

the Lakes Region Plan

Executive Summary 2015 to 2020



LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

103 Main Street • Humiston Building

Meredith, NH 03253

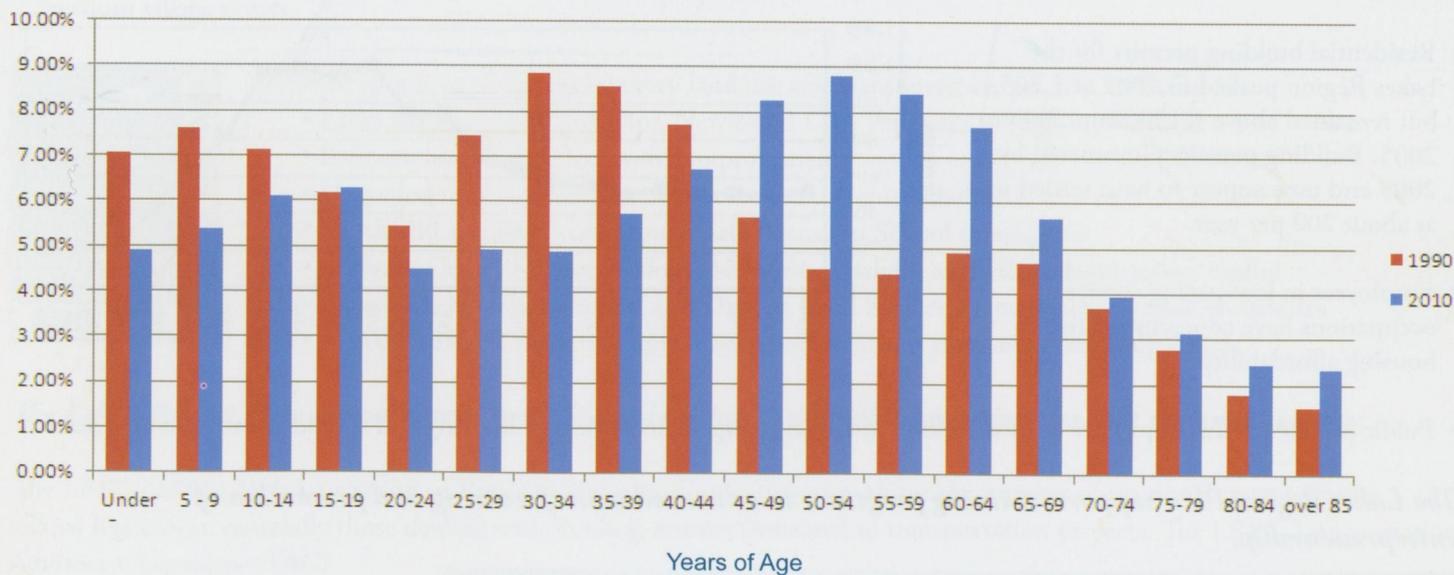
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Demographics — *the defining characteristic — the region will age ... an aging population brings an increase in demand for health care, personal care services, and other services.*

The changing demographics will significantly influence planning for the future ... more persons are 65 and older

- The graph below shows the percentage increase in persons over age 50 along with a percentage decline in persons age 44 and younger. This trend is getting stronger.
- In the 30 year period, 1980 to 2010, the region's population increased by 34,609 persons, an annual average of 1.5 percent. For the next 30 years, 2010 to 2040, projections indicate the population will increase by 11,200 persons, an annual average of 0.33 percent.
- This suggests a reduction in the rate of increase from 1,153 persons to about 370 persons per year.

Lakes Region Population Grew Older, 1990 to 2010



- Whether or not second home owners decide to retire permanently to the region, as the Baby Boomers get older and retire, these second home owners are likely to spend more time in the region, which will spur an increase locally in consumer spending.

