

Age Group	Number of Persons by Age			
	1970	1980	1990	2000
0 to 4	36	80	118	75
5 to 14	125	162	217	223
15 to 24	96	164	167	173
25 to 34	51	214	235	155
35 to 44	74	134	258	237
45 to 54	86	108	131	271
55 to 64	80	107	128	136
65 to 74	87	87	91	124
75+	44	59	60	60
Total	679	1,115	1,405	1,454

Source: OSP Comparison Binder of 70-80; 1990 (STF 1A) & 2000 Census

Figure III-2

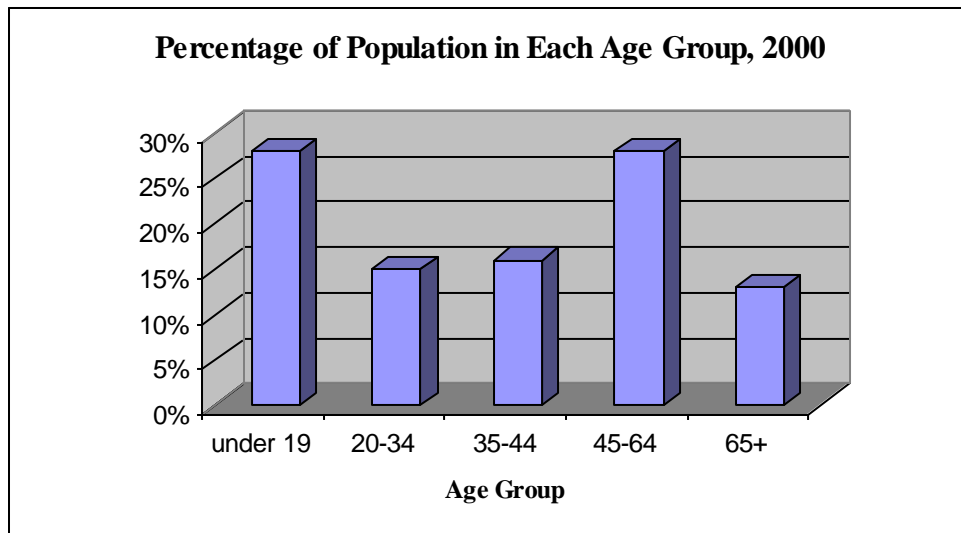
As shown below in Table III-16 and Figure III-3, children under 19 and adults between 45 and 64 each make up 28% of the population in Bradford.

Table III-16
Percentage of Population by Age Group, 2000

Age Group	Census 2000
under 19	28%
20-34	15%
35-44	16%
45-64	28%
65+	13%
Total	100%

Source: 2000 US Census

Figure III-3



Household Size

The number of people per household in Bradford dropped between 1990 and 2000. This correlates to the increase in 45 to 54 year old over the same time period. It is likely that more families with grown children are living in Bradford now, and thus the average household size is smaller.

Table III-17
Average Household Size

	1980	1990	2000
Persons per household	3.3	3.1	2.6

Source: 1980, 1990, 2000 US Census

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment can be related to many other social and economic characteristic of a town. For example, generally speaking, people with a higher level of education make more money. These people may purchase or build more expensive homes. Or, if there is a low level of educational attainment and a small number of jobs, poverty can be a problem. A dramatic increase or decrease in educational attainment can be indicative of some other force such as new people moving in or a problem with the school system, for example.

Both Bradford and New Hampshire as a whole have a higher level of educational attainment than the average for the country. In the United States, 80.4% of people have a high school degree or higher. Twenty four percent (24.4%) have a Bachelor's degree or higher. In New Hampshire, 87.4% have a high school degree and 28.7% have a Bachelor's degree or higher. In Bradford the figures are even higher. Ninety-two percent (92.4%) of Bradford residents have a high school degree or higher, and 32.3% have a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Compared to neighboring communities, Bradford has the second highest percentage of high school graduates. Only Newbury has a higher percentage. Bradford ranks fourth in the percentage of residents with a Bachelor's degree or higher. These figures are shown in Tabled III-18 and III-19 below.

Table III-20 compares the number of high school and college graduates in Bradford in 1990 and in 2000. Bradford has seen a drop in the number of residents that have less than a 9th grade education and a decrease in the number of people without high school diplomas. The percentage of people who have a high school diploma and the percentage of people who have Bachelor's degree remained virtually the same between 1990 and 2000. These are positive trends because they indicate that more residents are getting a basic education, and there has not been an influx of people with higher levels of education.

