

IV. DEMOGRAPHICS

The allocation of municipal resources must consider the population to be served. Population, housing and economic analyses are a principal component of any comprehensive plan. Obviously, the overall size of a population is related to the amount of land, manpower and services to be provided. In addition, particular groups within the population have different needs. This section will present past, current and expected population statistics in order to determine the Region's needs.

A. Historic Population Growth

The historical growth pattern of an area provides insight as to the growth that might be expected in the future. The following table lists the amount of population growth that has occurred over the last 50 years within each municipality of the Region.

**Historic Population Growth
Eastern Berks County Region**

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
District Township	570	752	1,094	1,211	1,449	1,337
Rockland Township	1,298	1,452	1,911	2,675	3,765	3,778
Topton Borough	1,684	1,744	1,818	1,987	1,948	2,069
Region	3,552	3,948	4,823	5,873	7,162	7,184

From the above table, several trends are visualized. First, the Region has realized a moderately accelerating rate of growth since 1960, most notably since 1970. The 1970s and 1980s saw particularly high rates of growth which continued in the 1990s and then leveled off between 2000 and 2010. Rockland Township has lead the Region in growth. District Township has had a very modest rate of growth throughout the period but has declined since 2000 and Topton Borough experienced growth until 1990 then declined in population in 2000 and saw a very modest growth over the last decade.

Another trend deals with the type of growth occurring. In 1960, Topton Borough comprised about 47% of the Region's population. In 2000 that share had diminished to 27% and slightly increased to about 29% in 2010. Therefore, the suburban and rural residences within the Region comprised 71% of its population. Overall, the Region had grown by 51% since 1960, but between 1990 and 2010 the Region grew only 18% overall and only 0.3% since the year 2000. During the highest growth decades, 1970 through 2000, the average growth rate of the Region in each decade was about 18%.

Next, a comparison of growth within Berks County and the Region can provide further insight into future expectations. By comparison, Berks County's growth rate for 1990-2000 was about 10% and for 2000-2010 was about 10%. The growth rate for Berks County from 1970-1990 was about 14%.

As the above number reflects, the Region has at all times experienced proportional growth above that of the County as a whole. Interestingly, the Region exhibits an inverse pattern of proportional growth when compared with the County between 1970 and 2000. When the County has experienced slower growth the Region has experienced accelerated growth and vice versa. Based upon the recent economic downturn and the slower housing market it is expected that Region will continue to grow at a rate slower than that of Berks County over the next decade.

B. Historic Housing Growth

In addition to population growth, another important consideration when projecting how fast an area will grow relates to its number of housing units. The following table lists the number of housing units within each municipality since the US Census Bureau began reporting such information in 1970.

**Housing Growth by Municipality
1970-2010**

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
District Township	254	400	461	548	565
Rockland Township	477	704	989	1,368	1,469
Topton Borough	590	693	779	842	877
Region	1,321	1,797	2,229	2,758	2,911

Unsurprisingly, the number of housing units exhibited similar growth trends as the population within the Region. However, the rate of housing growth is slightly greater than that of population. Between 1970 and 2010, the Region’s population grew by 45.9%, while its number of housing units grew by 52.1%. This occurred because fewer people are living together, as family sizes have decreased and more people are living by themselves. This trend is true for each municipality within the Region except Topton Borough which experienced a slight increase in household size during the 2000s, as can be seen in the table below. This trend has also occurred nationally for several decades. While there was a significant decrease in household size from 1970 to present, the numbers are leveling off and overall may even increase slightly in the future.

