

**City of Rockland
2002 Comprehensive Plan**

Chapter 1

POPULATION and DEMOGRAPHICS

Introduction

Rockland has the largest population of any municipality in Knox, Waldo, and Lincoln Counties and is also the County Seat for Knox County. Rockland is approximately 12 square miles in land area, and much of it is marsh, bogs, or steep slopes. The limited size and natural constraints have historically been contributing factors in keeping the developed area compact and will continue to limit significant growth in the population. The daytime population in Rockland is much higher than the resident population. Many residents of surrounding communities come to Rockland to work, shop, utilize professional services, recreate, and to do business at the Knox County Court House. Rockland is also increasingly becoming a tourist destination with many tourists coming to the City for the aesthetic beauty, local flavor, and the recreational activities.

Most phases of the Plan are either dependent on or strongly influenced by the size and composition of the City's future population. The goal of this chapter is to present an analysis of significant population and demographic characteristics and to provide a basis for future growth management decisions.

Population Trends

Although Rockland's population peaked in 1950, the population size has been relatively constant over the past 100 years. Rockland has always been a major transportation center with roads, railroads, trolleys, and steamships used to deliver both passengers and freight. As the County Seat, the courts, jail, and registry of deeds are located here. The City also provides many of the medical and shopping needs for the region. Much of City's architecture dates from its most prosperous era in the late 19th and early 20th century, a circumstance that has resulted in a varied housing stock. The dense settlement pattern reflects the fact that most workers in this era lived within walking distance of their jobs or commuted short distances on the local trolleys.

Due to an aging population and modern families generally having fewer children, many older homes are occupied by fewer residents than they were when Rockland's population was at its peak. Following World War II the number of homes occupied by three generations or more declined. With the current trend of decreasing household size, families are spreading out and Rockland is seeing more housing development for fewer people.

In the past century, the population of Rockland has fallen by about 6.5%, from 8,150 in 1900 to 7,609 in 2000 (See Graph 1-1 and Table 1-1). A significant amount of this change occurred in the last decade; the population decreased by 4.5% between 1990 and 2000. Rockland is alone in this trend among the mainland municipalities of Knox County. All other mainland communities in the County have shown some population growth between the 1990 and 2000 Census. Population growth in surrounding communities ranged from a low of 1.72% in Owls Head, to a high of 28.81% in Hope (see Table 1-2).

