

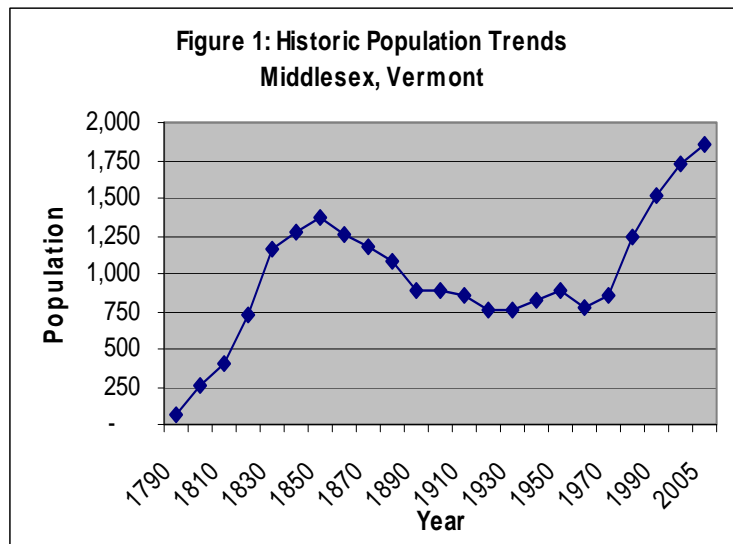
## Chapter 3: Community Profile

In any planning process it is important to know who exactly we are planning for. The purpose of this section is to answer that question. Knowing how many current and future residents will live in Middlesex, what ages they will be, their incomes and education will help the town target limited resources to those services needed most by the greatest number of residents. Also, as shown in the survey results at the end of this section, Middlesex residents responding feel that it is important to provide the opportunity for people with a mix of incomes and of all ages to live in Middlesex.



### Population Trends

As Figure 1 shows, Middlesex experienced a decline in population between 1850 and 1970. However, since the 1970's the population has been steadily increasing at an average rate of 23% every ten years. Middlesex's 14% growth rate between the last two Censuses in 1990 and 2000, outpaced that of Washington County (6%) and the state as a whole (8%). The town's 2005 population has been estimated at 1,847. Because Middlesex has less than 2,500 residents, under the Vermont Municipal Planning and Development Act, it is classified as rural.



### Population Projections

There are two studies available that provide projections of what the population in Middlesex will be in the year 2020. It should be noted that projecting population growth is difficult especially at the town level and is not an exact science. Therefore comparing these two projections may be helpful to show the range within which population growth in Middlesex is expected to fall. The first projection shown in the chart below was done by the Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research and includes each town in the state. This projection is a bit more conservative and projects that Middlesex will have 1,944 residents by 2020. The second projection was commissioned by the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission,

Chamber of Commerce, and Economic Development Corporation. This study projects growth at a faster rate and puts the town at 2,460 residents by 2020.

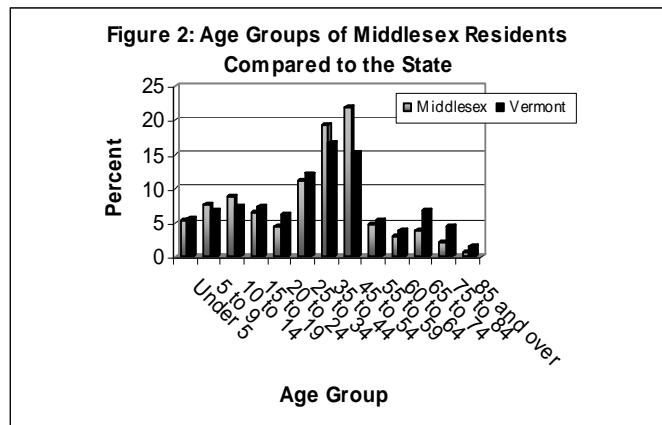
	Census	Projections				% Change				Abs Change
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2000-2005	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	2000-2020
<b>Projection 1</b>	1,729	1,798	1,840	1,883	1,944	4.0	2.4	2.3	3.3	215
<b>Projection 2</b>	1,729	1,874	2,026	2,230	2,460	8.4	8.1	10.1	10.3	731

SOURCE: Projection 1- MISER Population Projections for Vermont 2000-2020 by Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research  
 Projection 2- Central Vermont Planning Region 2000-2020 by Economic & Policy Resources, Inc.

Population estimates from 2005, which came in after these studies were completed, show the 2005 population at 1,847. If we use these two studies to predict a range of population growth, it is likely that the 2020 population of Middlesex will fall somewhere between 1,944 and 2,460.