**Persons per Housing Unit by Municipality
1970-2010**

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
District Township	2.96	2.74	2.63	2.64	2.49
Rockland Township	3.04	2.71	2.7	2.75	2.67
Topton Borough	2.96	2.62	2.55	2.31	2.48
Region	3.15	2.77	2.71	2.63	2.55

C. Population & Housing Projections

Review of the population and housing trends for the Region over the last few decades reveals a somewhat uniform and steady rate of growth. While previous population and housing projections showed a fairly steady growth in the Region until 2020 these numbers have proved to be unreliable since they did not predict the economic downturn between 2000-2010. As new projections are completed for the area the Region should review them to determine their validity. The projections shown in the previous EBRCPP showed inflated population and a large decrease in the persons per housing unit that did not occur. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection prepared a population projections report for the Updated State Water Plan. The projections are based upon the most recent 2010 Census, however even these newer projections are questioned as to their accuracy and validity. With a high rate of unoccupied housing and Brandywine School District projections of -3.75% the State's projections are even more questionable. (See Section V for Brandywine School District Projections) We can also look at the per capita taxed population with the Region to understand that the population is not currently increasing significantly. As of 2014 the total per capita taxes sent out to residents was 4,902. This tax is assessed upon persons that work and are not full-time students. With the idea that the majority of persons who work are between the ages of 20-64, as of 2010 this age group made up 4,476 persons in the Region. Even with the small numbers of person age 15-19 and over 65 that are employed and not full time students that would need to be included in the per capita eligible number, there does not appear to be any reason to believe that development increases will return to the 1970-2000 level and with the recent 2010 Census numbers along with the subdivision and land development activity levels at their lowest, populations increases will probably be even less than what is currently projected for the Region.

PA Department of Environmental Protection Population Projections Report (Berks County)					
Municipality	2000 Census	2010 Census	2020 Projected	2030 Projected	2040 Projected
District Twp.	1,449	1,337	1,425	1,399	1,438
Rockland Twp.	3,765	3,778	4,406	4,683	5,161
Topton Boro.	1,948	2,069	2,099	2,180	2,232
Region Totals	7,162	7,184	7,570	8,262	8,831
Berks County	372,049	411,442	444,991	480,374	514,836
Comments: While the Region is growing in population and housing the development trends lean more towards modest growth rates lower than what the PA DEP projects. It is anticipated that Rockland Twp. will continue to see more growth than either District Twp. or Topton Boro. due to their closer access to development centers, however development numbers in the Region have not increased to support the inflated numbers seen above.					

D. OTHER SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

AGE PROFILE					
Age Group	Topton Borough	District Township	Rockland Township	Region	Berks County
Under 5 years	108 (5.2%)	54 (4.0%)	184 (4.9%)	346 (4.8%)	25,288 (6.1%)
5-9 years	117 (5.7%)	57 (4.3%)	261 (6.9%)	415 (5.8%)	26,960 (6.6%)
10-14 years	151 (7.3%)	86 (6.4%)	261 (6.9%)	498 (6.9%)	27,828 (6.8%)
15-19 years	152 (7.3%)	87 (6.5%)	257 (6.8%)	496 (6.9%)	31,785 (7.7%)
20-24 years	140 (6.8%)	54 (4.0%)	164 (4.3%)	358 (5.0%)	27,355 (6.6%)
25-64 years	1,114 (53.8%)	808 (60.4%)	2,196 (58.1%)	4,118 (57.3%)	212,668 (51.7%)
65+ years	287 (13.9%)	191 (14.3%)	475 (12.6%)	953 (13.3%)	59,558 (14.5%)
Median age	39.3	46.7	44.4	43.5	39.1
Comments: The Region's age profile is fairly similar to the overall County's except for the age group 25-64 years where the Region has over 5.5% more persons.					

GENDER PROFILE					
Gender	Topton Borough	District Township	Rockland Township	Region	Berks County
Male	993 (48.0%)	688 (51.5%)	1,915 (50.7%)	3,596 (50.1%)	201,864 (49.1%)
Female	1,076 (52.0%)	649 (48.5%)	1,863 (49.3%)	3,588 (49.9%)	209,578 (50.9%)
Comments: The Region as a whole is gender balanced.					

