

COMMUNITY PROFILE

INTRODUCTION

The community profile is a collection of statistical information pertaining to general population, housing, income, and employment characteristics of the town. In the context of the master plan, a statistical profile is useful in two ways. First, it helps to place the town in comparison with other communities in the region. Second, important trends which may affect the future growth and development of the town can be identified and analyzed. As appropriate, this statistical information may be taken into account in making policy decisions.

Recognizing these intended uses, the statistical information presented here takes two principal forms. Most of the tables contain information for Atkinson and other surrounding communities of Danville, Plaistow and Sandown that are geographically and socioeconomically proximate to Atkinson. These four towns are also similar because they form the Timberlane School District. Included also are totals for Rockingham County and the State of New Hampshire. These tables provide an expanded regional context for the data presented. Most of the remaining tables show data for Atkinson covering a period of years, from which important trends can be identified.

An analysis of the statistical information regarding the demographics of Atkinson's populations reveals certain trends that may be found throughout the Master Plan. The findings in this chapter help to quantify and support these trends and provide a backbone to the final recommendations in this document. For instance, certain population characteristics may indicate a specific type of recreational facility used and/or needed. Also, depending on the age and makeup of the population, it may be apparent that certain specific land uses should be encouraged for the benefit of the Town's citizens.

The importance of the source for the information is equaled to the importance of the information itself. The data presented herein this chapter are derived from the U.S. Census, NH Office of Energy and Planning population reports and Town records. There were two types of questionnaires that were used to compile the U.S. Census data. The Short Form was sent to 83% of all households. It contained 14 basic population and housing questions. The Long Form, which was sent to 17% of all housing units, included the 14 questions that appear on the Short Form plus 45 other questions about each member of the household and the housing unit. STF1A data (also referred to as the 100-percent data) were prepared by tabulating responses to the 14 questions that appear on both the Short and Long forms. STF 3A data (also referred to as Sample data) is based on results from the Long Form. Sample data prepared from the long forms were statistically weighted or inflated to produce estimates of what a complete enumeration would have produced. There is usually a small amount of error present between the weighted figure, based on a sample, and the corresponding figure collected on a 100 percent basis. Therefore, certain counts in STF 3A data (e.g., Place of Birth) may have different totals than STF 1A counts (e.g., Total Population). If there are differences, they are

negligible: for instance Atkinson's place of birth totals from STF 3A population is 6,178; and total population number from STF 1A is also 6,178. All 2000 Census data was derived from STF 3A, with the exception of the population and housing data which came from STF 1A.

1. Population Growth

Historically, Atkinson like much of the Seacoast region of New Hampshire was an agricultural community with a sparsely populated area. The Town encompasses an area of 6,912 acres and its population in 1767 was 476 (Table P-1). During much of the 18th and 19th century, population levels remained stable, with minimal growth. Between 1950 and 1960, the population doubled from 492 persons to 1017 and experienced an average annual growth rate of 7.0%. This explosive growth trend continued for an additional 20 years. Since 1980, growth has seen a dramatic drop from the previous 30 years, however, there has continued to be a steady growth rate of approximately 1.4% per year. In 2005, Atkinson's population was estimated to be 6,560 persons. This is equivalent to 607 persons per square mile, or approximately 1.1 acres per persons. Although by urban standards this is not a high population density, it does represent a considerable increase in density when compared with historical populations of Atkinson. Figure P-1 and Figure P-2 visually depict the growth trends represented in Table P-1 and compare it with the population growth of surrounding communities.

Table P-1

POPULATION HISTORY

Atkinson

1767-2005

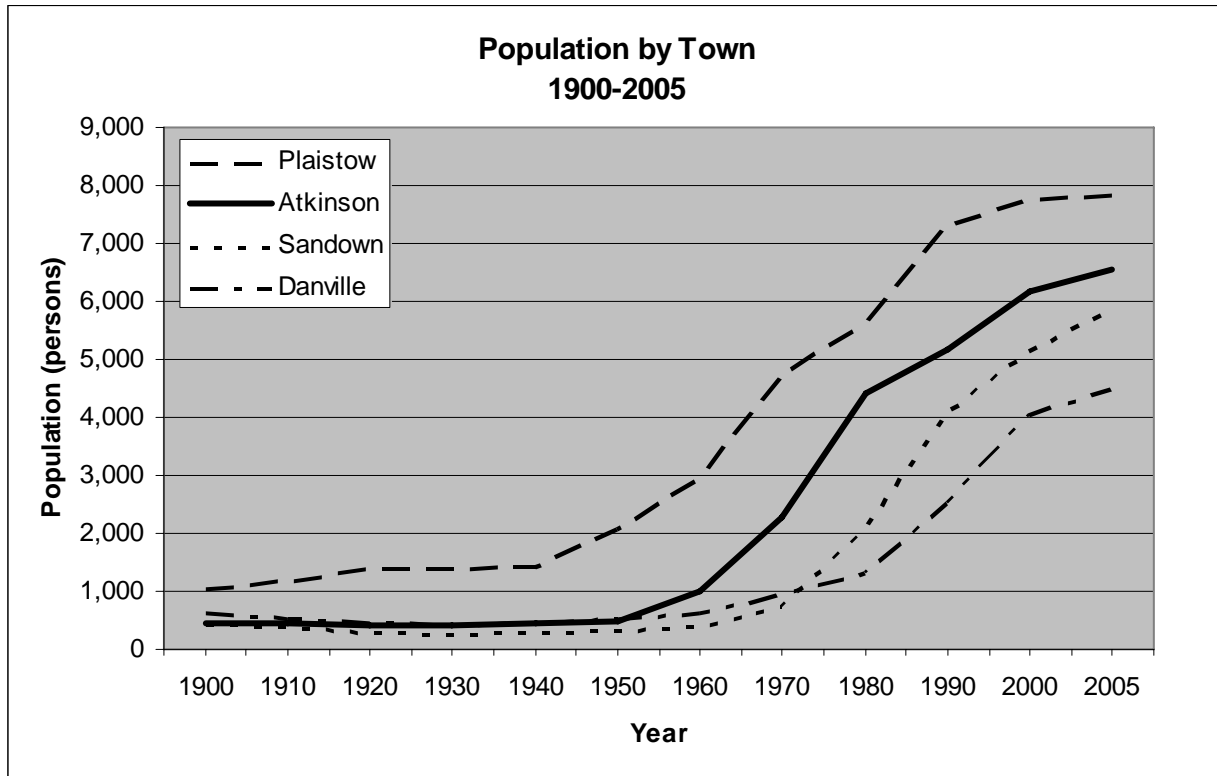
Area of Town: 6,912 Acres

Year	Population	Acres per Person	Average Annual Growth for Report Period	Year	Population	Acres per Person	Average Annual Growth for Report Period
1767	476	14.5	---	1890	483	14.3	-0.4%
1775	575	12	2.3%	1900	442	15.6	-0.9%
1786	500	13.8	-1.3%	1910	440	15.7	0.0%
1790	479	14.4	-1.1%	1920	413	16.7	-0.6%
1800	474	14.5	-0.1%	1930	407	17	-0.1%
1810	556	12.4	1.6%	1940	433	15.9	0.6%
1820	563	12.3	0.1%	1950	492	14	1.3%
1830	554	12.4	-0.2%	1960	1,017	6.8	7.0%
1840	557	12.4	0.1%	1970	2,291	3	7.8%
1850	600	11.5	0.7%	1980	4,397	1.5	6.3%
1860	546	12.6	-0.9%	1990	5,188	1.3	1.6%
1870	488	14.1	-1.1%	2000	6,178	1.1	1.7%
1880	502	13.8	0.3%	2005	6,560	1.1	1.2%

Sources: 1767-1960, 2005, NH Office of Energy and Planning.
1970-2000, US Census Bureau.