Population and Demographics

Graph 1-1 Historic Populations

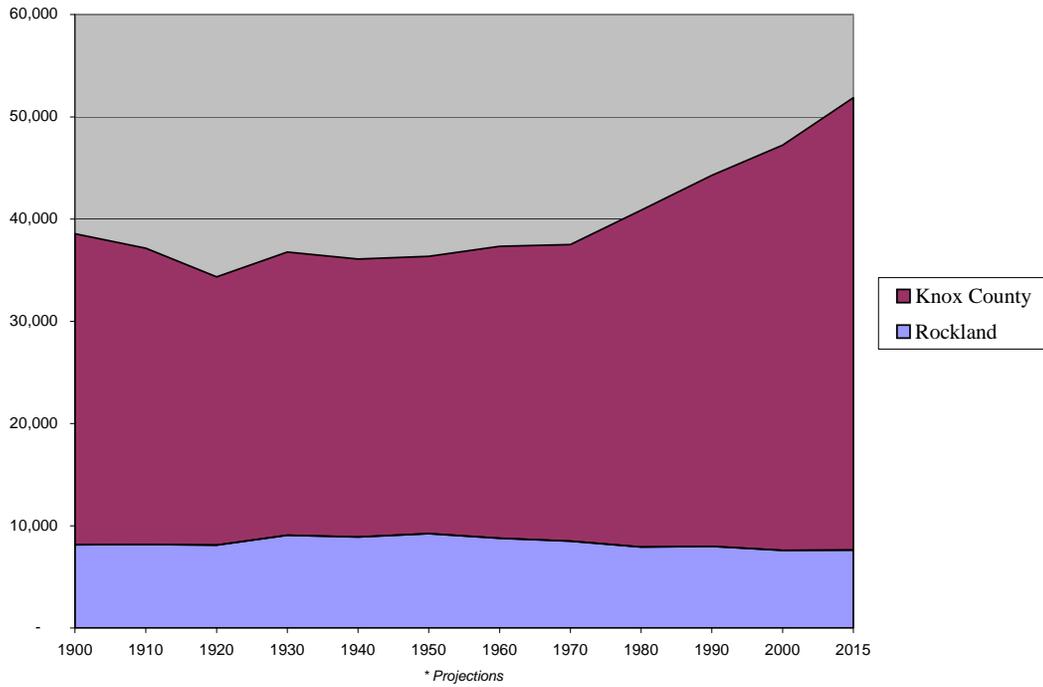


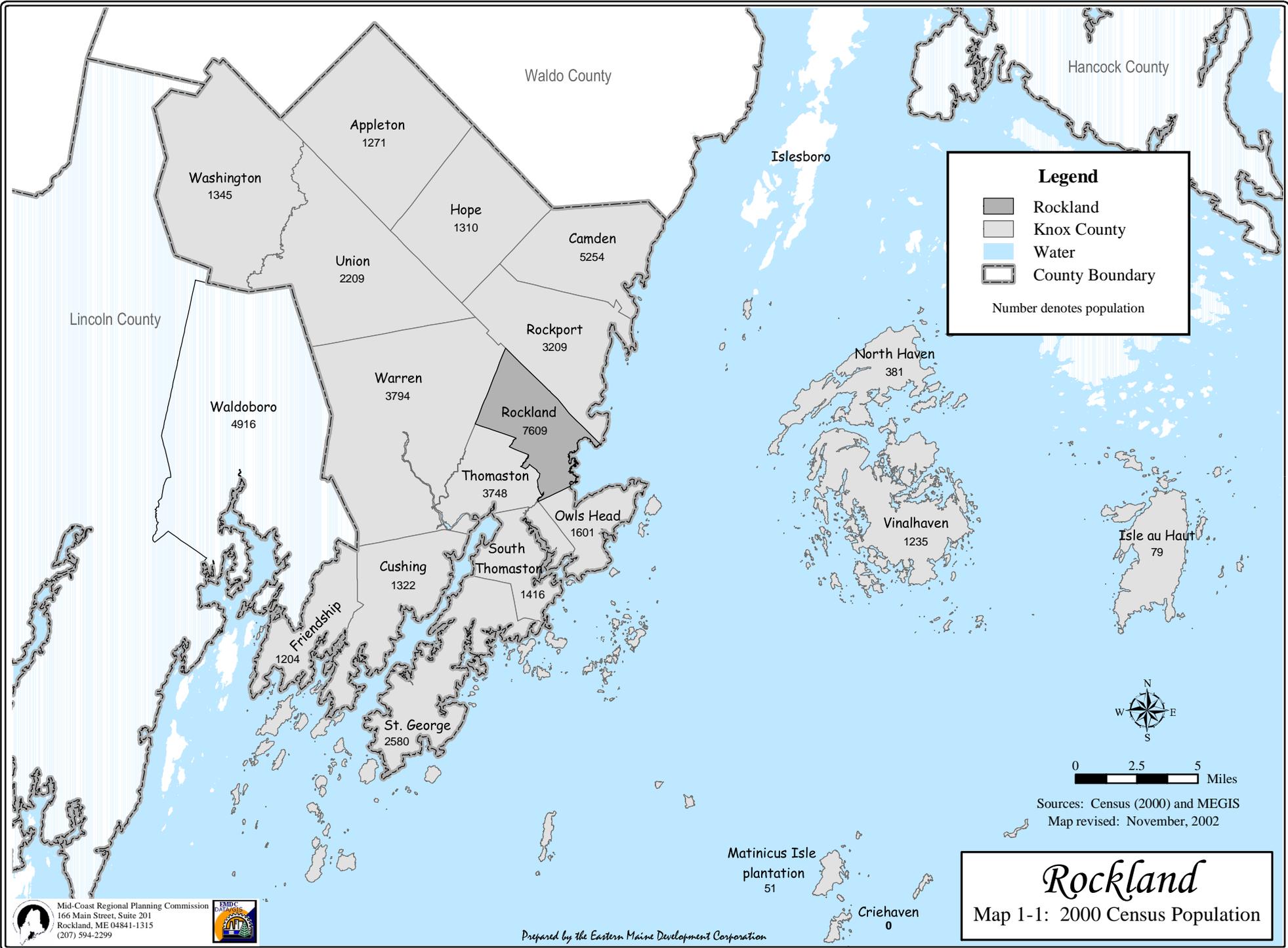
Table 1-1 Historic Population

Year	Rockland	Knox County
1900	8,150	30,406
1910	8,174	28,981
1920	8,109	26,245
1930	9,075	27,693
1940	8,899	27,191
1950	9,234	27,121
1960	8,769	28,575
1970	8,505	29,013
1980	7,919	32,941
1990	7,972	36,310
2000	7,609	39,618
2015*	7,615	44,269

Sources : 1983 Rockland Comprehensive Plan
1990 and 2000 Census

Maine State Planning Office Projection

Rockland, Thomaston, and Camden reflect the slower growth rates of more urbanized towns. However, Rockland has much less developable land available for new housing than Camden or Thomaston.