Table III-18
Educational Attainment, 2000
Bradford and Abutting Communities
(Based on the population 25 years of age and above)

	Population*	less than 9th grade		9th-12th grade (no diploma)		H.S. diploma or GED	
		number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Bradford	987	14	1.4%	60	6.1%	286	29.2%
Henniker	2,577	71	2.8%	167	6.5%	548	21.3%
Hillsborough	3,283	87	2.7%	277	8.4%	1,152	35.1%
Newbury	1,228	8	.7%	74	6.0%	288	23.5%
Sutton	1,113	36	3.2%	66	5.9%	283	25.4%
Warner	1,865	66	3.5%	193	10.3%	512	27.5%
Washington	647	13	2.0%	56	8.7%	215	33.2%
Merrimack County	91,278	3,611	4.0%	7,198	7.9%	27,044	29.6%

	Some College (no degree)		Associate's Degree		Bachelor's Degree		Graduate Degree	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Bradford	216	22.1%	86	8.8%	209	21.4%	107	10.9%
Henniker	474	18.4%	215	8.3%	771	29.9%	331	12.8%
Hillsborough	821	25.0%	395	9.0%	513	15.6%	138	4.2%
Newbury	250	20.4%	103	8.4%	350	28.5%	155	12.6%
Sutton	255	22.9%	102	9.2%	225	20.2%	146	13.1%
Warner	351	18.8%	158	8.5%	364	19.5%	221	11.8%
Washington	171	26.4%	54	8.3%	82	12.7%	56	8.7%
Merrimack County	18,823	20.6%	8,029	8.8%	17,126	18.8%	9,447	10.3%

Source: 2000 US Census

Table III-19
Percentage of Population with High School or Bachelor's Degree, 2000
(Based on the population 25 years of age and above)

	High School Graduate or Higher	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Bradford	92.4%	32.3%
Henniker	90.8%	42.8%
Hillsborough	88.9%	19.8%
Newbury	93.3%	41.1%
Sutton	90.8%	33.3%
Warner	86.1%	31.4%
Washington	89.3%	21.3%
State of NH	87.4%	28.7%
United States	80.4%	24.4%

Source: 2000 Census

Table III-20
Educational Attainment in Bradford, 1990 -2000
(Based on the population 25 years of age and above)

	1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
less than 9th grade	16	1.8%	14	1.4%
9th-12th grade (no diploma)	91	10.1%	60	6.1%
H.S. diploma or GED	268	29.7%	286	29.2%
Some College (no degree)	170	18.9%	216	22.1%
Associate's Degree	70	7.8%	86	8.8%
Bachelor's Degree	191	21.2%	209	21.4%
Graduate Degree	95	10.5%	107	10.9%
Total Population over 25	901	100%	987	100%

Source: 2000 US Census

ECONOMICS

Bradford's primary industry has long been tourism. In the late 1850's people would come to Bradford by train and stay in grand hotels for the summer. The local economy was based on service for these tourists. Farming and forestry were also pursued. But, as the railroad industry declined and people became more independently mobile, there was a shift from visitors staying in grand hotels to people purchasing or renting small summer cabins. In addition, as the west opened up many farmers moved on to find more fertile soils. These changes are evident in the historic population figures discussed earlier in the chapter.

Today Bradford is both a tourist destination and a bedroom community. The majority of Bradford residents work in other towns; and as mentioned, the number of retired people seems to be on the rise. There are also a lot of seasonal residents and part time residents who come to Bradford to enjoy the outdoors but keep a primary residence elsewhere. Tourism is still healthy, but it is regionally based rather than focused just on Bradford. People come to Bradford with plans to explore the region. Outdoor activities such as snowmobiling and hiking are primary draws. Special events such as parents' weekends at nearby colleges and the annual Highland Games also draw people to Bradford's inns.

During a community visioning session held in May 2004, participants discussing economics in Bradford expressed interest in maintaining rural character over creating more jobs or businesses. It was generally felt that Bradford must protect its primary attraction, the scenic landscape. Participants expressed support for smaller, specialized shops and restaurants as opposed to industrial or chain development. There was also interest in promoting home based businesses that have little or no impact on their surroundings.

The following sections will review where Bradford residents work, employment trends, and the type of work people pursue. Lastly, income and tax rates will be covered since these are good indicators of the economic health of a community.