Figure P-1

**POPULATION BY TOWN
Atkinson and Surrounding Communities
1900-2005**



Data:

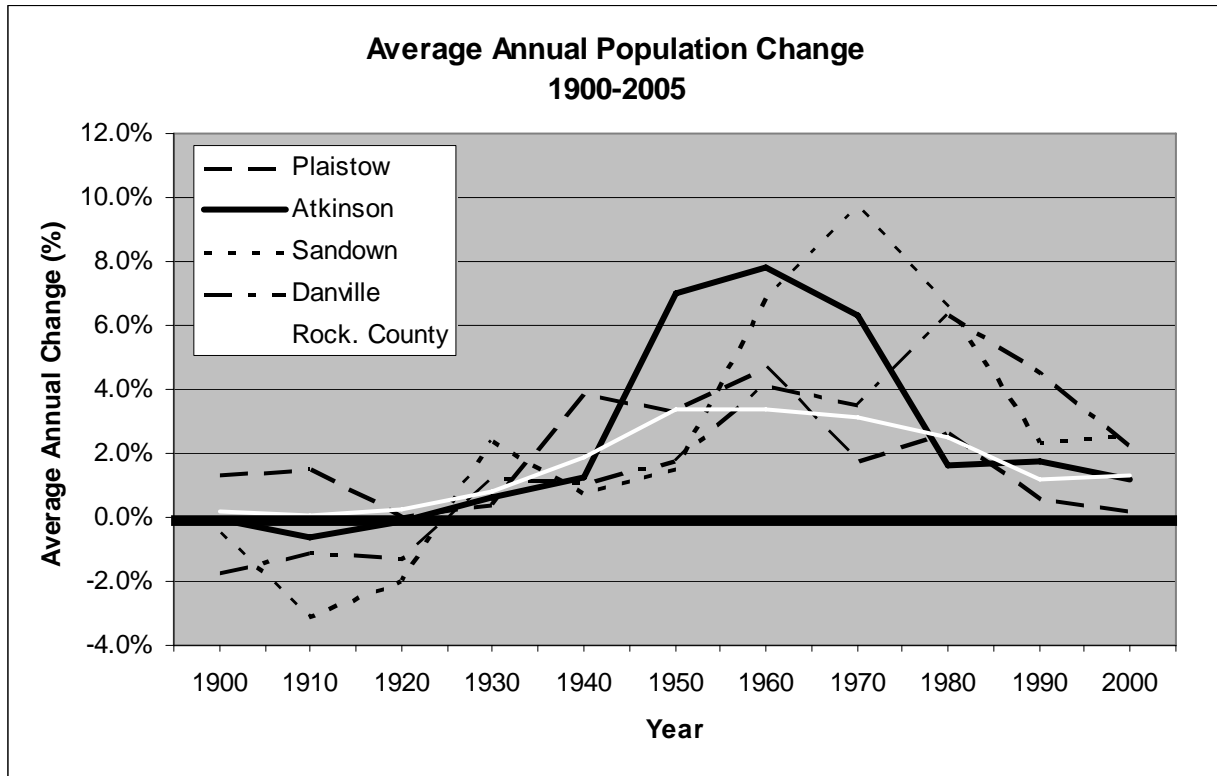
Town	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950
Atkinson	442	440	413	407	433	492
Danville	615	517	463	406	457	508
Plaistow	1,027	1,173	1,368	1,366	1,414	2,082
Sandown	400	380	280	229	292	315

Town	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005
Atkinson	1,017	2,291	4,397	5,188	6,178	6,560
Danville	605	924	1,318	2,534	4,023	4,490
Plaistow	2,915	4,712	5,609	7,316	7,747	7,820
Sandown	366	741	2,057	4,060	5,143	5,850

Sources: 1900-1960, 2005, NH Office of Energy and Planning.
1970-2000, US Census Bureau.

Figure P-2

**AVERAGE ANNUAL POPULATION CHANGE
Atkinson and Surrounding Communities
1900-2005**



Data:

	-1900	-1910	-1920	-1930	-1940	-1950
Atkinson	n/a	0.0%	-0.6%	-0.1%	0.6%	1.3%
Danville	n/a	-1.8%	-1.1%	-1.3%	1.2%	1.1%
Plaistow	n/a	1.3%	1.5%	0.0%	0.3%	3.8%
Sandown	n/a	-0.5%	-3.1%	-2.0%	2.4%	0.8%
Rock. County	n/a	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%	0.8%	1.8%

	-1960	-1970	-1980	-1990	-2000	-2005
Atkinson	7.0%	7.8%	6.3%	1.6%	1.7%	1.2%
Danville	1.7%	4.1%	3.5%	6.3%	4.5%	2.2%
Plaistow	3.3%	4.7%	1.7%	2.6%	0.6%	0.2%
Sandown	1.5%	6.8%	9.7%	6.6%	2.3%	2.5%
Rock. County	3.4%	3.4%	3.1%	2.5%	1.2%	1.3%

Sources: 1900-1960, 2005, NH Office of Energy and Planning.
1970-2000, US Census Bureau.

The growth of the population in Atkinson has largely been correlated to the population of the region and the surrounding communities. Table P-2 is a snapshot of the population growth and density for Atkinson and surrounding towns between 1980-2005. Throughout the 80's, Atkinson's average annual growth was dramatically lower than the surrounding communities. However beginning in 1990, Atkinson's population growth remained steady while surrounding communities realized a decline. This statement can be observed when comparing Atkinson's average annual increase in the 1980's being 1.6% and 1.7% in the 90's, while the average annual growth rate for Rockingham county was 2.5% and 1.2% respectively. Also of interest is the growth rate experienced at the state level. The general trend of a moderately increasing population during the 1990's continued into the 21st century. The exceptions being Danville with a decrease from 4.5% annual average growth in the 1990's to 2.2% between 2000-2005. Population density in 2005 showed Atkinson being relatively more concentrated (607.4 person/sq. mi.) versus its neighboring communities.

Table P-2

GROWTH AND DENSITY
Atkinson and Surrounding Communities
1980-2005

TOWN/AREA	US Census				Average Annual Change			2005	
	1980	1990	2000	OEP Est. 2005	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2005	Area (Sq. Mi)	Persons/Sq. Mile
Atkinson	4,397	5,188	6,178	6,560	1.6%	1.7%	1.2%	10.8	607.4
Danville	1,318	2,534	4,023	4,490	6.3%	4.5%	2.2%	11.5	390.4
Plaistow	5,609	7,316	7,747	7,820	2.6%	0.6%	0.2%	9.9	789.9
Sandown	2,057	4,060	5,143	5,850	6.6%	2.3%	2.5%	13.6	430.1
Timber. Sch. Dist.	13,381	19,098	23,091	24,720	3.5%	1.9%	1.4%	45.8	539.7
Rock. County	190,345	245,845	277,359	296,740	2.5%	1.2%	1.3%	699	424.5
N.H.	920,475	1,109,252	1,235,786	1,315,000	1.8%	1.1%	1.2%	8,992	146.2

Sources: 1980, 1990, 2000, US Census Bureau.
2005, NH Office of Energy and Planning.

In 2007, the N.H. Office of Energy and Planning projected Atkinson to grow moderately at 0.8% per year during 2000-2030 (Table P-3). It is estimated that in 2030 Atkinson's population will reach 7,790, or 1,230 more people than in 2005. This rate matches the rate of the region and is slightly lower than the projected growth rates for surrounding towns (Danville 1.0%, Sandown 1.1%, Hampstead 0.8%). The projected growth rates also reveal that Atkinson will continue to have a stable share of the county's population and it is not predicted that the Town will have any additional growth that won't already be experienced within the county.

