

Chapter 1- Community Profile **DRAFT**

Introduction

Population demographics comprise one of the most basic elements of a comprehensive plan. To understand the Town's current and future needs, a detailed examination of community characteristics will help decision makers understand population impacts on public facilities and services by:

- a. describing South Berwick's recent population trends;
- b. discussing how these trends relate to and contrast with those in York County and the State; and
- c. describing key characteristics of the current South Berwick population.

Key Findings & Issues

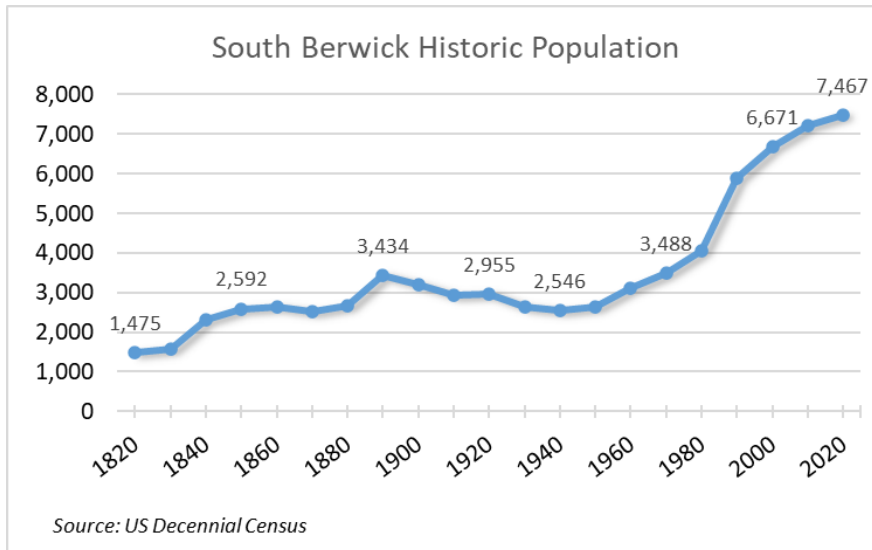
1. South Berwick has experienced consistent growth since the 1950's, but growth rates have slowed over time.
2. South Berwick is younger and has a higher average household size than surrounding communities, the state, and York County overall. However, school enrollment has decreased over time.
3. The town also has a higher educational attainment, and higher median income than the state and county overall.

Community Survey Results

- PLACEHOLDER

Population Change

South Berwick has experienced sustained growth since the 1950's, with the most extreme rate of growth happening in the period between 1980 and 1990. After growth management regulations passed at the state level, growth continued to slow in the decades after.



Compared to surrounding communities, South Berwick had the slowest growth rate in the period between 2010-2020. Berwick and North Berwick both grew at more than twice the pace in the same period. However, growth was on par with the state overall growth.

Population Change, 2000-2010					
	2000	2010	2000-2010	2020	2010-2020
South Berwick	6,671	7,220	7.6%	7,467	3.3%
Berwick	6,353	7,246	12.3%	7,950	8.9%
Eliot	5,954	6,204	4.0%	6,717	7.6%
North Berwick	4,293	4,576	6.2%	4,978	8.1%
York	12,854	12,529	-2.6%	13,723	8.7%
Rollinsford, NH	2,648	2,527	-4.8%	2,597	2.7%
Maine	1,274,923	1,328,361	4.0%	1,362,359	2.5%
York County	186,742	197,131	5.3%	211,972	7.0%

