

POPULATION GROWTH AND CHANGE

A. HIGHLIGHTS

1. The total number of people in the City has declined 15.4% over the past 20 years from a high of 15,511 persons in 1960 to 13,121 persons in 1980;
2. The decline of 11% in the City's population since 1970 was the smallest percent decline of any of the surrounding municipalities. The average for the area was 16%;
3. The total number of households in the City actually increased by 2% from 1970 to 1980;
4. The average household size declined 12% from 3.25 persons in 1970 to 2.85 persons in 1980, which accounts for the overall population decline in spite of an increase in households during the same period;
5. 34% of all households have at least one (1) person who is 60 years or over;
6. 16% of all households in the City have a head aged 65 years or over;
7. 80% of the elderly households (head 65+) own their residence;
8. 21 of 4,606 households in the City are minority, of which four (4) are renters and 17 are owners.

B. OVERVIEW OF CHANGE

Gloucester City has maintained a relatively even population count over the past 30 years showing a net decrease in population since 1950 of some 1,236 persons.

The City's population increased by 8% during the 1950's, then decreased by 3% during the 1960's reaching 14,707 persons in 1970, still some 350 persons above the 1950 level.

During the 1970's the population in Gloucester decreased by some 1,586 persons bringing the 1980 population count to 13,121 persons.

C. COMPARISON WITH OTHER COMMUNITIES

A comparison of the 30 year population counts for Gloucester City and the surrounding communities is shown on Table 1.

TABLE 1

POPULATION CHANGES FOR GLOUCESTER CITY AND ADJACENT TOWNS

1950 THROUGH 1980

<u>MUNICIPALITY</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1970-80 % CHANGE</u>
Bellmawr	5,213	11,853	15,618	13,721	-0.12
Brooklawn	2,262	2,504	2,670	2,133	-0.26
Camden	124,555	117,159	102,551	84,910	-0.17
GLOUCESTER	14,357	15,511	14,707	13,121	-0.11
Haddon Twp.	12,379	17,099	18,182	15,875	-0.13
Mt. Ephraim	<u>4,889</u>	<u>5,447</u>	<u>5,625</u>	<u>4,823</u>	<u>-0.14</u>
Study Area	163,655	169,573	159,533	134,623	-0.16
County Total	300,743	392,035	456,291	471,650	0.03

Source: U.S. Census; Compilations by Planning, Research and Development

It can be observed that Gloucester City, like its neighboring communities of Mt. Ephraim and Brooklawn has remained relatively stable over the past 30 years from a population standpoint.

D. CAUSES OF CHANGE - BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MIGRATION

The changes in population in Gloucester City are a result of changes in the rates of births, deaths and migration (into or out of the city).

During the 1950's new housing construction in Gloucester City helped to attract new households, thus increasing population. Similarly, the "Baby Boom" birth rates of the 1950's and early 1960's also caused increases in population. To a certain extent, these gains in population were offset by deaths that occurred in the population, pretty much on a par with other communities in the area.

However, during the mid to late 1960's, many of the "Baby Boom" generation were coming of age and leaving home---either through marriage or by setting up their own living quarters. Given the relatively constant supply of housing within the city, many of these new households had to seek housing elsewhere. The net result was a slight decrease in population by 1970 as "outmigration" outweighed any natural gains in population.

As the 1970's passed, this "outmigration" trend increased, causing the population of the city to decline. At the same time the "birth rate" decreased from 18.9 births per 1,000 persons in 1970 to 13.9 births per 1,000 persons in 1980. At the same time, the death rate per 1,000 residents increased from 12.8 deaths in 1970 to 14.6 deaths in 1980. This trend resulted in an excess of deaths over births in 1980. (See Table 2)

The accelerated "outmigration," which was only offset slightly by some limited new construction during the 1970's (106 units built), combined with decreasing births (as per a national trend) and an increasing death rate (due to an older population) resulted in an 11% decline in the overall city population from 1970 to 1980.