Racial Composition & Hispanic/Latino Origin					
Race	Topton Borough	District Township	Rockland Township	Region	Berks County
White	2,016 (92.4%)	1,307 (97.8%)	3,692 (97.7%)	7,015 (97.6%)	342,148 (83.2%)
African American	12 (0.6%)	8 (0.6%)	11 (0.3%)	31 (0.4%)	20,143 (4.9%)
Native American	5 (0.3%)	7 (0.5%)	2 (0.1%)	14 (0.2%)	1,285 (0.3%)
Asian	1 (0.0%)	2 (0.1%)	15 (0.4%)	18 (0.3%)	5,385 (1.3%)
Pacific Islander	-	-	1 (0.0%)	1 (0.0%)	128 (0.0%)
Other	14 (0.7%)	2 (0.1%)	15 (0.4%)	31 (0.4%)	32,101 (7.8%)
Bi-racial	21 (1.0%)	11 (0.8%)	42 (1.1%)	74 (1.0%)	10,252 (2.5%)
Hispanic/Latino	58 (2.8%)	7 (0.5%)	68 (1.8%)	133 (1.9%)	67,355 (16.4%)

Comments: As a whole the Region does not have as much racial diversity as Berks County. Combined the Region's minority population is 2.4%, which is up from 1.3% in 2000.

Other Housing & Household Characteristics					
Other Characteristics	Topton Borough	District Township	Rockland Township	Region	Berks County
Persons in Group Quarters	-	-	-	-	12,023 (2.9%)
Family w/children	273 (47.9%)	152 (37.7%)	463 (42.1%)	888 (42.8%)	50,394 (47.3%)
Rental Units	260 (31.1%)	75 (15.0%)	105 (7.4%)	440 (15.8%)	43,703 (28.3%)
Vacant Units	42 (4.8%)	29 (5.1%)	56 (3.8%)	127 (4.4%)	10,471 (6.4%)

Comments: Except for Topton Boro, the Region has fewer families with children and fewer rental units than Berks County as a whole. This contributes to the assumption that the increase in population will not be as significant as PA DEP projections. The Region as a whole and each municipality has lower vacancy rates than the County.

Education		
Area	High School Diploma	4+ Year @ College
Topton Borough	81.7%	20.0%
District Township	84.5%	16.6%
Rockland Township	90.7%	32.9%
Berks County	84.1%	22.3%

Comments: Overall the Region has a higher number of both graduates with a high school diploma and a 4+ year college degree.

Income				
Area	Per Capita	Median Family	Median Household	% of Persons Below Poverty
Topton Borough	\$27,274	\$74,423	\$59,330	5.0%
District Township	\$28,502	\$59,688	\$54,614	6.7%
Rockland Township	\$34,419	\$92,083	\$79,438	4.6%
Berks County	\$26,478	\$66,212	\$55,021	13.5%
Comments: The Region has significantly fewer persons living below the poverty rate than Berks County as a whole. Rockland Twp. leads the Region in income levels and education levels.				

Employment Status & Commuting						
Area	Total Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Carpooled	Public Transit	Average commute
Topton Borough	63.7%	59.5%	4.2%	5.5%	-	23.0
District Township	70.5%	66.5%	4.0%	2.5%	0.4%	30.2
Rockland Township	74.1%	69.2%	4.9%	6.2%	1.6%	29.2
Berks County	(66.3%)	(60.0%)	(6.23%)	(9.9%)	(1.8%)	24.2 min.
Comments: District and Rockland Twps. have a higher percentage of workers than Berks County as a whole. Overall the employment status is about equal to the County or higher, as seen in the Townships. Carpooling and Public Transit are not as popular in the Region as the County due to the more remote location and variety of directions that many workers travel.						