Source: US Decennial Census

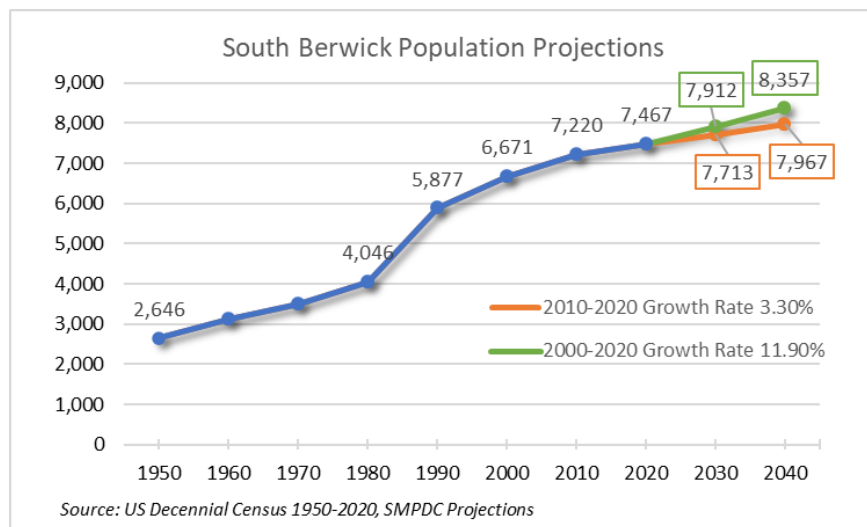
Population Projections

The Maine State Economist has produced population projections for all Maine towns and cities based on 2008-2018 Census population estimates. These projections estimate that South Berwick's population will continue to increase, resulting in a 14.1% increase by 2028, or a total population of 8,587. So far it appears these projections are quite high. Since the population has only increased by about 200 people between 2010 and 2020, and the projections assume it South Berwick would see another 400 people added to the population before 2023.

Population Projections, 2023-2038								
		South Berwick	Berwick	Eliot	North Berwick	York	Maine	York County
Population projected	2023	7,876	8,230	7,402	4,852	13,731	1,355,924	215,424
	2028	8,172	8,649	8,068	4,954	14,226	1,368,838	223,396
	2033	8,412	9,014	8,703	5,015	14,620	1,374,023	229,809
	2038	8,587	9,315	9,290	5,034	14,899	1,371,608	234,432
Percent change from previous period	2008-2013	0.6%	3.9%	0.3%	0.9%	-0.3%	-	-
	2013-2018	3.6%	4.5%	8.0%	2.2%	3.7%	-	-
	2018-2023	4.7%	5.6%	9.7%	2.9%	4.4%	1.1%	4.4%
	2023-2028	3.8%	5.1%	9.0%	2.1%	3.6%	1.0%	3.7%
	2028-2033	2.9%	4.2%	7.9%	1.2%	2.8%	0.4%	2.9%
	2033-2038	2.1%	3.3%	6.7%	0.4%	1.9%	-0.2%	2.0%
Total Percent Change	2018-2038	14.1%	19.6%	37.7%	6.8%	13.3%	2.3%	13.6%

Source: Maine State Economist, Based on 2018 US Census Population Estimates

Alternatively, if it is assumed that the growth rate between 2010 and 2020 would continue over the next decade, a 3.3% increase would mean a population of 7,713 by 2030. If one considers the twenty-year period of 2000-2020, the community saw a percent increase of 11.9%. If it is assumed that growth rate would continue for the next two decades, the community would see a population of 8,357 by 2040. Changes to statewide housing legislation may also impact future populations, with the allowance of more units statewide, we may see an increase in in-migration.