The impact of the moderate level of growth should not be underestimated. Even though the level of growth isn't expected to mimic the boom in the 50's, 60's and 70's, it is still a very important issue for town planners to consider both in a regional and local context. Issues regarding land use and population are more fully addressed in the Existing Land Use Chapter.

Table P-3

**PROJECTED POPULATION AND GROWTH RATES
Atkinson and Surrounding Communities
2000-2030**

TOWN/AREA	Population (#)						Average Annual Growth Rate (%)				
	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2000-2010	2000-2015	2000-2020	2000-2025	2000-2030
Atkinson	6,178	6,800	7,090	7,330	7,570	7,790	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%
Danville	4,023	4,660	4,870	5,060	5,240	5,420	1.5%	1.3%	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%
Hampstead	8,297	8,980	9,430	9,810	10,190	10,550	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%
Plaistow	7,747	8,110	8,480	8,770	9,070	9,350	0.5%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%
Salem	28,112	30,940	31,880	32,770	33,680	34,440	1.0%	0.8%	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%
Sandown	5,143	6,070	6,360	6,610	6,860	7,090	1.6%	1.4%	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%
Region	178,997	197,390	205,230	212,070	219,250	225,760	1.0%	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%
Rock. County	277,359	308,220	320,490	331,190	341,850	351,660	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%
N.H.	1,235,786	1,365,140	1,420,000	1,470,010	1,520,310	1,565,040	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	0.8%	0.8%

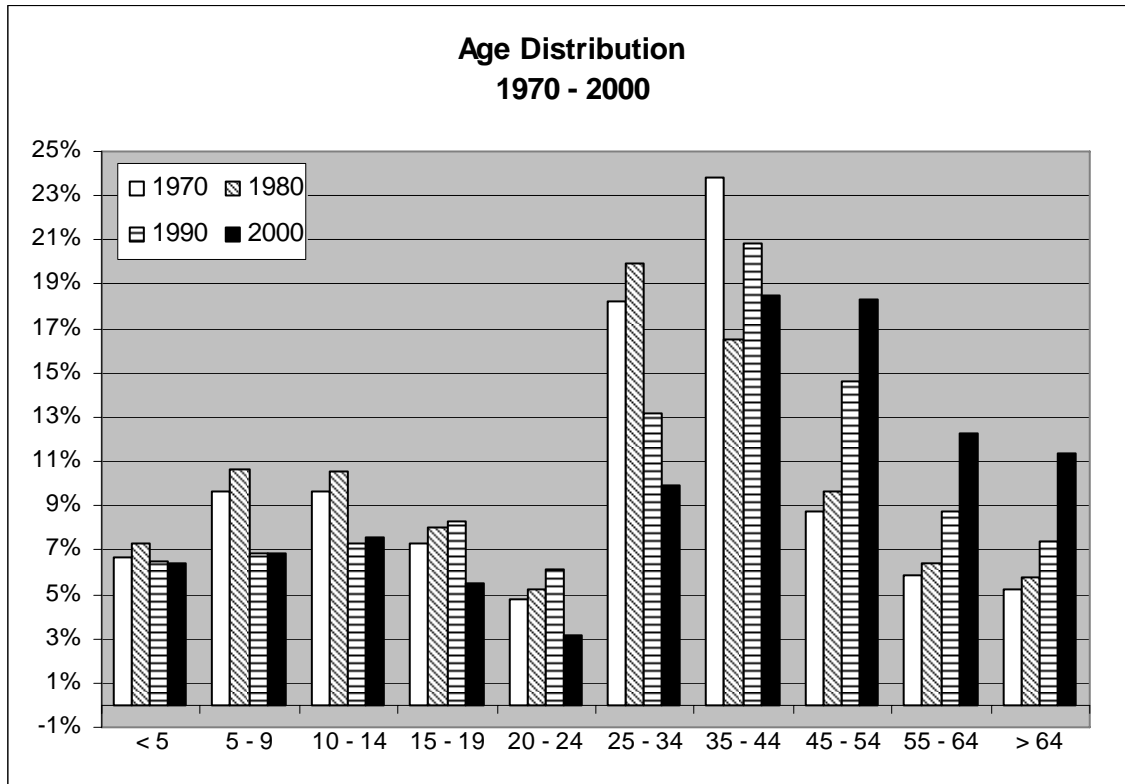
Sources: 2000, US Census Bureau.
2010-2030, NH Office of Energy and Planning.

Age Distribution

In addition to population changes, the age distribution of the residents in Atkinson will have an effect on the community services. Figure P-3 illustrates the age distribution of the population of the Town from 1970-2000. The data demonstrates the combined effects of in-migration and the demographic age shifts of an aging population. The adult and elderly populations have been growing, while the youth population brackets have fewer residents in this class for the year 2000 than in 1970. This trend of an aging population will cause a shift of services. One example is the increase number of 55+ communities that have transpired.

Figure P-3

**AGE DISTRIBUTION
Atkinson
1970-2000**



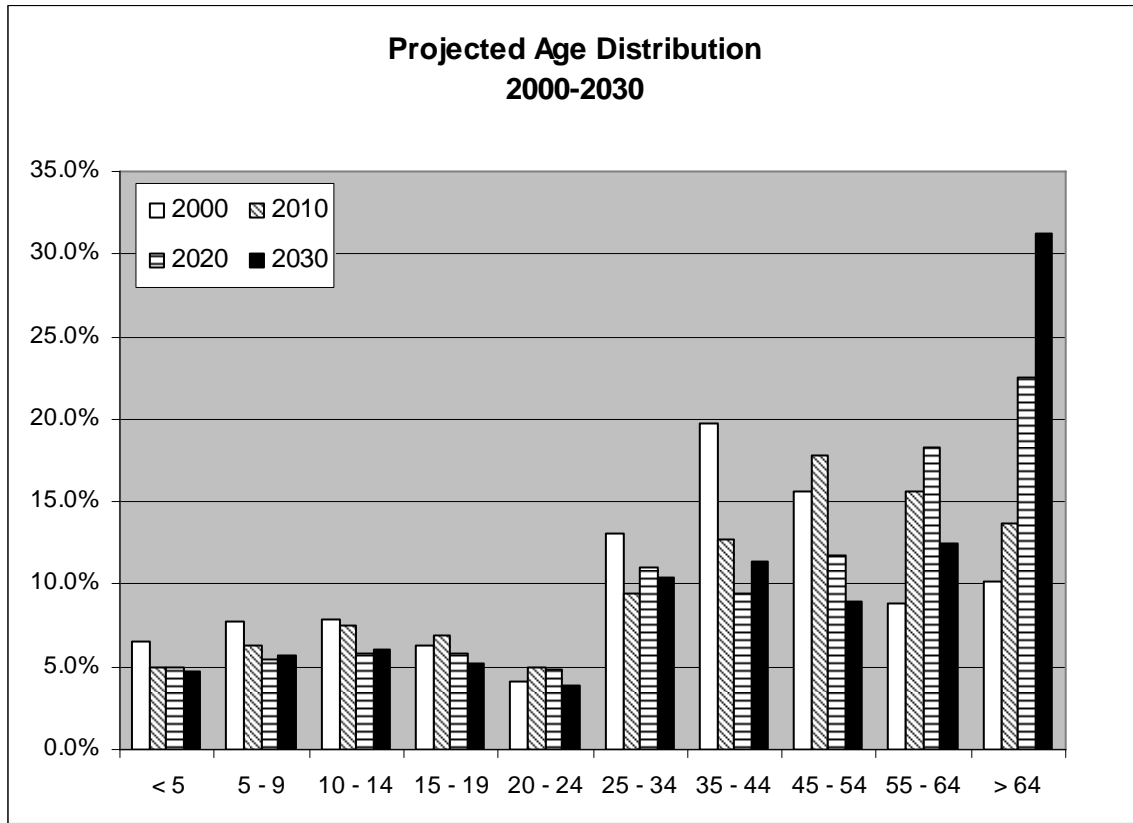
Data:

Age Group	1970		1980		1990		2000	
	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)
< 5	320	6.6%	320	7.3%	335	6.5%	397	6.4%
5 - 9	467	9.7%	467	10.6%	357	6.9%	424	6.9%
10 - 14	463	9.6%	463	10.5%	380	7.3%	469	7.6%
15 - 19	350	7.3%	354	8.1%	432	8.3%	339	5.5%
20 - 24	231	4.8%	231	5.3%	320	6.2%	193	3.1%
25 - 34	877	18.2%	877	19.9%	685	13.2%	615	10.0%
35 - 44	1,149	23.9%	726	16.5%	1,083	20.9%	1142	18.5%
45 - 54	423	8.8%	423	9.6%	759	14.6%	1134	18.4%
55 - 64	283	5.9%	283	6.4%	454	8.8%	760	12.3%
> 64	253	5.3%	253	5.8%	383	7.4%	705	11.4%
TOTAL	4,816	100%	4,397	100%	5,188	100%	6,178	100%

Source: 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, US Census Bureau.

Figure P-4

**PROJECTED AGE DISTRIBUTION
Rockingham County
2000-2030**



Data:

Age Group	2000		2010		2020		2030	
	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)	(#)	(%)
< 5	18,100	6.5%	15,203	4.9%	16,282	4.9%	16,655	4.7%
5 - 9	21,398	7.7%	19,534	6.3%	17,932	5.4%	19,895	5.7%
10 - 14	22,001	7.9%	23,306	7.6%	19,364	5.8%	21,150	6.0%
15 - 19	17,610	6.3%	21,382	6.9%	19,296	5.8%	18,140	5.2%
20 - 24	11,403	4.1%	15,331	5.0%	15,994	4.8%	13,685	3.9%
25 - 34	36,314	13.1%	29,033	9.4%	36,628	11.1%	36,431	10.4%
35 - 44	54,673	19.7%	39,211	12.7%	31,267	9.4%	40,187	11.4%
45 - 54	43,345	15.6%	55,044	17.9%	39,095	11.8%	31,651	9.0%
55 - 64	24,428	8.8%	48,179	15.6%	60,562	18.3%	43,971	12.5%
> 64	28,087	10.1%	42,004	13.6%	74,761	22.6%	109,869	31.2%
Total	277,359	100.0%	308,227	100.0%	331,181	100.0%	351,634	100.0%

Source: 2000-2025, NH Office of Energy and Planning.

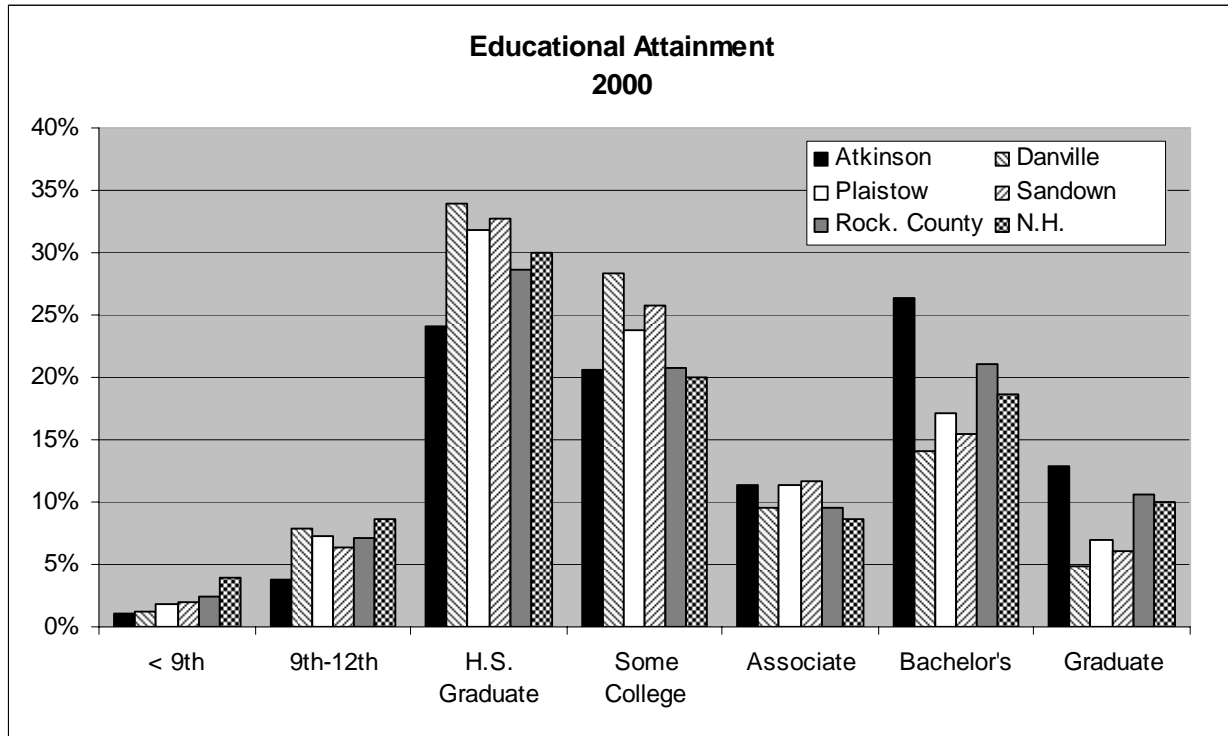
The future shift in the age distribution of the population may be anticipated by the patterns shown in Figure P-4, illustrating the projected age distribution for Rockingham County population for 2000-2030. The general projected trends indicate that the very young and youth population will remain a relatively stable to declining share of the total population, while there will be significant shifts within the adult population as the 45-54 year olds age into the 55-64 year old groups. The most dramatic increase will be the projected growth of the over 64 populace which is estimated to become 31% of the population of Rockingham County in 2030.

Education

Figure P-5 shows education attainment of residents in Atkinson and surrounding communities. Along the x axis are the categories for the highest level of education achieved and the y axis shows the percentage of the population within each of the towns/areas. The common trend across all of the towns and areas is the low number of individuals who have not graduated from high school versus the large number of individuals who have secondary education. Over 95% of Atkinson residents have graduated from high school or pursued higher education. In comparison this is slightly higher than Rockingham County (90%) and the state of NH (87%). This difference is further identified when the high school graduate category and the categories for higher education are compared between the town of Atkinson and the other municipalities. The number of residents in Atkinson who's highest degree is graduation from high school (24%) is substantially lower than surrounding communities. At first glance this may be concerning, but the discrepancy is revealed in the bachelors and graduate categories where the number of Atkinson residents are significantly higher, 26% and 13% respectively, than other town/areas. This clearly illustrates that Atkinson, as a whole, has achieved higher educational merits compared to other towns in the Timberlane School District.