Legend

- Rockland
- Knox County
- Water
- County Boundary

Number denotes population



0 2.5 5 Miles

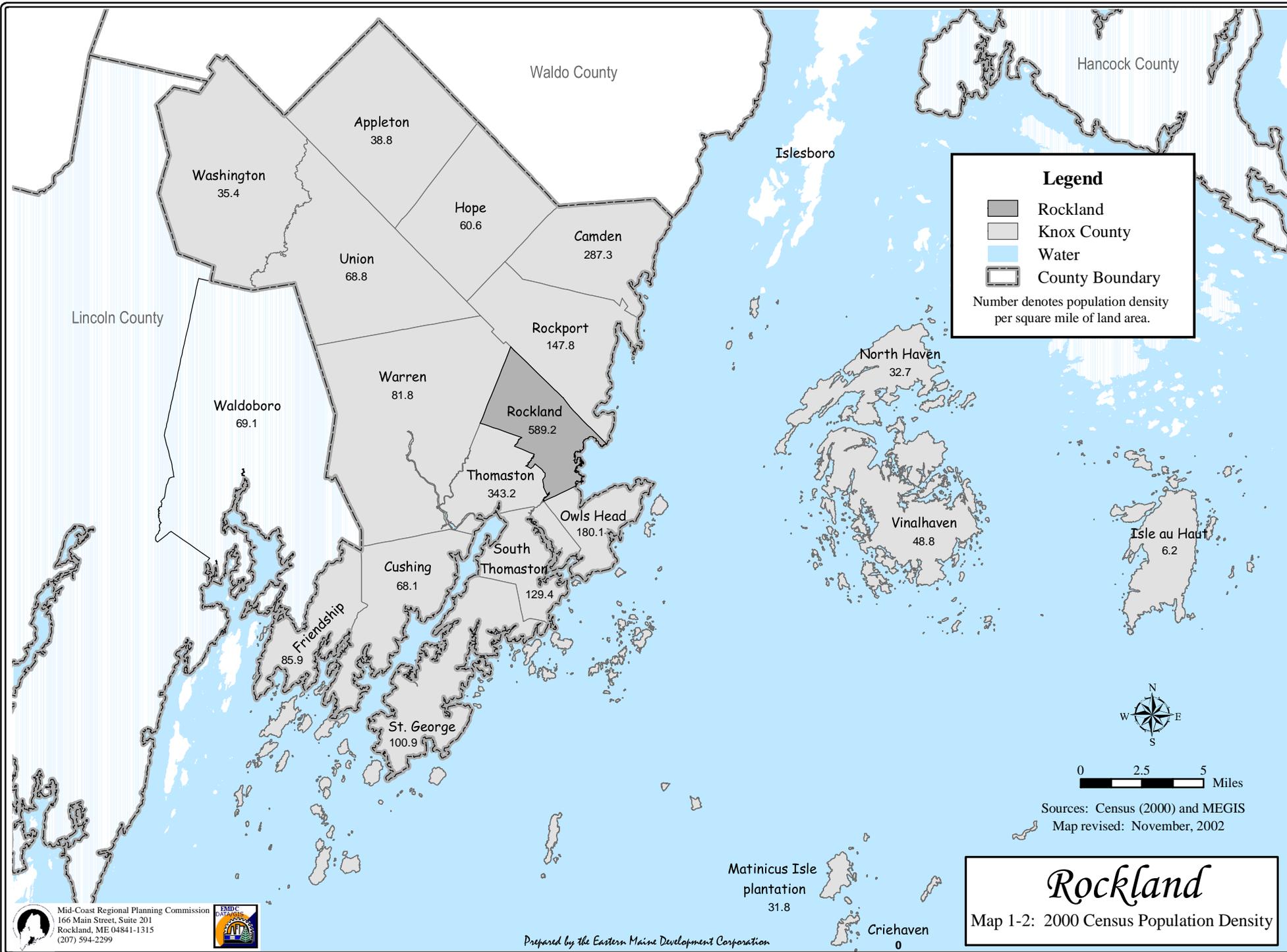
Sources: Census (2000) and MEGIS
Map revised: November, 2002

Rockland
Map 1-1: 2000 Census Population

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166 Main Street, Suite 201
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(207) 594-2299



Prepared by the Eastern Maine Development Corporation



Legend

- Rockland
- Knox County
- Water
- County Boundary

Number denotes population density per square mile of land area.