Demographic Conditions

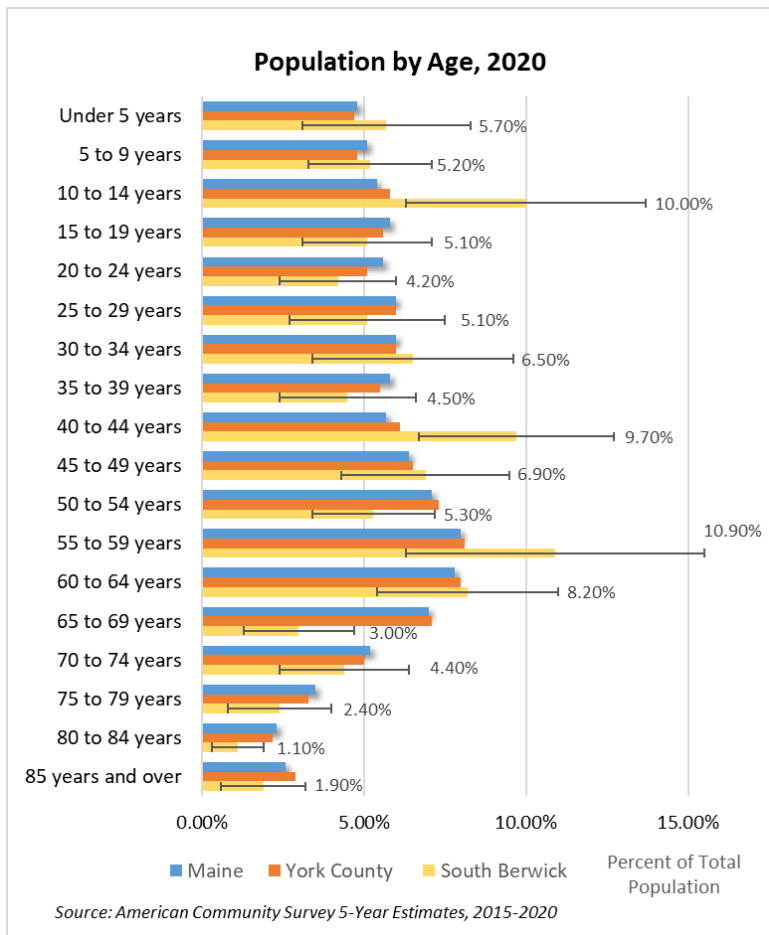
A Word on Demographic Information

Beginning in the 1700's and through to present day, the U.S. Decennial Census has been collected at the national level every 10 years. Even though that data is only available in 10-year increments, it is generally considered accurate because it surveys the entire population.

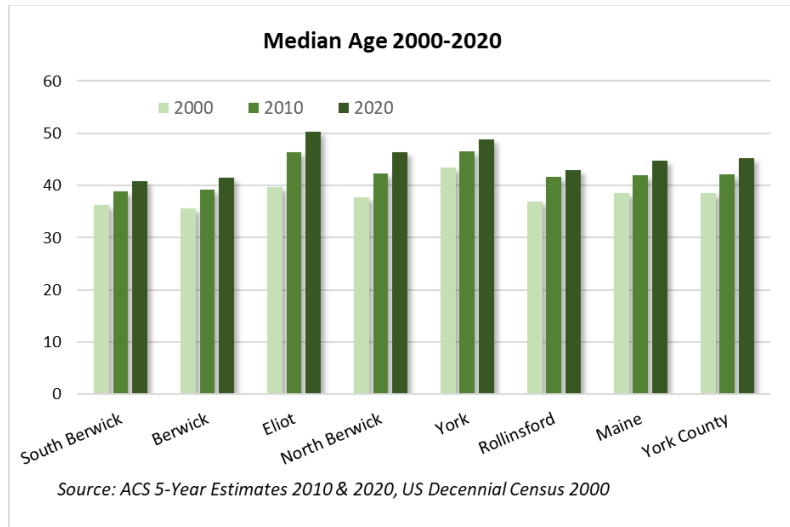
Starting in 2005, the Census Bureau began an annual collection of a smaller sample of the national population called the American Community Survey (ACS). Datasets from this survey are combined into 1-, 3- or 5-year compilations to get a large enough sample of the population to publish data. For small communities, only the 5-year compilations are considered accurate enough to use. For South Berwick, most data points have a margin of error of less than 5%. In many cases the ACS is the only source of data for specific topics or demographics, and the data is estimated and published annually, as opposed to every 10 years. For planning purposes, the drawbacks of that margin of error are almost always outweighed by the ability to get data for any particular year and dataset.