Figure P-5

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
Atkinson and Surrounding Communities
2000**



Data:

TOWN/AREA	< 9th	9th-12th	H.S. Graduate	Some College	Associate	Bachelors	Graduate	H.S. or higher
Atkinson	1%	4%	24%	21%	11%	26%	13%	95%
Danville	1%	8%	34%	28%	10%	14%	5%	91%
Plaistow	2%	7%	32%	24%	11%	17%	7%	91%
Sandown	2%	6%	33%	26%	12%	15%	6%	92%
Timber. Sch. Dist.	1%	6%	30%	24%	11%	19%	8%	92%
Rock. County	2%	7%	29%	21%	10%	21%	11%	90%
N.H.	4%	9%	30%	20%	9%	19%	10%	87%

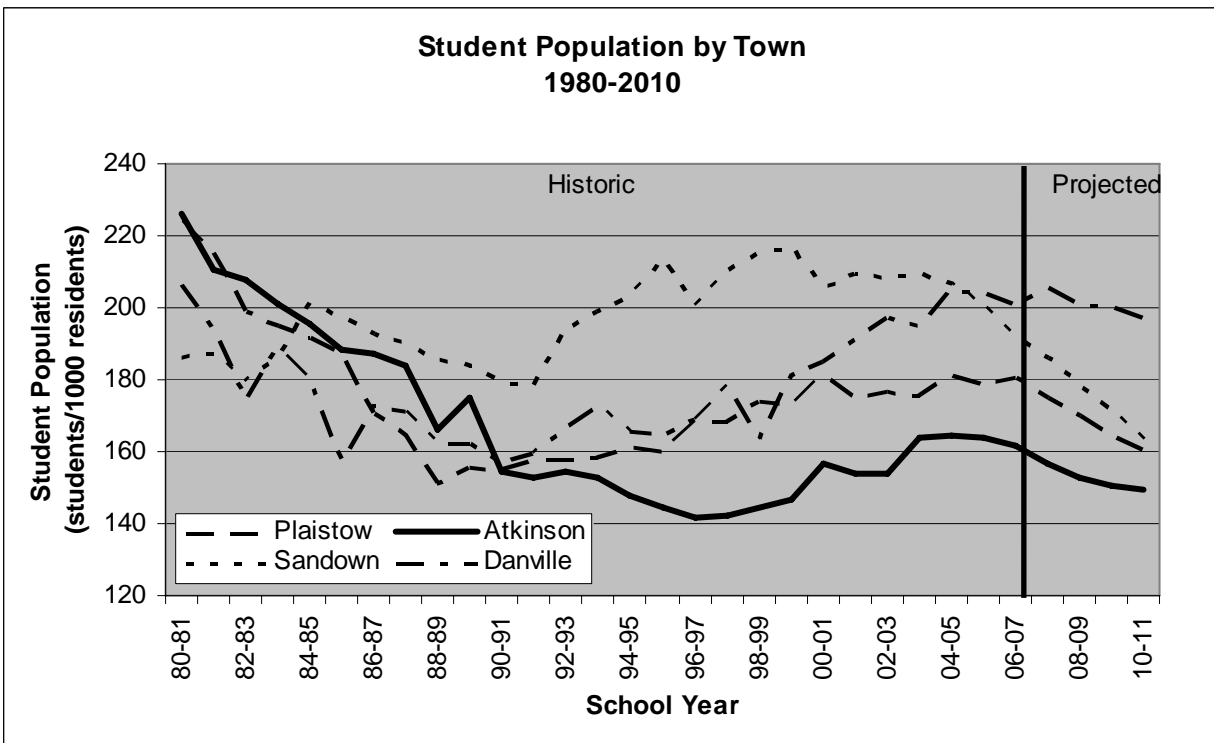
* percents are based off of only the population who is over 25 years old.

Source: 2000, US Census Bureau.

Over the past 20 years, the student population in the region has increased. Since the 1980-81 school year the student population for Atkinson has grown from 994 to 1069 for the 2006-07 school year (Data- Figure P-6). This represents a 7.5% growth over this time. However, if the number of students is compared to the population, there has been a decreasing trend for Atkinson (Figure P-6). For the school year 1980-81, there were 226 students for every 1000 residents, the highest ratio out of the four towns in the Timberlane School District. During the 1980's, Atkinson went from the highest student to resident ratio to the lowest ratio, with 155 students/1000 residents for the 1990-91 school year. Since then, Atkinson has continued to have a very low student to resident ratio. For the most recent school year 2006-07, the student/1000 resident ratio was 162. Projections provided by the Timberlane School District show a continuation of the declining school enrollment ratio for Atkinson and the other three towns in the school district. The trend of an increasing population with a smaller percentage of school aged families provides some concern for future planning within Atkinson.

Figure P-6

**STUDENT POPULATION BY TOWN
Atkinson and Surrounding Communities
1980-2010**



Data:

School Enrollment

Town/Area	1979-1980	1980-1981	1981-1982	1982-1983	1983-1984	1984-1985	1985-1986	1986-1987	1987-1988	1988-1989	1989-1990	1990-1991	1991-1992	1992-1993	1993-1994	1994-1995	1995-1996
Atkinson	1,000	994	976	947	939	941	927	891	886	855	913	802	804	828	835	826	821
Danville	288	272	256	249	277	301	304	330	359	355	372	397	419	444	478	474	490
Plaistow	1,334	1,256	1,212	1,131	1,111	1,130	1,151	1,147	1,120	1,102	1,140	1,132	1,148	1,144	1,171	1,209	1,210
Sandown	383	383	402	408	445	497	553	581	628	666	693	728	730	795	840	892	973
Timb. Sch. Dist.	3,005	2,905	2,846	2,735	2,772	2,869	2,935	2,949	2,993	2,978	3,118	3,059	3,101	3,211	3,324	3,401	3,494

Town/Area	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Atkinson	820	853	876	914	967	983	1,008	1,077	1,087	1,077	1,069	1,043	1,026	1,017	1,015	1,017
Danville	538	605	592	693	745	786	827	846	904	916	908	938	924	925	920	897
Plaistow	1,289	1,315	1,369	1,385	1,404	1,367	1,390	1,390	1,429	1,399	1,421	1,388	1,358	1,326	1,303	1,294
Sandown	932	993	1,032	1,052	1,056	1,093	1,122	1,166	1,177	1,173	1,131	1,105	1,066	1,031	993	972
Timb. Sch. Dist.	3,579	3,766	3,869	4,044	4,172	4,229	4,347	4,479	4,597	4,565	4,529	4,474	4,374	4,299	4,231	4,180

Town Population

Town/Area	1979-1980	1980-1981	1981-1982	1982-1983	1983-1984	1984-1985	1985-1986	1986-1987	1987-1988	1988-1989	1989-1990	1990-1991	1991-1992	1992-1993	1993-1994	1994-1995	1995-1996
Atkinson	4,181	4,397	4,637	4,563	4,664	4,810	4,923	4,762	4,815	5,144	5,217	5,188	5,269	5,358	5,460	5,595	5,685
Danville	1,282	1,318	1,319	1,430	1,468	1,670	1,933	1,913	2,097	2,188	2,297	2,534	2,629	2,675	2,766	2,865	2,975
Plaistow	5,764	5,609	5,638	5,687	5,693	5,899	6,141	6,730	6,807	7,290	7,341	7,316	7,269	7,260	7,384	7,504	7,573
Sandown	1,995	2,057	2,150	2,277	2,389	2,472	2,801	3,017	3,306	3,584	3,769	4,060	4,097	4,105	4,228	4,403	4,559
Timb. Sch. Dist.	13,222	13,381	13,744	13,957	14,214	14,851	15,798	16,422	17,025	18,206	18,624	19,098	19,264	19,398	19,838	20,367	20,792