0 2.5 5 Miles

Sources: Census (2000) and MEGIS
Map revised: November, 2002

Rockland

Map 1-2: 2000 Census Population Density

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Population and Demographics

The population growth rate from 1980-1990 in Knox County was higher than the population growth rate from 1990 to 2000. Overall, the total number of people moving to Knox County remained similar (see Table 1-2).

Table 1-2 Area Comparative Population Changes					
<u>Community</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Change 1980-1990</u>	<u>Change 1990-2000</u>
Rockland	7919	7972	7609	-0.67%	-4.55%
Camden	4522	5057	5254	11.83%	3.89%
Owls Head	1633	1574	1601	-3.61%	1.72%
Rockport	2682	2854	3209	6.41%	12.44%
Hope	735	1017	1310	38.37%	28.81%
Thomaston	2881	3360	3748	16.63%	11.55%
Warren	2566	3138	3794	22.29%	20.91%
Union	1569	1989	2209	26.77%	11.06%
Knox County	32941	36310	39618	10.23%	9.11%
Maine	1124660	1227928	1274923	9.18%	3.83%

Source : 1990 and 2000 Census

Maine State Planning Office Projection

There are no current or historic estimates of seasonal population for Maine towns or regions, and few accepted mechanisms to generate such estimates. Rockland’s only identifiable seasonal population is classified as “short-term transient” by the Census; that is, temporary guests whose stay averages approximately one week or less. According to the Rockland-Thomaston Chamber of Commerce, of the 969 hotel rooms available from members of the Chamber, there are approximately 269 overnight rental rooms (hotel rooms) in the City of Rockland.

Rockland residents are primarily year round residents while surrounding communities often have larger seasonal populations. Rockland and the Mid-Coast are very popular tourist destinations due to their aesthetic beauty and the location on Penobscot Bay. Many additional tourists pass through on Route 1 as a scenic route to points north or on their way to Downeast Maine.

While seasonal residents and tourists represent an economic base for the retail and service sectors of the area, they also create an extra load on municipal services. Data presented in *Chapter 2 The Local Economy* show increased sales in summer months, along with increased traffic flow, increased demand for police services, and increased generation of solid waste.

It is difficult to project how much these seasonal influences in Rockland will increase in the next ten years. Seasonal tourism is controlled in large part by economic conditions in Boston, New York, and the nation, largely outside of scope of this plan. Development of seasonal housing in the region will be limited by the available or permitted building sites along lakes, rivers, and Penobscot Bay.

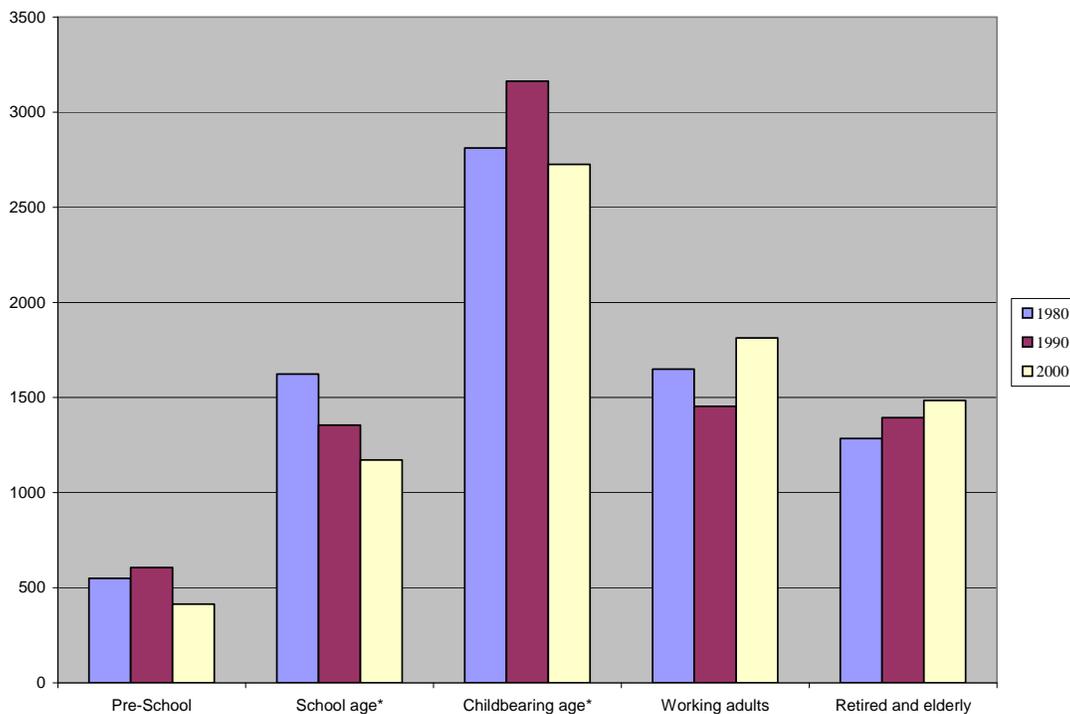
The year round population projections from the Maine State Planning Office (SPO) data from 2001 project a 2.1% decline in Rockland’s population between 2000 and 2010, while projections for Knox County show a 7.9% overall rate of increase during the same time period (see Table 1-1).

