

Demographics

DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES

Today, development pressure in Rhinebeck comes primarily from the south. Since World War II, growth has steadily moved outward from New York City – initially in Westchester, Bergen and Nassau Counties. In the 1960s, as land in those counties was developed, growth moved on to available land in Rockland and Suffolk Counties. Now, growth has moved to a new ring of suburbs, located 45 to 75 miles away from Manhattan. Dutchess County, as well as Orange, Putnam, Ulster and eastern Suffolk Counties, are situated within this ring, and these are the areas that experienced most of the region’s growth in recent decades. While population in the core counties surrounding New York City has either declined or remained substantially unchanged in recent decades, in the counties making up the “outer ring” of the metropolis, population has expanded.

Rural areas such as Rhinebeck have experienced market pressure for residential development from people who work within commuting distance of New York City, and wish to live where open space is still possible. Developers from the metropolitan area are also looking in Dutchess County and elsewhere in the Hudson Valley for lands that are available for development. This trend is expected to continue as people seek a quieter lifestyle and safer environment, and as developers run out of places to carry on their development activities within the suburbs closer to New York City.

POPULATION GROWTH

An understanding of the size and characteristics of a community’s population is a critical part of the planning process. Decisions involving housing, transportation, community facilities and economic development will affect and be affected by the number and characteristics of the people who live in a community.

Rhinebeck experienced rapid growth in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. Between 1980 and 2000, the rate of growth subsided. During that time, growth occurred most rapidly in the village of Rhinebeck, which grew 7.2 percent in population from 1980 to 1990, and a 12.9 percent from 1990 to 2000. In comparison, the town (excluding the village) lost three percent of its population between 1990 and 2000. This loss can be attributed to the many IBM employees who lived in the town, and who were either transferred to other locations, left the area, or retired after IBM Kingston closed its facility in the early 1990s.

In two and half years, between April 2000 and July 2003, Rhinebeck’s population increased 6.8 percent, almost double the rate of growth for Dutchess County.

However, between 2000 and July 2003, population in Rhinebeck has surged. These events have had a profound impact on residential development in the Hudson Valley as metropolitan residents seek to live in more rural communities. Between 2000 and 2003, the population of the town (excluding the village) increased 6.8 percent, almost double the county rate, as shown in Table 4.1. This rate of change is significant because Dutchess County is one of the fastest growing counties in New York State. Surrounding towns' historic growth is shown in Tables 4.2 and 4.3

TABLE 4.1: POPULATION GROWTH IN RHINEBECK AND DUTCHESS COUNTY 1950-2003

	Town of Rhinebeck*		Village of Rhinebeck		Dutchess County	
	Population	Percent Change Over Prior Decade	Population	Percent Change Over Prior Decade	Population	Percent Change Over Prior Decade
1950	1,823		1,923		136,781	
1960	2,519	38.2	2,093	8.8	176,008	28.7
1970	3,322	31.9	2,336	11.6	222,295	26.3
1980	4,520	36.1	2,542	8.8	245,055	10.2
1990	4,833	6.9	2,725	7.2	259,462	5.9
2000	4,685	-3.1	3,077	12.9	280,150	8.0
July 2003	5,004	6.8**	3,114	1.2**	290,885	3.8**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. July 2003 data are Census estimates.

*Excludes village.

** Percent change from 2000 to July 2003.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. 2003 data are Census estimates.

TABLE 4.2: HISTORIC POPULATION CHANGE: RHINEBECK AND NEIGHBORING TOWNS 1950-2003

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2003
Rhinebeck*	3,746	4,612	5,658	7,062	7,558	7,762	8,118
Red Hook*	4,219	6,023	7,548	8,351	9,565	10,408	10,990
Milan	806	944	1,322	1,668	1,895	2,356	2,527
Clinton	1,233	1,639	2,604	3,394	3,760	4,010	4,168
Hyde Park	6,136	12,681	16,910	20,768	21,230	20,851	21,055

*Town data includes villages.

TABLE 4.3: HISTORIC RATES OF CHANGE, RHINEBECK* AND NEIGHBORING TOWNS* 1900-2003

	Percent Change in Population					
	Rhinebeck	Red Hook	Milan	Clinton	Hyde Park	Dutchess County
1950-1960	23.1	42.8	17.1	32.9	106.7	28.7
1960-1970	22.7	25.3	40.0	58.9	33.3	26.3
1970-1980	24.8	10.6	26.2	30.3	22.8	10.2
1980-1990	7.0	14.5	13.6	10.8	2.2	5.9
1990-2000	2.7	8.8	24.3	6.6	-1.8	8.0
2000-2003	4.6	5.6	7.3	3.9	1.0	3.8
1950-2003	116.7	160.5	213.5	238.0	243.1	112.7

*Town data includes villages.

POPULATION DENSITY

Population density provides a measure of the number of people per area of land. It is also a means that New York State uses to determine whether a community can be classified as rural or urban. The New York State Legislative Commission on Rural Resources designates 150 persons-per-square-mile as the threshold for a “rural” town.