Current Characteristics

Table 1 below describes some of the general demographic characteristics of Middlesex residents, compared to the county and state, as reflected in the 2000 Census. Data from the 2000 U.S. Census are generally more reliable and complete and, though it may seem dated, many demographic characteristics such as age ranges and household size do not change quickly. Therefore, this plan assumes that in 2006 these characteristics remain relatively the same. More current data which are available and reliable on characteristics that change frequently such as income and employment are included in the chart below.

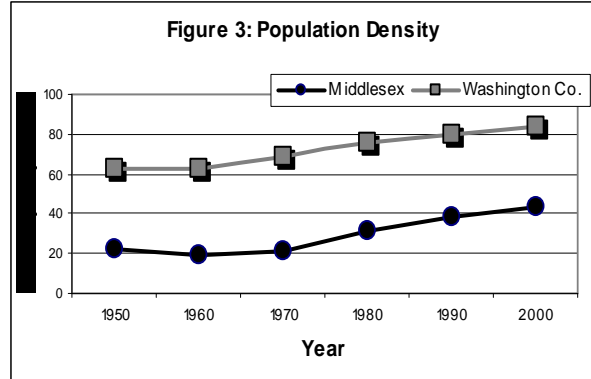


The median age in Middlesex is 38.6 years which is about the same as the state and county median. However, there are a disproportionately small percentage of residents over 65 years old (6.8%) in Middlesex compared to the county (12.9%) or the state (12.7%). The town has slightly more families with children and relatively fewer single occupancy households than the other two geographies.

Of the 486 families living in Middlesex, about 37% of them had children under the age of 18. As shown in Figure 2, the greatest percentage of town residents is between the ages of 35 and 54. There are also more children between the ages of 5 and 14 than the state average.

<b>Table 1: Demographic Profile of Middlesex Residents Compared to the State &amp; County</b>			
	<b>Middlesex</b>	<b>Washington County</b>	<b>Vermont</b>
<b><i>Population (2005)</i></b>	<b>1,847</b>	<b>59,478</b>	<b>623,050</b>
% Male	49%	49%	49%
% Female	51%	51%	51%
% Born in Vermont	57.1%	58.5%	54.3%
% Foreign Born	1.8%	3.6%	3.8%
% with a Disability (civilian non-institutionalized)	16.7%	17.3%	16.1%
<b><i>Median Age</i></b>	<b>38.6</b>	<b>38.5</b>	<b>37.7</b>
% Children (under 18 years)	26.5%	23.5%	24.2%
% Elderly (65 and over)	6.8%	12.9%	12.7%
<b><i>Average Annual Wage (2005)</i></b>	<b>\$37,833</b>	<b>\$34,530</b>	<b>\$34,199</b>
% Below Poverty Level	6.2%	8.0%	9.4%
% Children Below Poverty Level	8.0%	9.1%	10.7%
% Elderly Below Poverty Level	0.0%	6.8%	8.5%
<b><i>Families</i></b>	<b>486</b>	<b>15,053</b>	<b>157,763</b>
% Families with Children (under 18 years)	37.1%	31.0%	31.8%
Average Family Size	2.96	2.91	2.96
Householder Living Alone	19.5%	28.5%	26.2%
<b><i>Median Family Adjusted Gross Income (2004)</i></b>	<b>\$60,253</b>	<b>\$52,350</b>	<b>\$50,396</b>
% Below Poverty Level	4.3%	5.5%	6.3%
% with Children Below Poverty Level	6.4%	8.7%	9.7%
SOURCE: U.S. Census 2000, U.S. Census Bureau – 2005 Population Estimates, Vermont Department of Employment and Training - Covered Employment and Wages report 2005, Vermont Department of Taxes. Please note: All data which is not labeled with a year above, is from the 2000 Census.			

A little over half of the town’s residents are native to Vermont which is similar to the state and the county as a whole. Only 1.8% of the town’s residents were born in a different country. According to the recent survey, the highest percentage of respondents had lived in the town between 21 and 40 years.



Between 1950 - 2000, Middlesex’s population density, or the number of people per square mile, has followed the county trends with a slight dip in 1960 but increasing steadily since (see Figure 3). However, the population density in Middlesex (43.6) is still far below county average of 84.22 persons per square mile.

Next we will look at the income and education levels of Middlesex residents. Overall, Middlesex residents are comparatively well educated and make higher incomes, exceeding the state and county averages.