Civilian Labor Force				
Area	Topton Borough	District Township	Rockland Township	Berks County
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and	1.1%	2.2%	0.0%	1.9%
Construction	4.5%	10.1%	10.6%	5.7%
Manufacturing	28.3%	26.4%	28.6%	18.3%
Wholesale trade	3.0%	1.6%	0.7%	3.3%
Retail trade	9.6%	13.2%	7.0%	12.4%
Transportation, warehousing and utilities	6.4%	5.6%	1.5%	4.8%
Information	0.4%	3.1%	2.0%	1.4%
Finances, insurance and real estate	3.8%	2.8%	6.2%	5.9%
Professional, scientific, management and waste	5.0%	7.2%	8.9%	8.8%
Educational, health and social services	23.4%	12.7%	21.6%	23.5%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, lodging & food	9.3%	7.8%	5.2%	7.2%
Other services	2.6%	5.0%	5.9%	4.5%
Public administration	2.9%	2.5%	2.0%	2.5%
Comments: The Region has significantly more persons working in the Construction and Manufacturing sectors than Berks County. This may in some part be related to the fact that East Penn Manufacturing, one of the largest employers in Berks County, has facilities in and near the Region. In most cases the remaining sectors are fairly consistent with the overall County percentages with a few exceptions, District Twp. has far fewer workers in the Educational, health and social services fields than the County and other two municipalities and Rockland Twp. has more individuals in the professional, scientific, management and waste category than Topton and District.				

Housing Condition			
Area	Units Lacking Complete Plumbing	Units Lacking Complete Kitchen	Built Pre-1940
Topton Borough	-	-	302 (40.6%)
District Township	-	3 (0.6%)	104 (18.5%)
Rockland Township	-	-	365 (25.4%)
Berks County	961 (0.6)	1,656 (1.1%)	47,709 (29.0%)
Comments: Topton Boro. has more housing units than the Region and Berks County as a whole built prior to 1940.			

Housing Tenure & Vacancy				
Area	Owner-occupied Units	Owner-occupied Vacancy Rate	Renter-occupied Unit	Renter-occupied Vacancy Rate
Topton Borough	530 (74.3%)	-	183 (25.7%)	6.5%
District Township	402 (80.2%)	2.9%	99 (9.8%)	10.8%
Rockland Township	1,364 (95.1%)	0.0%	71 (4.9%)	0.0%
Berks County	111,016 (72.1%)	1.6%	42,961 (27.9%)	5.7%
Comments: Overall the Region has a higher owner occupied rate than Berks County and a lower amount of renter occupied units.				

Housing Costs		
Area	Median Monthly Rental Costs	Median Owner-Occupied Housing Values
Topton Borough	\$841	\$165,400
District Township	\$774	\$244,900
Rockland Township	\$834	\$243,600
Berks County	\$812	\$173,400
Comments: The Median owner occupied housing values are significantly higher in District and Rockland Townships versus the County as a whole, in fact more than \$70,000 higher than the County. Median rental housing is highest in Topton Borough. Possibly in part to the significantly higher number of rental properties compared to the other municipalities.		

Housing Type					
Area	Single-family Detached	Single-family Attached	Two-family	Multiple-family	Mobile Home
Topton Borough	382 (51.3%)	214 (28.8%)	39 (5.2%)	105 (14.2%)	4 (0.5%)
District Township	444 (78.9%)	3 (0.5%)	3 (0.5%)	2 (0.4%)	111 (19.7%)
Rockland Township	1,375 (95.8%)	16 (1.1%)	-	-	44 (3.1%)
East. Berks Co. Region	2,201 (80.3%)	233 (8.5%)	42 (1.5%)	107 (3.9%)	159 (5.8%)
Berks County	90,289 (54.9%)	3,842 (73.3%)	6,175 (3.8%)	24,114 (14.6%)	5,581 (3.4%)
Comments: Overall the Region favors single-family detached housing units with more than 25% more than Berks County overall. Topton has the most single-family attached, two-family and multiple family of the Region, however this is due to their having access to public sewer and water facilities.					