Employment Characteristics

The employment picture for Bradford residents is very positive. The unemployment rate is low, 3.2%, and a high number of residents work in managerial or professional positions. However, the majority of residents travel to other communities for work.

Commuting Patterns

As mentioned, the majority of people in Bradford who are in the work force commute to other towns. As shown in Table III-21, slightly less than 20% work and live in Bradford. For those who commute to other towns for work, the most common destinations are Concord and New London. Another 45% commute to a wide variety of other towns. Five percent commute to another state.

Table III-21
Commuting Destinations for Bradford Residents

Destination	Number	Percent
Bradford	155	19%
Concord	148	18%
New London	102	13%
Other NH town or city*	368	45%
Other State	40	5%
Total	813	100%

Source: US Census (www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/mcdworkerflow.html)

*The number of commuters to other NH towns or cities ranged from 54 to 1.

It is worth while to examine commuting time because a drastic increase in time spent commuting can indicate either a steep increase in traffic or the need for residents to travel farther for jobs. Commuting time increased between 1990 and 2000 for Bradford and the surrounding communities, but none of the increases were drastic.

Table III-22
Commuting Time for Area Residents, 1990 - 2000
(Based workers 16 years of age and above)

	1990 Mean Travel Time to Work (minutes)	2000 Mean Travel Time to Work (minutes)
Bradford	25-29	33.9
Henniker	20.7	24.1
Hillsborough	24.0	32.4
Newbury	NA	28.6
Sutton	15-19	29.8
Warner	20-24	29.4
Washington	NA	36.6
Merrimack County	21.5	24.3

Source: NH Assoc. of Regional Planning Commissions website (www.nhrpc.org) and 2000 Census

Employment in Bradford

In 2000 there were 1,454 people in Bradford. As shown below, 1,128 of those people were 16 years or older. Of those 16 years and older, 850 were in the civilian labor force, and one was in the military. Just under 25% of people 16 years or older were not in the labor force. These people were likely retired or chose not to work for other reasons.

Table III-23
Employment Status in Bradford, 2000

	Number	Percent
Population 16 years and older	1,128	100%
In civilian labor force	850	75.4%
Employed	821	72.8%
Unemployed	29	2.6%
Not in labor force	277	24.6%

Source: 2000 Census

Between 1993 and 2003, the number of people in the civilian work force in Bradford increased by 13.8%. This is notable because between 1990 and 2000, the population of Bradford only increased by 3.5%. This corresponds to the fact that the age group that increased the most in Bradford between 1990 and 2000 was people between 45 and 54 years of age.

Table III-24
Number of Civilians in the Labor Force, 1993 & 2003

	1993	2003	% Change from '93-'03
Bradford	770	876	13.8%
Henniker	2,183	2,813	28.9%
Hillsborough	2,671	3,148	17.9%
Newbury	765	906	18.4%
Sutton	785	859	9.4%
Warner	1,307	1,815	38.9%
Washington	315	524	66.3%

Source: NH Department of Employment Security

The New Hampshire Department of Employment and Security keeps a list of the largest employers in each town. While six employers are listed for Bradford, only three employ a significant number of people. These three are Kearsarge Regional Elementary, Bruss Construction, and Colonial Woodworking.

Table III-25
Major Employers in the Town of Bradford, 2004

Employer	Product/Service	# of Employees
Kearsarge Regional Elementary School	Education	50
Bruss Construction	Design/Build Contractors	30
Colonial Woodworking	Staircase units	25
Merrimack Farm Store	Farm, home, and garden supplies	9
Barns of Bradford	Home furnishings	3
Bradford Machine, Inc.	Machine job shop	3

Sources: NH Department of Employment Security, 2003

Unemployment

Bradford is fortunate to have a relatively low unemployment rate. In 1993 the rate was 7.4%, down 57% from 13.1% in 1993. Several other towns in the region have unemployment rates that are similar to Bradford's. Newbury and Sutton have lower rates.