Age

In the period between 2000 and 2020, all communities across the state have experienced aging populations. This is due to several factors, including decreasing birth rates, more non-traditional household types, and the large "Baby Boomer" generation reaching retirement age. This trend is also relevant to South Berwick and its neighboring communities, who all show increased median ages in 2010 and 2020. However, South Berwick has consistently had the lowest median age of communities in the area, and the increase in median age has been slower than the state and county overall. In 2020, South Berwick had a median age of 40.8, compared to 44.8 for the state, and 45.3 for York County.



When broken down into individual age groups, it is estimated that South Berwick has higher proportions of population under age 5 and ages 10-14 than the state and county. The town also has a higher percentage of individuals 30 to 34 years of age. Overall, these trends could indicate a higher population of families with young children, and older individuals still active in the workforce. Large age groups like those in the 55-59 population would be looking at retirement within the next 5-10 years.



Race

Maine is historically one of the least diverse states in the country. However, over the last decade the total percent of the population which identifies as White only has decreased slightly, from 95.2% in 2010 to 90.8% in 2020. The same is true for South Berwick, where the percent of the population identifying as White only has decreased from 97.5% in 2010 to 92.5% in 2020. South Berwick has a higher proportion of its total population identifying as two races than the state and county overall.

Population by Race, 2020 (Percent of Total Population)			
	Maine	York County	South Berwick
Total Population	1,362,359	211,972	7,467
Population of one race:	95.3%	95.4%	94.7%
White alone	90.8%	92.1%	92.5%
Black or African American alone	1.9%	1.0%	0.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	0.6%	0.3%	0.2%
Asian alone	1.2%	1.2%	0.8%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.03%	0.03%	0.01%
Some Other Race alone	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%
Population of two races:	4.5%	4.4%	5.1%
White; Black or African American	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%
White; American Indian and Alaska Native	1.7%	1.6%	1.6%
White; Asian	0.5%	0.6%	0.8%
White; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.03%	0.03%	0.03%
White; Some Other Race	1.6%	1.6%	2.0%
Population of All Other Two or More Races	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%

Source: US Decennial Census, 2020

School Enrollment

York County overall has seen a decrease in school enrollment in recent years. South Berwick and all neighboring communities had a 2022 enrollment less than their 10-year average. Although the MSAD 35 district saw an overall decrease in enrollment of about 7% between 2019 and 2022, the total number of homeschooled students tripled in that same period. According to the MSAD 35 Superintendent's Office, there were 48 homeschooled students during the 2018-2019 school year, and that has increased to 141 by the 2021-2022. It is expected that some of these students will return to classrooms as risk from the COVID-19 pandemic diminishes. Considering South Berwick has seen continual population growth, decreases in enrollment are more reflective of an aging population, decreased birth rates, and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

School Enrollment, Publicly Funded Students by Residence							
	MSAD 35			Other Communities			
	South Berwick	Eliot	MSAD 35	Berwick	North Berwick	York	York County
2015	1,313	988	2,328	1,310	702	1,800	27,859
2016	1,283	983	2,360	1,323	678	1,760	27,712
2017	1,268	968	2,372	1,330	672	1,768	27,457
2018	1,266	888	2,292	1,394	667	1,741	27,482
2019	1,265	878	2,310	1,397	693	1,691	27,424
2020	1,239	854	2,238	1,345	701	1,642	27,399
2021	1,188	858	2,190	1,299	662	1,635	26,358
2022	1,156	841	2,134	1,331	680	1,586	26,339
10 Year Average	1,265	922	2,278	1,333	684	1,732	27,456
2021-2022 Percent Change	-2.77%	-2.02%	-2.62%	2.40%	2.65%	-3.09%	-0.07%

Source: Maine Department of Education, 2022

Educational Attainment

The ACS estimates that South Berwick has a generally higher educational attainment than the state and county overall. A smaller proportion of South Berwick residents have not completed high school, and a higher percentage of the town's population have gone on to complete secondary education. High educational attainment has implications for household incomes, community involvement and awareness, as well as workforce diversity and employment needs.