Economic Development & Housing

A drop in employment

- From 2005 to 2012, total employment in the Lakes Region dropped by 2,600 jobs. Nearly all of the jobs lost were attributable to a decline in goods-producing (i.e. manufacturing and construction) industries.
- Between 2005 and 2012, employment in manufacturing and construction declined by more than a quarter of their original base.

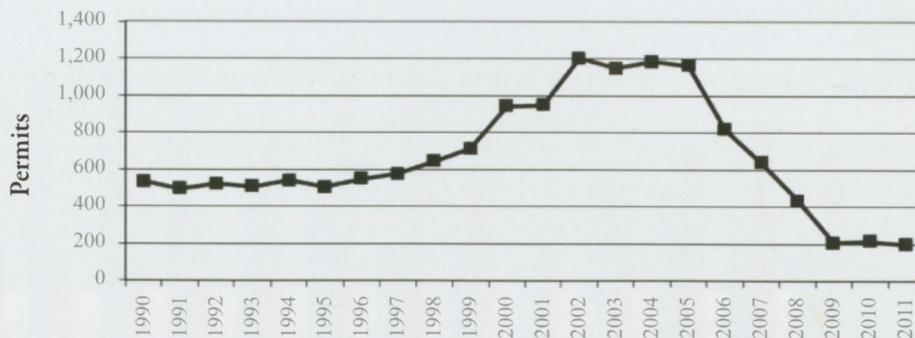
Seasonal employment is becoming a larger component of the regional economy

- Due to the decline of the goods-producing industries, the region has become more dependent on service-providing jobs, traditionally in tourism and now services related to an aging population.
- For some residents, seasonal jobs are a way of life, working summer jobs in the Lakes Region and migrating to other regions for work during the winter months.
- Lack of employment opportunities during the winter months, lower wages, and lack of benefits create hardship for some residents.

The regional economy needs suitable housing for workers and retirees alike

- The housing market is adjusting to changes in employment and population.
- Residential building permits for the Lakes Region peaked in 2002 at 1,205, but remained above 1,150 from 2003 to 2005. Building permits plummeted by 2009 and now appear to have settled in at about 200 per year.
- Employees in low-paying service occupations have concerns relative to housing affordability.
- Public private partnerships have been successful in constructing some workforce housing and should continue where needed.

Total Residential Permits Issued in the Lakes Region: 1990 - 2011



The Lakes Region Plan supports training programs in advanced manufacturing and promotion of entrepreneurship.

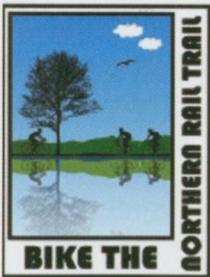
In Belknap County, regional leaders in education, economic development, planning, banking, and local business people continue to collaborate to create a continuous supply of trained workers for local manufacturers so that they can find the talented and skilled labor locally. The Lakes Region Community College (LRCC) and the Huot Technical Center continue to align their curriculums to better meet the needs of local manufacturers. Investments in new equipment, facilities, and curriculum improvement are producing positive results. Instructional programs in manufacturing at the Huot Center have grown in enrollment from four students to more than 110 in less than three years. Other regional high schools are providing training in high tech manufacturing.

The Belknap Economic Development Council (BEDC) encourages training for replacement and new employment opportunities in advanced manufacturing and promotes entrepreneurship and encourages young talented persons to move to the region. The Enterprise Center at Plymouth, incubator space for new entrepreneurs, will benefit the Lakes Region.

Transportation

Transportation needs far outweigh available resources ... especially for remote rural areas

- Transportation needs statewide have outpaced available funding, which in the Lakes Region led to a \$88 million reduction and removal of locally identified transportation construction projects from the state plan since 2006.
- Beyond road maintenance, additional funding and focus is needed to mitigate highway impacts on water quality; with few exceptions, highway stormwater is not treated prior to entering surface waters.
- Even though vehicle travel on New Hampshire's major highways increased 32 percent between 1990 and 2008, rising from 9.8 billion vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in 1990 to over 13 billion miles statewide, gas tax revenues have continued to decline.
- The region's population will age ... and the Lakes Region has few transportation alternatives for an aging population.
- A significant challenge in the Lakes Region is the poor state of repair of secondary and unnumbered state routes. Sections of the following roads are of concern: NH 25B, NH 109, NH 113, NH 171, NH 175 and the three state routes leading to Freedom village center.