Table III-26
Unemployment Rate Trends, 1993 to 2003

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	% Change from '93-'03
Bradford	7.4%	6.2%	3.4%	4.1%	3.4%	2.4%	1.7%	2.7%	2.6%	3.2%	3.2%	-57%
Henniker	4.2%	2.8%	2.8%	3.3%	3.4%	3.0%	2.8%	2.9%	3.0%	3.5%	3.2%	-24%
Hillsborough	5.9%	4.1%	3.2%	4.6%	2.7%	2.6%	2.2%	2.0%	3.3%	3.6%	3.2%	-46%
Newbury	3.3%	2.8%	2.4%	3.5%	2.7%	1.1%	1.1%	1.8%	1.9%	2.8%	1.3%	-61%
Sutton	3.4%	1.5%	1.3%	1.5%	1.7%	1.4%	1.4%	1.3%	1.5%	1.9%	1.9%	-44%
Warner	3.7%	2.9%	2.4%	3.0%	2.3%	1.9%	1.7%	2.0%	2.3%	3.0%	3.4%	-8%
Washington	4.4%	2.9%	3.2%	3.0%	1.7%	3.5%	3.5%	2.6%	3.6%	3.7%	3.1%	-30%

Source: NH Department of Employment Security - NNetwork

Occupations

In the community survey sent out in February 2004, residents were asked about the specific professions in which they were employed. The US Census also tracks occupations but on a more general level. The largest percentage of Bradford workers (31.5%) are employed in managerial, professional, and related occupations. The second largest percentage (24.2%) work in service related occupations. Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining make up the smallest percentage of jobs, 0.5%, in Bradford.

Table III-27
Occupation of Employed Individuals over Age Sixteen, 1999

	Number	Percent
Employed individuals over age 16	821	100%
Managerial, professional, and related occupations	259	31.5%
Sales and office occupations	123	15.0%
Service occupations	199	24.2%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	4	0.5%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	117	14.3%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	119	14.5%

Source: 2000 US Census

Income Characteristics

Most of Bradford's residents enjoy a moderate to high level of income. Weekly wages and per capita income have both increased steadily since the early 1990s. According to the census, only 2.5% of families and 4.1% of individuals in Bradford have incomes below the poverty level.

Wage Comparisons

According to the New Hampshire Department of Employment and Security, in 2003 there were 327 jobs in Bradford. In an average week, the number of jobs had increased 21.6% from ten years earlier, and the weekly wage had increased 55.4%. When compared to abutting communities, Bradford has the third lowest wage and the second lowest number of jobs. Bradford and Sutton have almost the same number of jobs, and Bradford's weekly wage is closest to Warner's.

Table III-28
Average Annual Weekly Jobs and Wages, 1993 & 2003

Town	Number of Jobs 1993	Weekly Wages 1993	Number of Jobs 2003	Weekly Wages 2003	Job % Change, 1993-2003	Wage % Change, 1993-2003
Bradford	269	\$314	327	\$488	21.6%	55.4%
Henniker	1,505	\$395	1,716	\$524	14.0%	32.7%
Hillsborough	2,063	\$488	1,766	\$683	-14.4%	40.0%
Newbury	161	\$321	486	\$331	201.9%	3.1%
Sutton	136	\$482	329	\$677	141.9%	40.5%
Warner	476	\$348	900	\$495	89.1%	42.2%
Washington	36	\$326	90	\$376	150.0%	15.3%

Source: NH Department of Employment Security

Household and Per Capita Income Comparisons

Yearly household income is high for most Bradford residents. Almost half of the households (49.1%) have incomes of \$50,000 or more.

Table III-29
Yearly Household Income in Bradford, 1999

Yearly gross household income	Number of Households	Percent of Total
less than \$10,000	24	4.3%
\$10,000-\$14,999	21	3.8%
\$15,000-\$24,999	67	12.0%
\$25,000-\$34,999	75	13.5%
\$35,000-\$49,999	97	17.4%
\$50,000-\$74,999	158	28.4%
\$75,000-\$99,999	56	10.1%
more than \$100,000	59	10.6%
Total households	557	100.0%
Median household income	\$49,018	
Median earnings	\$30,371	

Source: 2000 US Census

Table III-30 compares per capita income in Bradford to per capita income in surrounding communities. In 1990 Bradford had the third highest per capita income. In 2000 it had the fourth highest. Per capita income in Bradford increased by 29% over the same ten year period. Most other towns in the area had higher increases.