Population and Demographics

Age Distribution

Rockland residents' age distribution has shifted during the past three decades. The population of "Pre-school" residents (0-4 year olds) has dropped significantly particularly between 1990 and 2000. The population of "School Age" residents (5-17 year olds) has continuously dropped since 1980, which is also reflected in the school enrollment numbers. The population of "Child Bearing" aged residents (18-44 year olds) peaked in 1990 and has significantly decreased between 1990 and 2000. The population of "Working Adult" residents (45-64 year olds) and "Retired and Elderly" residents (65+ year olds) has continually increased. The median age of residents of Rockland has increased significantly from 34.6 years old according to the 1990 census to 40.9 years old according to the 2000 census. The largest segment of Rockland's population is the "Child Bearing" grouping (see Graph 1-2 and Table 1-3).

Graph 1-2 Comparative Age Groups in the Population



The 2000 Census showed Rockland's population to be 54% female and 46% male. Currently, the older the age grouping, the higher percentage of females in that group. Comparison of the 1980, 1990 and 2000 age distribution reveals a steady decline in the under 45 years of age groupings and a steady increase in the 45 + years of age population. From 1980 to 1990 the big growth was in the 25-44 age group; from 1990 to 2000, this shifted upwards to the 45-64 age group (see Graph 1-2 and Table 1-3).

In comparing the vital statistics for 1980-1990 and 1990-2000, the number of births has declined, the number of deaths has increased, and migration has decreased; these are all contributing factors to the declining population in the past decade (see Table 1-4).

Population and Demographics

Table 1-3 Comparative Age Groups in the Population				
Grouping	1980	1990	2000	
Pre-School	550	606	414	0-4 yrs
School age*	1,623	1,355	1,172	5-17 yrs
Childbearing age*	2,812	3,163	2,725	18-44 yrs
Working adults	1,649	1,454	1,813	45-64 yrs
Retired and elderly	1,285	1,394	1,485	65 yrs +
Total Population	7,919	7,972	7,609	

Source: 1980, 1990 and 2000 Census

* 2000 Census used a different age format, numbers have been revised to reflect age groups

Table 1-4 - Vital Statistics		
Rockland	1980-1990	1990-2000
Births	1197	1035
Deaths	1270	1304
Migration	126	94
Total change	53	-363

Source: City of Rockland Clerk

Households and Ancestry

Rockland has 3,434 households according to the 2000 Census. Of these households, 41% are married couple families (down from 47% in 1990); 16% are single householders age 65 and over (same as 1990); 20% are single householders under age 65 (up from 15% in 1990); 13% are female-headed single parent families (same as 1990); 9% are non-family multiple person households (up from 6% in 1990); and 3% are male-headed single parent families (same as 1990). There are 7,395 persons living in households; 175 institutionalized persons; and 39 persons living in group quarters (see Graph 1-3 and Table 1-5).

Persons per household continued to drop between 1990 and 2000. The median persons per household dropped to 2.15 in 2000, down from 2.34 in 1990, and 2.56 in 1980. This reflects the continuing trend of smaller families and an aging population in Rockland.

According to the 2000 Census, 97.9% of the Rockland population is white, followed by both Hispanic/Latinos and Asians making up 0.6% of the population each (see Table 1-6).

The statistics show that in general the population of Rockland is aging. The population that is dying is being replaced with either couples that are older and/or couples not having children, with single elderly people and other non-family living arrangements.