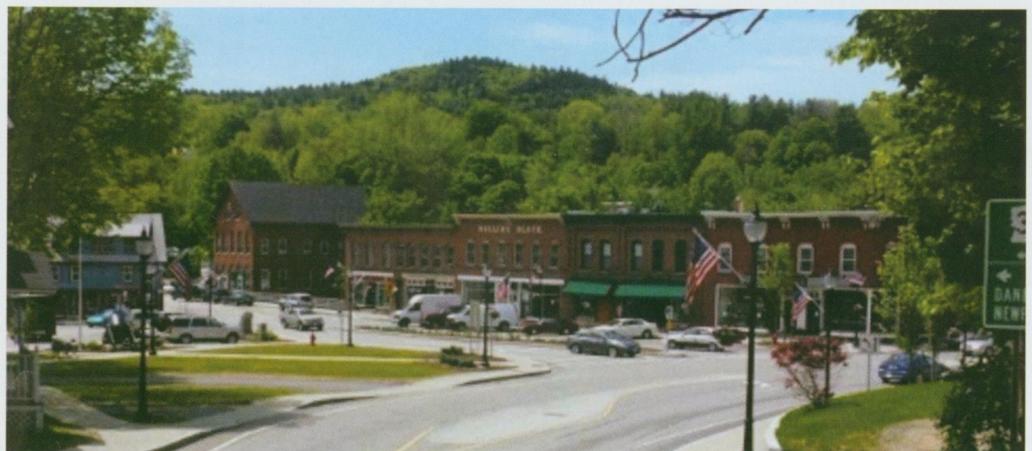


- Recent examples of complementary land use and transportation projects include:
 - Lakes Region Trail Connector, Newfound Lake Pathways, Northern Rail Trail
 - Belmont and Bristol downtown improvements
 - Upgraded road standards in Sanbornton and Center Harbor
 - Northfield and Moultonborough Safe Routes to School travel plans
 - Ashland, Center Harbor, Gilford, Meredith, Ossipee, and Tilton Road Safety Audits
 - Barnstead, Moultonborough and Ossipee Road Surface Management System inventories
 - Meredith and Wolfeboro Context Sensitive Solutions state route planning efforts.

The Lakes Region Plan supports transportation planning that establishes priorities in a regional context.

The LRPC and the NH Association of Regional Planning Commissions monitor the impacts of proposed transportation related legislation, especially those dealing with funding sources dedicated to transportation projects. The LRPC Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) monitors necessary transportation infrastructure improvements and evaluates regional transportation projects. The TAC was pleased to support the Town of Bristol's transportation enhancement project.

Central Square, Bristol



Environment

Water quality is the defining issue in the region and requires continual attention ...

The overall quality of the lakes is good, though transparency and clarity is declining. Due to phosphorus and fertilizers, the lakes are experiencing algae blooms and cyanobacteria. Increased stormwater runoff and outdated septic systems contribute to declining water quality.

Water Quality Action items:

1. Need for continued education, outreach and citizen involvement on water quality issues.
2. Regional cooperation on a watershed basis; review and update watershed management plans.
3. Enhanced local land use regulations and use of Best Management Practices.
4. Identify water quality issues and propose design alternatives. The design and construction of the bio-retention basin in Laconia is a good example.

Conservation and protection of key parcels will lead to improved water quality.