Educational Attainment, Population 25 years and older			
	Maine	York County	South Berwick
Less than 9th grade	2.3%	1.9%	1.4%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	4.5%	4.4%	2.8%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	31.3%	29.5%	20.7%
Some college, no degree	19.2%	20.9%	23.9%
Associate degree	10.2%	11.1%	12.9%
Bachelor's degree	20.3%	20.8%	23.3%
Graduate or professional degree	12.2%	11.3%	14.9%
High school graduate or higher	93.2%	93.8%	95.8%
Bachelor's degree or higher	32.5%	32.2%	38.2%

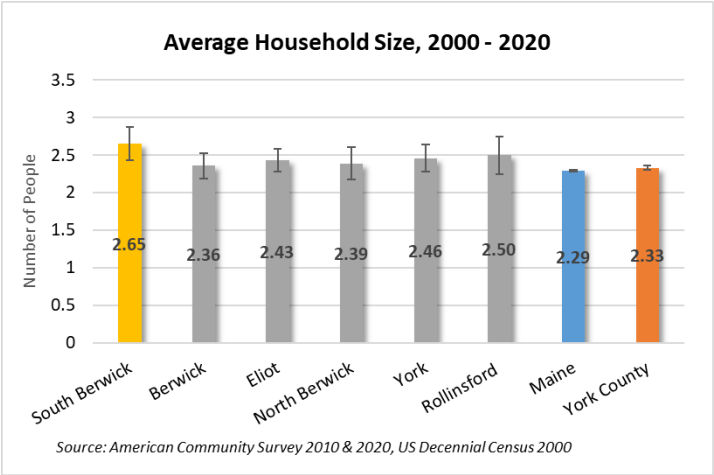
Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2020

Household Size

The American Community Survey also estimates that South Berwick has a higher average household size than surrounding communities, the state, and county overall. However, average household size has decreased for all communities over time, which also contributes to the overall trend of aging populations and decreased birth rates. National data also indicates that younger generations are less likely to live with a spouse or family of their own than previous generations at the same age, creating smaller average household sizes.

Average Household Size, 2000-2020			
	2000	2010	2020
South Berwick	2.76	2.72	2.65
Berwick	2.72	2.75	2.36
Eliot	2.58	2.27	2.43
North Berwick	2.67	2.54	2.39
York	2.42	2.37	2.46
Rollinsford	2.56	2.47	2.50
Maine	2.39	2.34	2.29
York County	2.47	2.43	2.33

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2010 & 2020, US Decennial Census 2010



Household Income

The period between 2010 and 2020, and the years beyond into the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic recession, has seen several economic shifts and changes. When comparing the 2010 median household income to 2020 estimates, we have adjusted 2010 figures to be equivalent to 2020 inflation adjusted dollars. Typically, the value of the dollar increases over time, however due to the pandemic, the dollar was actually worth less in 2020 than in 2010. Due to that change, when adjusted for inflation, South Berwick and all surrounding communities are estimated to have higher value median household

Median Household Income, 2010-2020		
	2010	2020
South Berwick	89,064	86,074
Berwick	73,018	70,317
Eliot	79,349	78,528
North Berwick	68,618	66,905
York	75,830	97,115
Rollinsford	78,526	71,366
Maine	55,704	59,489
York County	65,289	68,932

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2010 & 2020 (2010 estimates inflation adjusted to 2020 dollars)

incomes in 2010. The state and county overall, however, saw increases of about 6.8% and 5.6% respectively. With a median income of over \$80,000, South Berwick also has a low poverty rate compared to the state and county.

Percent Below Poverty Level, 2020	
South Berwick	3.70%
Maine	11.10%
York County	7.40%

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2020

Summary

Overall, South Berwick appears to be a well-balanced but growing community. The town's make up is similar to the state overall, but with likely a higher percentage of younger families and working people. In terms of population growth, the community has consistently grown over time. However, since 1990, growth rates have slowed. Population projections estimate that this gentle growth rate will continue into the future. Future population needs will include increasing retirement rates, changes to school enrollment as families age, and birth rates possibly continuing to decrease.