Population density indicates that Rhinebeck is nearing the threshold for classification as a “rural” community and is becoming more suburban.

The population densities among the communities surrounding Rhinebeck vary considerably, as shown in Table 4.4, below. Density is most concentrated in the village centers, consistent with the region’s historic settlement pattern. Only three Northern Dutchess communities – Milan, Clinton and Rhinebeck (excluding the village) – currently qualify as “rural” towns according to the New York State designation. In two-and-a half years, between

April 2000 and July 2003, Rhinebeck’s density increased from 135 persons-per square-mile to 144 persons. The town is nearing the threshold for designation as a “rural” community. With a 4.4 percent increase in population (from 5,004 persons to 5,225 persons), Rhinebeck is well on its way to becoming a more suburban community.

**TABLE 4.4: POPULATION DENSITY: RHINEBECK, NEIGHBORING TOWNS, DUTCHESS COUNTY
1980-2003**

Municipality	Square Miles	Population Per Square Mile			
		1980	1990	2000	2003
Town of Rhinebeck*	34.64	130	140	135	144
Village of Rhinebeck	1.62	1,569	1,682	1,899	1,922
Town of Red Hook*	33.87	176	199	220	270
Village of Red Hook	1.08	1,567	1,661	1,671	1,697
Milan	36.10	46	52	65	70
Clinton	38.46	88	98	104	108
Hyde Park	36.96	562	574	564	570
Dutchess County	801.66	306	324	349	363

Source: Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development.

* Excludes village(s).

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The distribution of population by age groups in Rhinebeck is important to determine which services will be needed in the future. Consistent with the national and statewide trends, the number of elderly residents in Rhinebeck is increasing as a percentage of total population¹, while the percentage of school age children is declining. In 1970, 15.2 percent of Rhinebeck residents were 65 and older. By 2000, this percentage had increased to 22.8 percent. The aging of Rhinebeck’s population is reflected in the median age of Rhinebeck residents, which rose dramatically from 37.2 percent in 1970, to 44.1 years in 2000. This is significantly higher than the county’s median age of 36.7 years, and the nation’s of 35.3 years. Three nursing home facilities located in Rhinebeck may contribute to the town’s higher median age. Table 4.5 compares the age distribution of Rhinebeck residents in 1990 and 2000, and Table 4.6 compares median age and average family size for Rhinebeck in 1990 and 2000.

National trends for smaller family size and higher median age are reflected in Rhinebeck, as well as in Dutchess County as a whole. These trends are expected to be long term.

¹ According to the 2000 Census, one in five Americans is currently older than 55.

TABLE 4.5: RHINEBECK* AGE DISTRIBUTION, 1990 AND 2000

	1990		2000		Numerical Change
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Under 5	413	5.4	323	4.2	-90
5 to 9	430	5.6	409	5.3	-21
10 to 14	464	6.2	515	6.6	51
15 to 19	479	6.3	481	6.2	2
20 to 24	388	5.2	296	3.8	-92
25 to 34	1,073	14.2	804	10.4	-269
35 to 44	1,121	14.8	1,167	15	46
45 to 54	843	11.2	1,192	15.4	349
55 to 59	354	4.7	461	5.9	107
60 to 64	363	4.8	342	4.4	-21
65 to 74	695	9.2	685	8.7	-10
75 to 84	550	7.3	656	8.5	106
85 and over	385	5.1	431	5.6	46
TOTAL	7,558	100	7,762	100	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

* Town data includes village.

Also consistent with the statewide demographic pattern is a decrease in the percentage of young people. In 1970, persons 35 and under comprised 52 percent of the total population in Rhinebeck. By 2000, this percentage had declined to 36.5 percent. Within this group, the number of school age children declined from 18.7 percent in 1970 to 11.9 percent in 2000². The decline in the number of young people reflects the nation-wide trend toward smaller families.

On the other hand, the number of “baby boomers” born between 1946 and 1964 increased from 23 percent of the total population in 1990 to 29 percent in 2000³. As the baby boom generation enters retirement in the next 10 to 20 years, it will create additional needs for services for senior citizens, such as affordable housing, smaller housing units, access to community services and public transportation. Baby boomers represent the largest segment of the town’s population, and will have a strong voice in setting the community’s priorities in the future.

² Children ages 5 to 14 only are included as school age children in this calculation in order to compare recent data with 1970 Census data.

³ These percentages are approximate. Since the Census data does not break the 35 to 45 year category into five-year increments, the percentages in that age category were halved to estimate the percentage of population aged 40 to 59.

TABLE 4.6: MEDIAN AGE AND AVERAGE FAMILY SIZE, RHINEBECK*

	1990	2000
Median Age	40.0 years	44.1 years
Average Family Size	2.94 persons	2.87 persons

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. * Town data includes village.