Population and Demographics

Graph 1-3 Houshold by Type 2000

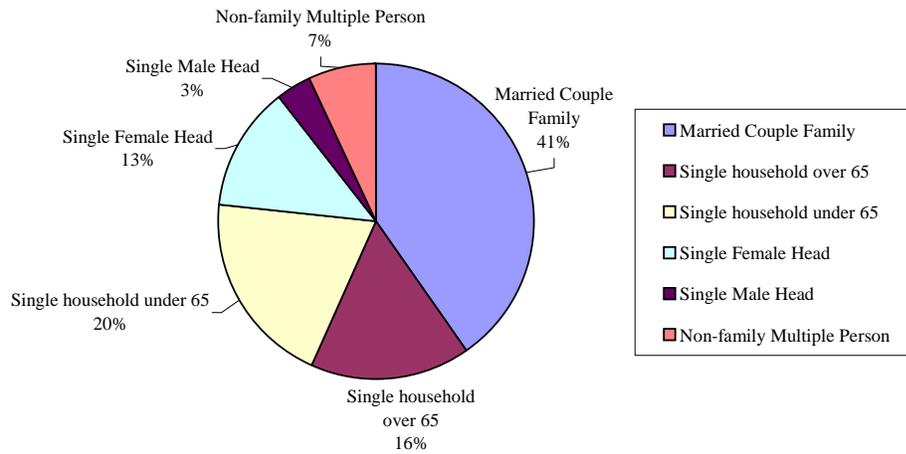


Table 1-5 Population by Household

Household Type	Number	Percentage
Married Couple Family	1386	41%
Single household over 65	558	16%
Single household under 65	690	20%
Single Female Head	442	13%
Single Male Head	117	3%
Non-family Multiple Person	241	9%
Total Households	3434	100%
Persons Living in Households	7395	97%
Institutionalized	175	2%
Other group quarters	39	1%
Total Population	7609	100%

Table 1-6 - 2000 Census Race

Ancestry	Number	Percentage
White	7406	97.90%
Hispanic/Latino	43	0.60%
Asian	43	0.60%
Black or African American	19	0.20%
American Indian	18	0.20%
Pacific Islander	2	0.00%
Some other race	8	0.10%
Two or more races	70	0.90%

Source: 2000 Census

Population and Demographics

Income

According to Census information, Rockland’s income levels rose substantially from 1980-1990; median income more than doubled from \$10,632 to \$22,006, an increase of 107%. The consumer price index for the United States increased by 58.6% during the same time period according to the State of Maine Department of Labor. According to Census 2000, the median household income increased by over \$8,000 between 1990 and 2000 to \$30,209, or by 37.2%. During the same time period the consumer price index for the United States increased 31.8% according to the State of Maine Department of Labor. Consumer price index information was not available for the State of Maine or Knox County. If the consumer price index changes for the nation reflect those in the State of Maine, the earning power of Rockland residents has increased significantly between 1980 and 1990 and less between 1990 and 2000.

Table 1-7 - Income Levels Compared				
Income Levels	1990		2000	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Under \$10,000	684	20.7%	461	13.4%
\$10,000-\$14,999	463	14.0%	485	14.1%
\$15,000-\$24,999	753	22.8%	594	17.2%
\$25,000-\$34,999	592	17.9%	443	12.9%
\$35,000-\$49,999	445	13.5%	714	20.7%
\$50,000-\$74,999	288	13.7%	473	13.7%
\$75,000-\$99,999	41	1.2%	146	4.2%
\$100,000-\$149,999	19	0.6%	106	3.1%
\$150,000 or more	19	0.6%	22	0.7%
Median Income	\$22,006		\$30,209	
Per Capita Income	\$9,404		\$16,659	

Source: 1990, 2000 Census

Per capita income grew between 1990 and 2000 from \$9,404 to \$16,659 (see Table 1-7). While most income increased from 1980 to 1990, some, such as farm self-employment income, dropped from a mean of \$7,005 to \$6,421 annually. Public Assistance income between 1980 and 1990 rose slightly from \$2,007 to \$3,183 but decreased to \$2,899 in 2000 (see Tables 1-8, 1-9).

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Table 1-8 Income Types 1980			
Type	1980		
	Households	Percent	Mean Income
Wage or Salary Income	2215	34.90%	\$12,839
Nonfarm Self Employment	318	5.00%	\$7,391
Farm Self Employment	7	0.10%	\$7,005
Social Security	1030	16.20%	\$3,607
Public Assistance	560	8.80%	\$2,007
Interest, Dividend, Rental	1068	16.80%	\$2,336
Retirement Income	*	*	*
All Other Income	1154	18.20%	\$3,264

*Census format changed from 1980 to 1990

Source: 1980 and 1990 Census

Table 1-9 Income Types 1990			
Type	1990		
	Households	Percent	Mean Income
Wage or Salary Income	2380	48.70%	\$24,197
Nonfarm Self Employment	500	10.20%	\$16,985
Farm Self Employment	21	0.40%	\$6,421
Social Security	1016	20.80%	\$7,665
Public Assistance	440	9.00%	\$3,183
Interest, Dividend, Rental	*	*	*
Retirement Income	530	10.80%	\$7,259
All Other Income	*	*	*