Town/Area	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Atkinson	5,794	5,997	6,071	6,228	6,178	6,387	6,542	6,578	6,603	6,562	6,608	6,656	6,704	6,752	6,800	6,858
Danville	3,188	3,388	3,622	3,824	4,023	4,115	4,192	4,336	4,412	4,492	4,524	4,558	4,592	4,626	4,660	4,702
Plaistow	7,664	7,812	7,873	7,987	7,747	7,812	7,860	7,906	7,884	7,817	7,878	7,936	7,994	8,052	8,110	8,184
Sandown	4,648	4,723	4,785	4,851	5,143	5,220	5,381	5,563	5,694	5,851	5,894	5,938	5,982	6,026	6,070	6,128
Timb. Sch. Dist.	21,294	21,920	22,351	22,890	23,091	23,534	23,975	24,383	24,593	24,722	24,904	25,088	25,272	25,456	25,640	25,872

Enrollment per 1000 Persons

Town/Area	1979-1980	1980-1981	1981-1982	1982-1983	1983-1984	1984-1985	1985-1986	1986-1987	1987-1988	1988-1989	1989-1990	1990-1991	1991-1992	1992-1993	1993-1994	1994-1995	1995-1996
Atkinson	239	226	210	208	201	196	188	187	184	166	175	155	153	155	153	148	144
Danville	225	206	194	174	189	180	157	173	171	162	162	157	159	166	173	165	165
Plaistow	231	224	215	199	195	192	187	170	165	151	155	155	158	158	159	161	160
Sandown	192	186	187	179	186	201	197	193	190	186	184	179	178	194	199	203	213
Timb. Sch. Dist.	227	217	207	196	195	193	186	180	176	164	167	160	161	166	168	167	168

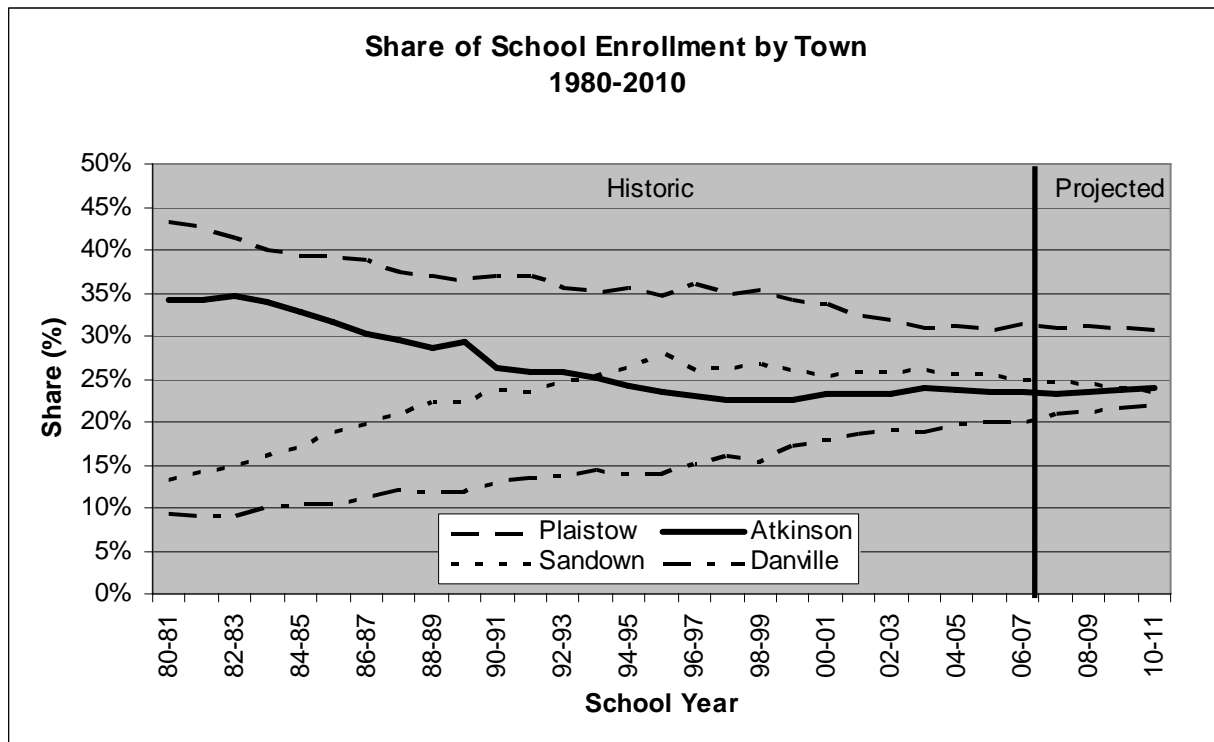
Town/Area	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Atkinson	142	142	144	147	157	154	154	164	165	164	162	157	153	151	149	148
Danville	169	179	163	181	185	191	197	195	205	204	201	206	201	200	197	191
Plaistow	168	168	174	173	181	175	177	176	181	179	180	175	170	165	161	158
Sandown	201	210	216	217	205	209	209	210	207	200	192	186	178	171	164	159
Timb. Sch. Dist.	168	172	173	177	181	180	181	184	187	185	182	178	173	169	165	162

Sources: 1979-2007, School Administration Unit 55 (SAU 55)- Timberlane Regional School District.
 1979-2012, NH Office of Energy and Planning.

Figure P-7 displays the share of school enrollment per town. Historically, it illustrates the two towns of Atkinson and Plaistow have contributed a declining share of students to the Timberlane Regional School District. In the 1980-81 school year, Atkinson represented 34% of student enrollment while Plaistow had 43%. Respectively the school enrollment share declined to 24% and 31% for the 2006-07 school year. Sandown and Danville show an increasing contribution over the same time period. Since 2000, school enrollment shares have stabilized and these trends are projected to remain constant into the future to the 2010-11 school year.

Figure P-7

**SHARE OF SCHOOL ENROLLMENT BY TOWN
Atkinson and Surrounding Communities
1980-2010**



Data for Figure P-7:

Share of School Enrollment

Town	1979-1980	1980-1981	1981-1982	1982-1983	1983-1984	1984-1985	1985-1986	1986-1987	1987-1988	1988-1989	1989-1990	1990-1991	1991-1992	1992-1993	1993-1994	1994-1995	1995-1996
Atkinson	n/a	34%	34%	35%	34%	33%	32%	30%	30%	29%	29%	26%	26%	26%	25%	24%	23%
Danville	n/a	9%	9%	9%	10%	10%	10%	11%	12%	12%	12%	13%	14%	14%	14%	14%	14%
Plaistow	n/a	43%	43%	41%	40%	39%	39%	39%	37%	37%	37%	37%	37%	36%	35%	36%	35%
Sandown	n/a	13%	14%	15%	16%	17%	19%	20%	21%	22%	22%	24%	24%	25%	25%	26%	28%

Town	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Atkinson	23%	23%	23%	23%	23%	23%	23%	24%	24%	24%	24%	23%	23%	24%	24%	24%
Danville	15%	16%	15%	17%	18%	19%	19%	19%	20%	20%	20%	21%	21%	22%	22%	21%
Plaistow	36%	35%	35%	34%	34%	32%	32%	31%	31%	31%	31%	31%	31%	31%	31%	31%
Sandown	26%	26%	27%	26%	25%	26%	26%	26%	26%	26%	25%	25%	24%	24%	23%	23%

Change in Student Enrollment (%)