Table III-30
Per Capita Income in Bradford

	1990 (in 1989 dollars)	2000 (in 1999 dollars)	% Change from '90-'00
Bradford	17,234	22,240	29%
Henniker	14,005	24,530	75%
Hillsborough	13,155	20,122	53%
Newbury	16,091	29,521	83%
Sutton	17,886	24,432	37%
Warner	18,088	21,558	19%
Washington	12,885	20,540	59%

Sources: 1990 and 2000 US Census

TOWN TAX RATES

Property taxes can be good measure of the economic health of a town. High property values indicate that a town is a desirable place to live. On the other hand, tax rates that are too high can be a deterrent to business growth. Bradford's total tax rate increased in 2003, but was only slightly higher than it had been in 2000. The total assessed value of both land and buildings jumped between 2000 and 2001 and has risen at a moderate rate since, as shown in Table III-32. It should also be noted that in between 2001 and 2003, the assessed value of residential buildings grew, but the assessed value of commercial building remained close to the same. This is indicative of the fact that Bradford has experienced more residential growth than commercial.

Table III-31
Breakdown of Bradford Tax Rates, 2000-2005

Year	Municipal Rate per \$1000	County Rate per \$1000	Local Education Rate per \$1000	State Education Rate per \$1000	Total Rate per \$1000
2000	8.31	2.31	8.98	6.06	25.66
2001	6.99	2.24	6.15	5.34	20.72
2002	7.93	2.20	7.28	5.36	22.77
2003	8.54	2.34	10.21	4.71	25.80
2004	9.03	2.24	10.34	3.79	25.90
2005	4.78	1.73	5.76	1.96	14.23*

Source: Bradford Town Reports; NH Department of Revenue Administration website

** revaluation year*

Table III-32
Assessed Value of Land and Buildings in Bradford, 2000-2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Land					
Current Use	\$1,521,288	\$1,535,475	\$1,551,699	\$1,703,701	\$1,704,579
Conservation Restriction	NA	NA	NA	\$6,181	\$5,370
Residential	\$34,655,893	\$40,153,600	\$40,202,300	\$40,050,300	\$40,219,700
Commercial	\$196,700	\$2,072,600	\$2,072,600	\$2,092,400	\$2,186,000
Buildings					
Residential	\$45,280,700	\$58,571,175	\$61,389,300	\$64,224,400	\$66,311,800
Manufactured Housing	NA	\$1,294,900	\$1,303,400	\$1,311,900	\$1,275,900
Commercial	\$432,000	\$5,456,300	\$5,288,100	\$5,460,900	\$5,555,800
Total	\$82,086,581	\$109,084,050	\$111,807,399	\$114,849,782	\$117,259,149

Source: Bradford Town Reports

Each year the state Department of Revenue Administration equalizes the property values for every city and town. Equalization is an adjustment of the town's local assessed values, either upward or downward, in order to approximate the full value of the town's property. Adjustments are not made to any individual properties. Rather, the total value of all property in town is adjusted based upon the comparison of recent property sales with local property assessments. For example, if the comparison of recent sales indicates that on the average, the town is assessing property at 90% of market value, then the total local assessed value of the town would be increased by 10% in order to approximate the town's full value. If the comparison indicates that, on the average, the town is assessing at 105% of market value, then the total local assessed value would be decreased by 5%.

The purpose for equalizing local assessed property values is to provide a "level playing field." Once property values have been equalized, public taxes and state revenues shared by towns and cities may be fairly apportioned among them. This includes state education property taxes and county taxes.

Table III-33 shows the equalized tax rates for Bradford and its abutting communities. Bradford has the fourth highest tax rate in the area. Thus, Bradford does not suffer from particularly high tax rates when compared to neighboring towns, nor has it experienced an extreme increase in recent years.

Table III-33
Equalized Tax Rates of Bradford
and Abutting Communities, 2003

	Equalized Tax Rate per \$1000
Bradford	\$19.54
Henniker	\$23.49
Hillsborough	\$21.07
Newbury	\$11.67
Sutton	\$17.46
Warner	\$19.45
Washington	\$16.92

Source: NH Department of Employment Security, Community Profiles

SUMMARY

Bradford is fortunate to have strong growth, but it will need to be managed more in the future. As new development is proposed, the Planning Board will have to consider what impact the development will have on town demographics, job opportunities, and taxes. Bradford will also need to remain cognizant of how it compares to neighboring towns, keeping in mind that regional changes could impact the make up and economics of Bradford.

While Bradford does not have a strong internal commercial economy, it is part of an economically healthy region. The fact that its population is well educated with a high level of income gives the community a great deal of resources. In addition, taxes remain reasonable and unemployment is low, giving the town economic strength. While growth may be inevitable, the Town can attempt to ensure that it is balanced and paced.

MAPS

One map accompanies this chapter, the 2000 Census Population Distribution Map.