*Census format changed from 1980 to 1990

Source: 1980 and 1990 Census

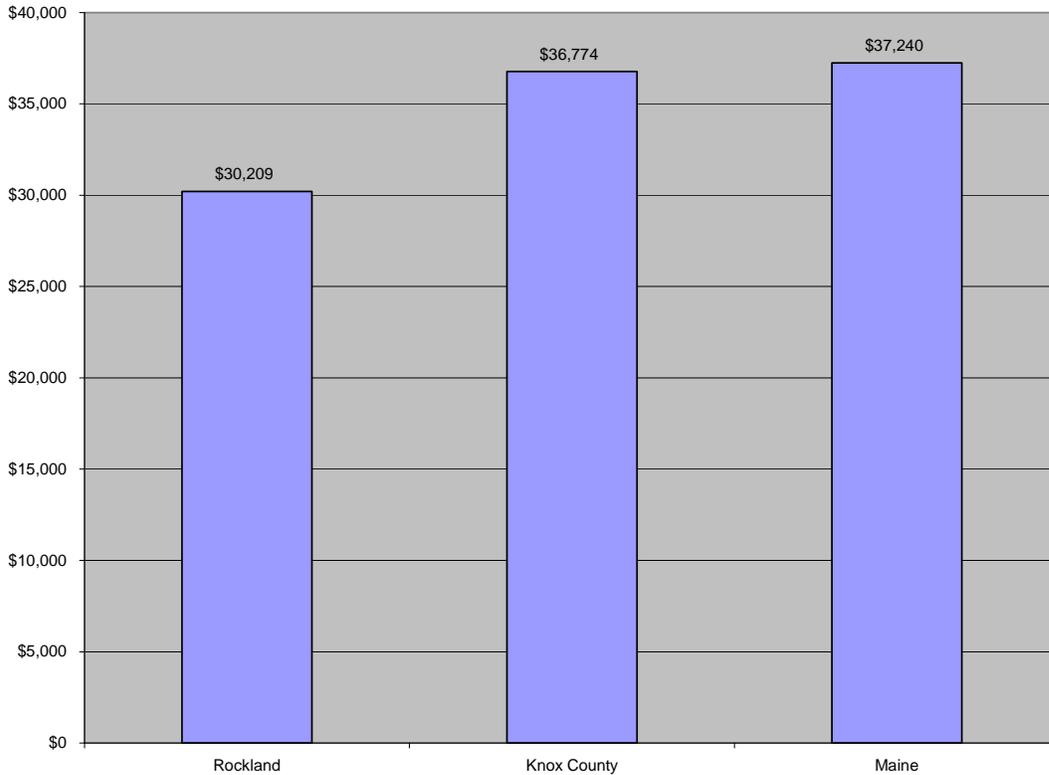
Rockland's median income level in 2000 was below the median income level of Knox County and the State (see Graph 1-4). The ratio of households with very low and low incomes in relation to the County have dropped from 1990 to 2000 according to census information and information derived from Claritas information (see Table 1-10).

Rockland's median household income was \$30,206 in 2000 according to the US Census. Among mainland municipalities in Knox County, only Rockland and Thomaston had median household incomes below \$35,000 (see Table 1-11).

Population and Demographics

Both the 1990 and the 2000 Census recorded a significantly higher percentage of persons in Rockland living below the poverty level than either Knox County or the State of Maine. The poverty rate dropped from 15.9 percent in 1990 to 14.7 percent in 2000. This decrease could be due to a number of regional economic improvements that have occurred since 1990. While both Knox County and Rockland’s poverty levels have decreased since 1990, the State of Maine’s poverty rate has increased. Table 1-12 shows the current poverty income levels as recognized by the State and Federal Government.

Graph 1-4 Median Household Income 2000



Income level	1990	2000	2000 Income
Very Low	34.70%	27.10%	<\$17,249
Low	22.80%	19.00%	\$17,250- \$27,599
Moderate	31.40%	34.50%	\$27,600 - \$51,748
Upper	11.10%	19.40%	>\$51,748

Very Low - less than 50% of County median income

Low - 51% to 80% of County median income

Moderate - 81% to 150% of County median income

Upper - More than 151% of County median income

Source: 1990, 2000 Census

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Table 1-11 - Median Income 2000	
Municipality	Median Income
Rockport	\$47,115
Owls Head	\$40,107
South Thomaston	\$43,594
Warren	\$35,662
Thomaston	\$33,306
Rockland	\$30,209
State of Maine	\$37,240
Knox County	\$36,774

Source: US Census 2000

Table 1-12 - Poverty Status - 2000				
Persons Living in Poverty	City of Rockland		Knox County	Maine
	Population	Rate	Rate	Rate
under 5	123	29.70%	15.1%	15.9%
5-17 years	233	19.1%	11.3%	18.5%
18-64 years	615	13.7%	9.4%	9.8%
65 years plus	114	9.7%	7.7%	9.7%
Total	1085	14.70%	10.10%	10.90%

Source: 2000 Census

One possible reason the poverty rate is higher in Rockland than in surrounding municipalities could be because most county social service provider agencies are located in Rockland. The high number of rental units and relatively “affordable” housing may be attracting households with lower incomes, thereby explaining the considerably lower median household income in Rockland (see *Chapter 7 Housing*).