Land Conservation Action items:

1. Educate the public about the water quality and land conservation connection.
2. Education on “green infrastructure” and the value it adds.
3. Maintain interest and support for land conservation.
4. Education on benefits of key parcels to be acquired.

In order to maintain and improve the high level of water quality, local and state governments will need to make investments in local wastewater treatment facilities and in the Winnepesaukee River Basin Program.

The Lakes Region Plan recommends that LRPC and its partner institutions keep local officials, citizens, volunteers and the general public engaged.

The LRPC will work and cooperate with the Lake Winnepesaukee Watershed Association and other watershed associations using the <http://winnepesaukeegateway.org> website to educate the public on water quality issues and best management practices (BMPs). The LRPC will support land use planning efforts and assist with educational efforts regarding future investments in wastewater treatment facilities and stormwater management programs.



Natural Hazards and Climate Change

Climate change is causing more severe and frequent weather events that strain local infrastructure ... communities need to plan for these events and become more resilient.

- New England experienced 70 percent more extreme precipitation in recent years as evidenced by dramatic downpours that increase the risk of flooding.
- Unusual events such as tornados and severe ice storms are occurring.
- Climate change and severe weather events impact our traditional economy.

The Lakes Region Plan recommends that LRPC assist communities in becoming more resilient.

The LRPC will continue to work with communities on hazard mitigation planning and assist them with land use plans that address resiliency issues.



**Straits Road, old and new culverts,
New Hampton**



July 24, 2008 tornado, Wolfeboro



Energy Efficiency and Green Building

There is strong interest in energy efficiency, renewable energy and green buildings ... energy efficiency and green building techniques provide Lakes Region communities with options to lower energy costs.

- Local and County government have implemented innovative energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, such as solar array in Sandwich, geothermal heating system at Kingswood Regional High School, wood boiler at the Carroll County Nursing Home, lighting upgrades in Laconia and others.
- The Lakes Region Community College (LRCC) is a valuable regional resource for its energy services and technology program and overall energy knowledge base.
- Region-wide energy efficiency can best be implemented when other public policies are taken into consideration, such as land use, air quality, transportation, housing and economic development and other issues.

The Lakes Region Plan recognizes the importance of energy issues and the potential role of the LRPC in cooperation with partner institutions.

The LRPC will collaborate with partner organizations (NH DES, LRCC, The Jordan Institute, and others) regarding public information, education and outreach, information sharing and technical assistance with small scale energy efficiency, and renewable energy projects and green building projects. LRPC can assist local energy committees when needed.

Lakes Region Community College



We welcome your comments.

The Lakes Region Plan can be a valuable resource and source of information for communities as they consider future land use issues, update chapters of their Master Plans and explore ways to collaborate on regional issues such as transportation, watershed planning, economic development and others.

The LRPC sincerely thanks the Lakes Region Plan Advisory Committee (LRPAC) for dedicated assistance in reviewing draft planning documents, offering comments and in guiding the process of plan preparation. As representatives of local governments, the LRPAC made sure the plan reflected local and regional concerns, issues and aspirations. LRPAC members include LRPC Commissioners John Cotton, Andover; Jean Marshall, Chair, Freedom; Bob Snelling, Vice Chair, Holderness; Warren Hutchins, Laconia; Carmine Cioffi, Sanbornton; Joseph Jesseman, Tilton; Steve Wingate, Tuftonboro; David Kerr, TAC, Barnstead; Shanna Saunders, Laconia City Planner; Mark Scarano, Grafton County Economic Development Council, Ashland; Carol Pierce, Regional Leadership Committee, Laconia.

LRPC staff members, Jeffrey Hayes, Executive Director, and Gerald Coogan, AICP Project Manager, welcome your comments. Contact jhayes@lakesrpc.org or jcoogan@lakesrpc.org.

Assistance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Sustainable Communities Initiatives program provided the resources to complete the Lakes Region Plan, which enabled the Commission to comply with the requirements of NH RSA 36:45 to 50.