Income & Education

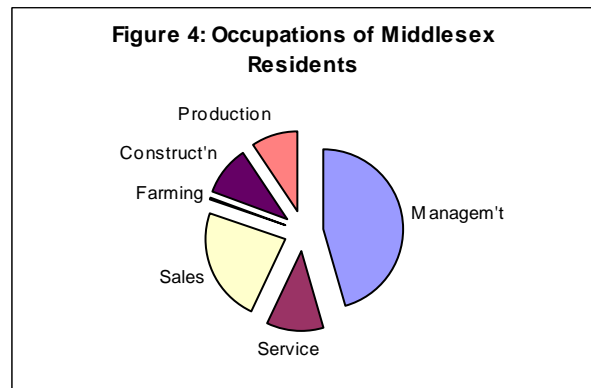
As shown in Table 1 above, both 2005 average annual wages and 2004 median family adjusted gross income in Middlesex are higher than state or county medians. In fact, the 2006 Central Vermont Community Profile, written by the Chamber of Commerce, ranks Middlesex #1 for the highest average wages in the County. More specific data on the sources of income for residents who work outside of Middlesex are only available in the 2000 Census. As shown in Table 2, and Figure 4, a majority of Middlesex residents have been in the management, professional, and related occupations. The next most common occupations have been those related to sales and then services. Though Middlesex residents enjoy the farmland scenes in town, less than one percent of working residents have made their living this way.

**Table 2: Occupations of Middlesex Residents**

OCCUPATION	Percent of Workers
Management, professional, and related occupations	45.6%
Service occupations	11.4%
Sales and office occupations	23.3%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0.4%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	9.9%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	9.5%

SOURCE: U.S. Census 2000

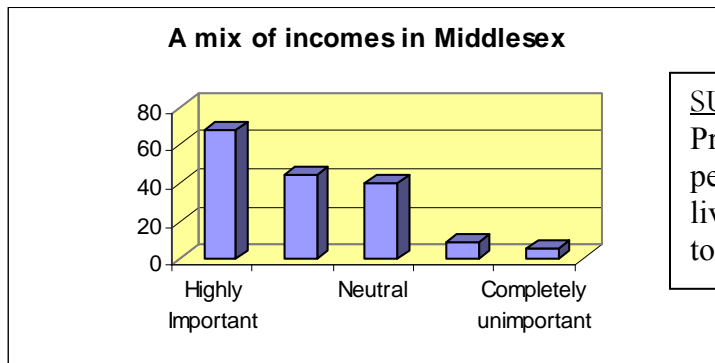
The percentage of Middlesex residents who were self employed (11.9%) has been slightly higher than the county (9.5%) and the state (10.3%) averages. Also, many residents draw at least a portion of their income from social security (18%) income or retirement income (11%). We also know that of all workers, 26% were government workers, many of which are likely taking advantage of the town’s close proximity to the state offices in Waterbury and Montpelier.



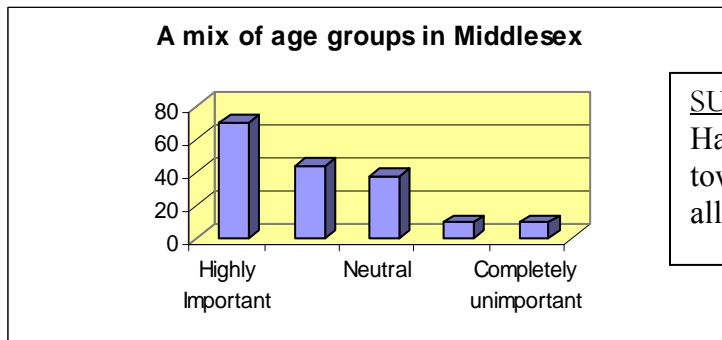
Female full time year-round workers made about \$7,000 less per year than male workers. This is about the same as in other towns in the county.

There are less Middlesex residents that fall below the federal poverty level (6.2%) than the county (8%) or state (9.4%) averages at all ages. In fact at the last census there were zero residents over 65 years below the poverty level. Only 21 families or 4.3% of families were below the poverty level in 2000, however, 26% of households with female householders and no husband present were living in poverty. From more recent data available to us, we do know that in 2005 24 Middlesex households were receiving food stamps. The opportunity for lower income families to live in Middlesex, as deemed important in the survey show below, is also addressed in the housing section of this plan.

According to the last Census, 91% of residents over 25 years old were high school graduates which is slightly higher than state and county residents (88.4%). Many more Middlesex residents (42%) had earned at least a bachelor's degree as compared to the state (29.4%) and the county (32.2%).



SURVEY RESULTS  
 Providing the opportunity for people with a mix of incomes to live in Middlesex was important to 66% of survey respondents.



SURVEY RESULTS  
 Having a mix of age groups in town was important to 67% of all survey respondents.

In order to provide the opportunity for a mix of incomes and ages to live in Middlesex, the housing types and employment options that are encouraged in town must be considered carefully. This will be done in the next two sections of this plan.