Educational Enrollment and Attainment

The portion of Chapter 10 relating to schools clearly shows that Rockland schools are equivalent to schools in surrounding communities. However, the performance of recent graduates does not necessarily reflect the population as a whole. Census data from 1990 and 2000 shows that Rockland had a higher percentage of persons over the age of 25 who did not graduate from high school than Knox County or the state. Rockland also had a lower percentage of residents attaining their Bachelor’s, Graduate, or Professional degrees than in the County or the State. However, the percentage of Rockland

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citizens with some college (no degree), and persons with an associate degree was higher than the County and State percentages for these categories (see Table 1-13).

Table 1-13 - Educational Attainment Comparisons 2000				
Attainment	City of Rockland		Knox County	Maine
	Population	Rate	Rate	Rate
Less than 9th grade	250	4.70%	3.50%	5.40%
9-12th grade/no diploma	645	12.00%	9.00%	9.20%
High school graduate	2051	38.30%	36.40%	36.20%
Some college/no degree	1071	20.00%	18.90%	19.00%
Associates degree	249	4.60%	5.90%	7.30%
Bachelor's Degree	724	13.50%	17.10%	14.90%
Post graduate degree	370	6.90%	9.20%	7.90%
Total	5360	100.00%		

Issues and Implications

- (1) Rockland’s population has decreased slightly in the past decade, but remains relatively stable. Should the City take actions to effect this trend?
- (2) The median age of the population has increased considerably in the past decade and is expected to continue to increase. This may have implications in the next two decades as more medical and social services and specialized housing may be needed for this population. How should the City adapt to these changes?
- (3) As the size of the average household continues to decrease, a stable population with smaller family sizes still increases the demand for housing. Should the City do anything to influence the housing market to respond to these trends?
- (4) According to the 2000 Census and the Rockland-Thomaston Area Chamber of Commerce data, the population of Rockland has a higher percentage of high school dropouts and a lower percentage of people with some college education than either the county or state as a whole. Is the resident work force sufficiently educated and trained to meet the skilled labor needs of new and expanded industries and businesses the City? Are there sufficient opportunities for adult education?

Goals, Policies, and Strategies

Goal: Foster conditions that will stabilize Rockland's gradual population decline since 1950.

Policies:

- 1) Consider effects of commercial development on residential properties, neighborhoods, and the population of the City.
- 2) Promote Rockland's cultural advantages to attract prospective residents.
- 3) Provide municipal support for private efforts that enhance the maritime culture of Rockland.

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Strategies:

- 1) Review and amend residential zoning factors such as lot size, building setbacks, landscaping standards, and traffic to achieve an attractive urban environment in which people want to live and work.
- 2) Review and amend commercial zoning factors such as lot size, building setbacks, landscaping standards, and traffic to efficiently use available commercial land and to achieve an attractive urban environment in which people want to live and work.
- 3) Increase efforts to make the harbor accessible, visually and physically, to the public while still maintaining areas for marine-related activities.

Goal: To promote a balance between residential and commercial growth so that Rockland continues to be a desirable place to live and work.

Policies:

- 1) Continue to develop Rockland's infrastructure to support both residential and commercial expansion.
- 2) Continue to amend Rockland's land use ordinances to reflect present realities and desired future development trends. Continue to improve the administration and enforcement of these ordinances.
- 3) Encourage adaptive reuse of historic structures.

Strategies:

- 1) Invest in infrastructure to serve areas that are undeveloped.
- 2) Develop Ordinances that require the removal or rehabilitation of uninhabitable buildings.

Goal: Support development of educational opportunities.

Policies:

- 1) Promote relationships between the Rockland -Thomaston Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, the City of Rockland, and public and private education organizations to develop the knowledge and skills required in business.
- 2) Support development of educational opportunities through schools, libraries, art galleries, and other cultural institutions.
- 3) Modify and expand the educational system, public and private, to provide continuing education and economic advancement opportunities to students of all ages.

Strategies:

- 1) Stimulate the development of "Career Days" and business seminars for Maine School Administrative District # 5 (MSAD 5) students.
- 2) Encourage industrial and business site seminars for educators.
- 3) Promote MSAD 5 student involvement in all aspects of local government: student internships, Student Mayor, City Manager, and City Council Day.