The U.S. Census Bureau defines a family as “a group of two people or more related by birth, marriage or adoption, and residing together.” According to the census, there were 3,001 households in the Rhinebeck (including the village) in 2000, of which 1,799 met the Census Bureau definition of families. The remainder were either single-person households or were composed of individuals who were unrelated, or whose relationship were not encompassed in the Census Bureau definitions of household. Persons in group quarters, such as in congregate care facilities and boarding schools, totaled 1,089. This represents 14 percent of the population, more than double the county average of 6.5 percent. The average family size in Rhinebeck declined from 2.94 persons in 1980 to 2.87 persons in 2000.

Reflecting the county trend, population has become slightly more diverse in Rhinebeck since 1990, with a 4.6 percent decrease in the number of Whites, and slight increases in the number of Blacks, Asian and Pacific Islanders, and those of “other race.” The percentage of persons of Hispanic origin increased from 2.04 percent in 1990 to 3.93 percent in 2000. However, the vast majority (91 percent) of Rhinebeck residents are White. This figure is higher than the county as a whole (84 percent). Racial breakdown for Rhinebeck, neighboring towns and Dutchess County is summarized in Table 4.7.

TABLE 4.7: RACIAL BREAKDOWN: RHINEBECK, NEIGHBORING TOWNS*, AND COUNTY, 1990 AND 2000

	Percent White		Percent Black		Percent Native American		Percent Asian/Pacific Islander		Percent Other		Percent Hispanic**	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Rhinebeck	95.54	91.16	2.96	4.72	0.07	0.04	0.89	1.52	0.54	1.20	2.04	3.93
Red Hook	95.95	93.66	1.37	1.79	0.17	0.07	2.16	2.47	0.35	0.54	1.55	2.39
Milan	97.73	95.50	1.48	1.36	0.37	0.64	0.26	0.46	0.16	0.72	2.53	2.42
Clinton	97.40	96.03	1.38	1.60	0.08	0.35	0.82	1.02	0.32	0.22	1.97	1.75
Hyde Park	93.37	91.02	4.33	4.25	0.08	0.20	1.71	1.47	0.51	1.19	1.84	3.23
Dutchess County	88.33	83.66	8.40	9.32	0.14	0.22	2.25	2.55	0.88	2.37	3.76	6.45

Source: US Census Bureau. 2000 figures are based on corrected counts and were compiled by the Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development. Percentages may add to more than 100 percent since individuals may report more than one race. * Town data includes villages.

SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

In 2000, the median household income in the town and village of Rhinebeck was \$52,679, which was slightly lower than the median household income in Dutchess County (\$53,086). However, incomes for both households and families have been increasing at a greater rate in Rhinebeck than in the county, as shown in Table 4.8. Three percent of Rhinebeck families were below the poverty level in 1999, as compared with five percent in the county as a whole. The unemployment rate in Rhinebeck was 4.9 percent, compared with 3.6 percent in Dutchess County.

Rhinebeck is a well-established, predominately middle-income community with a high level of educational attainment.

Thirty-nine percent of Rhinebeck residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, and 86.6 percent are high school graduates or higher, indicating a well-educated population. As shown in Table 4.9, Rhinebeck residents are better educated than those in Dutchess County, New York State and the nation.

TABLE 4.8: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY INCOME, 1990 AND 2000

	Household Income		Change 1990-2000	Family Income		Change 1990-2000
	1990	2000		1990	2000	
Rhinebeck*	\$37,235	\$52,679	41.5%	\$46,766	\$67,837	45.1%
Dutchess County	\$42,250	\$53,086	25.6%	\$49,305	\$63,254	28.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. * Town data includes village.

TABLE 4.9: PERCENT EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, 2000

	High School Graduate or Higher	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Rhinebeck	86.6	38.9
Dutchess County	84.0	27.6
New York State	79.1	27.4
United States	80.4	24.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. * Town data includes village.

Rhinebeck residents favor occupations in management, professional and related occupations (49.9 percent), sales and office occupations (22.5 percent), and service occupations (13.4 percent). Farming and forestry occupations comprised only one percent. Within individual industry classifications, the largest percentage of workers was employed in the educational, health and social services industry (32.1 percent), likely as a result of the hospital located in Rhinebeck. The mean travel time to work for Rhinebeck residents was 27.9 minutes, compared with 29.8 minutes for county residents as a whole.

TABLE 4.10: PERCENT EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION, 2000

	Rhinebeck	Dutchess County
Management, professional and related occupations	49.9	48.4
Service occupations	13.4	15.6
Sales and office occupations	22.5	25.3
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0.1	0.4
Construction, extraction and maintenance occupations	8.9	10.1
Production, transportation and material moving occupations	5.3	10.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

TABLE 4.11: PERCENT EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY, RHINEBECK AND DUTCHESS COUNTY 2000

	Rhinebeck	Dutchess County
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0.9	1.0
Construction	8.4	6.8
Manufacturing	5.6	12.3
Wholesale trade	1.5	2.5
Retail trade	12.0	11.4
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	2.6	4.9
Information	3.8	3.3
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	6.6	5.9
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	9.5	9.1
Education, health and social services	32.1	26.4
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	7.0	6.3
Other services (except public administration)	5.6	4.6
Public administration	4.4	5.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.