Town/Area	1979-1980	1980-1981	1981-1982	1982-1983	1983-1984	1984-1985	1985-1986	1986-1987	1987-1988	1988-1989	1989-1990	1990-1991	1991-1992	1992-1993	1993-1994	1994-1995	1995-1996
Atkinson	n/a	-0.6%	-1.8%	-3.1%	-0.9%	0.2%	-1.5%	-4.0%	-0.6%	-3.6%	6.4%	13.8%	0.2%	2.9%	0.8%	-1.1%	-0.6%
Danville	n/a	-5.9%	-6.3%	-2.8%	10.1%	8.0%	1.0%	7.9%	8.1%	-1.1%	4.6%	6.3%	5.3%	5.6%	7.1%	-0.8%	3.3%
Plaistow	n/a	-6.2%	-3.6%	-7.2%	-1.8%	1.7%	1.8%	-0.3%	-2.4%	-1.6%	3.3%	-0.7%	1.4%	-0.3%	2.3%	3.1%	0.1%
Sandown	n/a	0.0%	4.7%	1.5%	8.3%	10.5%	10.1%	4.8%	7.5%	5.7%	3.9%	4.8%	0.3%	8.2%	5.4%	5.8%	8.3%
Timb. Sch. Dist.	n/a	-3.4%	-2.1%	-4.1%	1.3%	3.4%	2.2%	0.5%	1.5%	-0.5%	4.5%	-1.9%	1.4%	3.4%	3.4%	2.3%	2.7%

Town/Area	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
Atkinson	-0.1%	3.9%	2.6%	4.2%	5.5%	1.6%	2.5%	6.4%	0.9%	-0.9%	-0.7%	-2.5%	-1.7%	-0.9%	-0.2%	0.2%
Danville	8.9%	11.1%	-2.2%	14.6%	7.0%	5.2%	5.0%	2.2%	6.4%	1.3%	-0.9%	3.2%	-1.5%	0.1%	-0.5%	-2.6%
Plaistow	6.1%	2.0%	3.9%	1.2%	1.4%	-2.7%	1.7%	0.0%	2.7%	-2.1%	1.5%	-2.4%	-2.2%	-2.4%	-1.8%	-0.7%
Sandown	-4.4%	6.1%	3.8%	1.9%	0.4%	3.4%	2.6%	3.8%	0.9%	-0.3%	-3.7%	-2.4%	-3.7%	-3.4%	-3.8%	-2.2%
Timb. Sch. Dist.	2.4%	5.0%	2.7%	4.3%	3.1%	1.3%	2.7%	2.9%	2.6%	-0.7%	-0.8%	-1.2%	-2.3%	-1.7%	-1.6%	-1.2%

Source: 1979-2007, School Administration Unit 55 (SAU 55)- Timberlane Regional School District.

Employment

As of 2004, Atkinson had 127 employers who employed over 950 persons (Table P-4). Comparatively, in 1990, there were 92 employers who employed 933 persons. The growth over this period of time can be expressed as annual average growth with a 2.3% increase in employers and .1% increase in employees. It could be inferred then that there are more employers in Atkinson who are employing less people. The weekly wages earned by those employed in Atkinson was \$697.71. This was \$264.92 more than in 1990 and represents a 3.4% average annual growth over this time frame. Atkinson wasn't alone in this growth trend. Other surrounding communities and Rockingham County experience the growth of the employment base as well. Atkinson however did fall short in many of the categories in Table P-4. For example, the average annual growth for employers in Atkinson (2.3%) was the third lowest out of all of the communities and the average annual growth in employees (.1%) was the lowest out of the surrounding communities. Regionally the average weekly wage in Atkinson is strong compared to towns in the Timberlane School District and slightly lower than county statistics. Overall, the employment base for Atkinson is strong and is projected to continue growing.

Table P-4

**NUMBER OF EMPLOYERS & EMPLOYEES
Atkinson and Surrounding Communities
1990-2004**

TOWN/AREA	Total Pop. 2000	1990			2004		
		Employers	Avg. Annl. Employees	Average Weekly Wage	Employers	Avg. Annl. Employees	Average Weekly Wage
Atkinson	6,178	92	933	\$432.79	127	952	\$697.71
Danville	4,023	35	132	\$277.72	59	219	\$559.86
Plaistow	7,747	276	3,322	\$321.02	372	5,039	\$611.97
Sandown	5,143	32	138	\$284.82	55	244	\$607.53
Timber. Sch. Dist.	23,091	435	4,525	\$329.09	613	6,454	\$619.27
Rock. County	277,359	6,649	93,950	\$428.83	9,881	133,803	\$774.11
N.H.	1,235,550	31,658	497,266	\$434.67	43,403	613,327	\$753.70

TOWN/AREA	# CHANGE: 1990-2004			Avg. Annl. Growth: 1990-2004			Jobs Per Capita in 2000
	Employers	Avg. Annl. Employees	Average Weekly Wage	Employers	Avg. Annl. Employees	Average Weekly Wage	
Atkinson	35	19	\$264.92	2.3%	0.1%	3.4%	0.12
Danville	24	87	\$282.14	3.7%	3.6%	4.9%	0.04
Plaistow	96	1,717	\$290.95	2.1%	2.9%	4.5%	0.63
Sandown	23	106	\$322.71	3.8%	4.0%	5.3%	0.04
Timber. Sch. Dist.	178	1,929	\$290.18	2.4%	2.5%	4.4%	0.26
Rock. County	3,232	39,853	\$345.28	2.8%	2.5%	4.1%	0.47
N.H.	11,745	116,061	\$319.03	2.2%	1.5%	3.9%	0.49

Source: 2004, NH Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau.

Table P-5 looks at the percent of the population who are unemployed for the respective communities between 2000-2006. Most recently, Atkinson's unemployment rate was 3.8% in 2006. Over this time frame, the recession between 2002-2004 is evident by the increased unemployment rates. Historically Atkinson's unemployment rate has hovered around the average unemployment rate for the Timberlane School District (5.7%) but it lies significantly higher than the unemployment rates of Rockingham County (4.9%) and New Hampshire (4.2%).

Table P-5

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
Atkinson and Surrounding Communities
2000-2006

TOWN/AREA	Unemployment Rate							
	March 2000	March 2001	March 2002	March 2003	March 2004	March 2005	March 2006	Avg. 00-06
Atkinson	5.6%	4.8%	7.5%	5.6%	6.5%	5.8%	3.8%	5.7%
Danville	3.6%	3.1%	7.0%	9.0%	6.0%	5.8%	5.1%	5.7%
Plaistow	5.1%	4.4%	8.9%	7.3%	7.2%	5.8%	5.3%	6.3%
Sandown	2.8%	3.4%	8.3%	6.8%	6.8%	5.0%	3.7%	5.3%
Timber. Sch. Dist.	4.3%	3.9%	7.9%	7.2%	6.6%	5.6%	4.5%	5.7%
Rock. County	n/a	n/a	n/a	5.3%	5.4%	4.9%	4.0%	4.9%
N.H.	n/a	n/a	n/a	4.5%	4.4%	4.0%	3.7%	4.2%

Source: 2000, US Census Bureau.

Commute

The effects of suburbanization in the U.S. have not been limited to physical development of the communities. Suburbanization has also affected societal factors such as commute habits (Table P-6). Residents in Atkinson had a mean commute time of 30.7 minutes, which is slightly higher than the county's mean commute time of 28.6 minutes. Due to the proximity to Massachusetts border and financial differences between the two states, many residents opt to live in Atkinson and commute to Massachusetts (53.7%). This is also depicted in Plaistow, another border town. Employers in Rockingham County (37.4%) and Essex County (36.1%) in Massachusetts, employ the two largest concentrations of Atkinson residents. However in Rockingham County, the location where the residents are commuting is fairly spread out with 24.2% of Atkinson residents commuting to "Other" localities within the county. However there is some concentration of commuters in the Salem/Windham area, where 6.7% of the residents work.

Table P-6

COMMUTER DESTINATIONATIONS
Atkinson and Surrounding Communities
2000

TOWN/AREA	Destination by State				
	Commute Time (minutes)	NH Workplace	MA Workplace	ME Workplace	Other State
Atkinson	30.7	44.5%	53.7%	0.0%	1.8%
Danville	36.5	60.3%	38.7%	0.0%	0.9%
Plaistow	29.0	42.3%	57.1%	0.2%	0.4%
Sandown	34.4	65.2%	34.2%	0.0%	0.6%
Rock. County	28.6	69.9%	28.0%	1.2%	0.9%

TOWN/AREA	Destination in Rock. County					
	Exeter/Hampton/ Seabrook	Portsmouth/ Newington	Derry/ Londonderry	Salem/ Windham	Other Rockingham	Rockingham Co. Total
Atkinson	2.7%	2.3%	1.5%	6.7%	24.2%	37.4%
Danville	3.9%	2.0%	2.5%	5.9%	37.9%	52.2%
Plaistow	2.3%	2.6%	0.5%	6.1%	25.8%	37.3%
Sandown	4.4%	2.2%	5.6%	6.5%	32.2%	50.8%
Rock. County	10.2%	9.8%	8.0%	7.8%	17.2%	52.9%

TOWN/AREA	Destination in Other County						
	Strafford Co., NH	Merrimack Co., NH	Hillsborough Co., NH	York Co., ME	Suffolk Co., MA	Middlesex Co., MA	Essex Co., MA
Atkinson	0.2%	1.0%	5.7%	0.0%	2.5%	13.6%	36.1%
Danville	1.2%	0.8%	5.3%	0.0%	3.4%	10.9%	23.1%
Plaistow	1.2%	0.0%	3.9%	0.2%	3.1%	16.2%	36.9%
Sandown	0.3%	0.2%	13.2%	0.0%	1.3%	6.5%	24.4%
Rock. County	2.9%	2.5%	11.3%	0.9%	3.0%	9.3%	14.7%

Source: 2000, US Census Bureau.

Income, Poverty and Housing

Table P-7 compares the median household income, poverty rates, median house values, and median monthly rental costs. Across all categories, Atkinson is relatively more affluent. The Town has the highest median income and home price. Also supporting this statement is the lower percent of families below the poverty level (2.3%). The median monthly rent is the one category which is quite lower (\$600/month) compared to neighboring communities. This is attributed to the lack of diversity in rental units and the relative age of the units, which are mostly located behind the post office and constructed 20-30 years ago. Neighboring towns have a higher rate because they tend to be newer construction and offer more diversity, in layouts and number of bedrooms, compared to Atkinson.

Table P-7

INCOME, POVERTY, AND OTHER INDICATORS Atkinson and Surrounding Communities 2000 & 2006

TOWN/AREA	2000 Median Household Income	2000 % of Families Below Poverty	2006 Median Home Price	2006 Median Rent (\$/month)
Atkinson	\$69,729	2.3%	\$337,000	\$600*
Danville	\$57,287	3.2%	\$285,000*	\$944*
Plaistow	\$61,707	2.1%	\$252,350	\$983
Sandown	\$67,581	3.3%	\$298,400	\$818**
Timber. Sch. Dist.	\$63,508	2.7%	\$295,917	\$983
Rock. County	\$58,150	3.1%	\$303,000	\$994
N.H.	\$49,467	4.3%	\$250,000	\$928

*- Data from 2005

** - Data from 2000

Source: 2000, US Census Bureau.
2005,2006, NH Housing and Finance Authority.

Table P-8 lists the housing units for Atkinson and surrounding communities. The housing boom in the 1980's is quite evident in this table, with all of the communities experiencing large growth rates during this period. In subsequent years, the housing market has waned off but is still progressing forward with strong growth rates between 2%-4% annually. Also, over this time period there is evidence that the housing units are occupying fewer people, suggesting the continuing sprawl of the community. In 1980, Atkinson had 3.08 persons per housing unit. By 2000 this statistic dropped to 2.54, representing a 17% decrease from 1980 levels.

Table P-8

HOUSING UNITS COMPARISON
Atkinson and Surrounding Communities
2000

TOWN/AREA	Housing Units				Avg. Annual Growth Rate			Average Persons per Unit		
	1980	1990	2000	2005	80-90	90-00	00-05	1980	1990	2000
Atkinson	1428	1885	2431	2650	2.7%	2.5%	1.7%	3.08	2.75	2.54
Danville	439	960	1479	1662	7.5%	4.2%	2.3%	3.00	2.64	2.72
Plaistow	1827	2691	2927	2990	3.8%	0.8%	0.4%	3.07	2.72	2.65
Sandown	736	1488	1777	2051	6.8%	1.8%	2.8%	2.79	2.73	2.89
Timber. Sch. Dist.	4430	7024	8614	9353	4.5%	2.0%	1.6%	3.02	2.72	2.68
Rock. County	69375	101773	113023	122322	3.8%	1.0%	1.6%	2.74	2.42	2.45
N.H.	349172	503904	547024	588895	3.6%	0.8%	1.5%	2.64	1.68	2.26

Sources: 1980, 1990, 2000, US Census Bureau.
2005, NH Office of Energy and Planning.

Migration Patterns

Table P-9 analyzes the residence where people live for individuals aged four years old or older in the year 2000 and compares it to their residence in 1995. Out of the 5,767 respondents in Atkinson, 3,612 (63%) live in the same residences compared to 2,095(36%) who lived in a different residence. There were 60 respondents (1%) who fell into the “other” category. This could include residents who lived abroad. Out of the 2,095 who lived in a different residence in 1995, 903 (16%) had previously lived in the same county compared to 1,192 (21%) who lived in a different county. Respondents who lived in a different county are further broken down based on whether the previous residence was in a county within New Hampshire (116 respondents, 2%) or a different state (1,076, 19%). This shows that a significant number of residents who have moved to Atkinson since 1995 have come from outside of the state. This trend is similarly reflected in the other towns in Timberlane School District as well as Rockingham County and New Hampshire. Interestingly, this analysis also reveals the higher percent of residents of Atkinson who have not moved. Some factors which may be attributed to the low emigration percents include: high quality of life, connections to the community and more stable employment.

Table P-9

**RESIDENCE FLUCTUATIONS
Atkinson and Surrounding Communities
2000**

TOWN/AREA	Population > 4 years old		Same Residence		Different Residence										Other	
					Total		Same County		Different County							
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	Total		NH		Different State		#	%
									#	%	#	%	#	%		
Atkinson	5,767	100%	3,612	63%	2,095	36%	903	16%	1,192	21%	116	2%	1,076	19%	60	1%
Danville	3,704	100%	1,701	46%	2,003	54%	1,067	29%	936	25%	133	4%	803	22%	0	0%
Plaistow	7,245	100%	4,254	59%	2,991	41%	1,396	19%	1,595	22%	170	2%	1,425	20%	0	0%
Sandown	4,739	100%	3,105	66%	1,634	34%	978	21%	656	14%	107	2%	549	12%	0	0%
Timber. Sch. Dist.	21,455	100%	12,672	59%	8,723	41%	4,344	20%	4,379	20%	526	2%	3,853	18%	60	0%
Rock. County	259,267	100%	148,115	57%	108,652	42%	51,059	20%	57,593	22%	14,333	6%	43,260	17%	2,500	1%
N.H.	1,160,340	100%	642,397	55%	501,335	43%	259,110	22%	242,225	21%	79,975	7%	162,250	14%	16,608	1%

Source: 2000, US Census Bureau.

Conclusion

Population in Atkinson is growing and its strain can be felt on through increase traffic, longer commute times, increase housing costs and more kids attending school. The town should encourage sustainable development practices to help mitigate these and other concerns. Sustainable development practices include low impact development standards for stormwater management, compact central development in town center, energy efficient development and improve alternative transportation options.