WINCHESTER COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2011

Draft of 4/8/21

CHAPTER TWO

PLANNING STUDIES

This chapter presents background information about Winchester and its ten neighborhood Planning Areas. The analysis here supports the sustainable vision of Winchester, the specific citywide goals, and the Planning Area objectives for particular neighborhoods.

Summary

The first part of this chapter describes Winchester's current and projected future conditions under the same policies. Six important qualities about the city in 2020 are:

- The current population is about ~~26,500~~ 28,803.
- 11.3% of residents are African-American, and ~~11.2~~% 18.3% are Hispanic.
- 38.8% of residents live in a family headed by a married couple.
- ~~Half of Winchester's families earn more than $58,000 per year~~. The median household income is $53,797 ($67,000 for families).
- ~~Half~~ 41.8% of Winchester's residents have never taken a college course.
- 16.5% of population is 65 years of age or older.

Four important trends into the future include:

- A gradually growing population to ~~30,000~~ 32,770 by ~~2023~~ 2040.
- A gradually aging population with more retirees and senior workers.
- Fewer households with married couples and children.
- A more diverse city, at least ~~15%~~ 46% Hispanic by ~~2030~~ 2040.

The second part of this chapter describes current land use. Winchester previously adhered to ~~uses~~ the traditional Euclidean zoning approach, which segregates different land uses: homes, stores, and factories all in separate places. Residents and visitors under this approach must use cars to move about the city. Reliance on cars for so many everyday tasks contributes to lost time and money, stress, and pollution. Even the current street design creates pollution and complicates walking.

Winchester mixed land uses for the first 200 years of its history. It was intended back then that most people would walk to work, school, or when out shopping, which works well with mixed land use. This changed however following the Second World War with the widespread adoption of the automobile. City planning instead emphasized Euclidean principles and a more spread out, commuter-centric street design.

Downtown Winchester however never abandoned its mixed land usage and pedestrian focus, though new construction in the southern half of the City has generally followed the Euclidean approach. The 2011 Comprehensive Plan adopted New Urbanism in place of Euclidean zoning, emphasizing a return to a more pedestrian and public transit friendly

design. New mixed use development tends to occur where property values are lowest, replacing vacant and blighted buildings with new apartments, homes, and businesses.

~~Mixed use development means integrating land uses which are now segregated. Winchester mixed land uses for most of the first 200 years of its history. Before cars were invented, most people walked to work, school, and shopping. Mixed use development presents opportunities to make getting around Winchester easier. New mixed use development tends to occur where property values are lowest, replacing vacant and blighted buildings with new apartments, homes, and businesses.~~

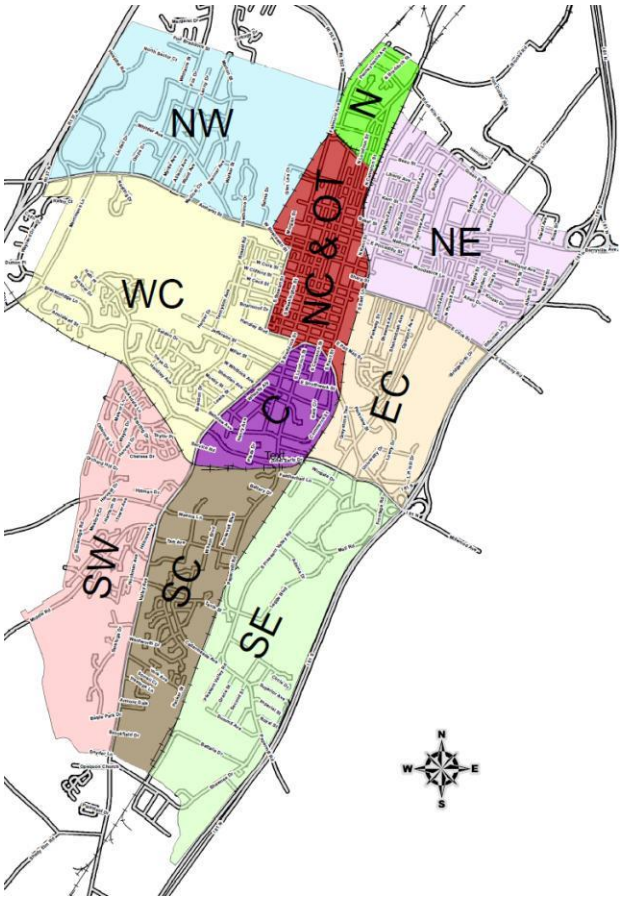
Later chapters of this plan outline how Winchester's government will promote a more sustainable and vibrant city. From zoning to street design, policy changes can enhance the entire community. This chapter presents background information to place the new plan in a helpful context.

Data Analysis

The U.S. Census provides detailed information about our neighborhoods. Data from the ~~2000~~ 2010 census is the primary source for the neighborhood-level statistics and charts in this chapter. Detailed data from the ~~2010~~ 2020 Census was not complete in time for this Plan, and detailed information will likely not be available until early in ~~2012~~ 2022.

To bridge this long gap, the Census Bureau also conducts the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS does not question every person in the United States, but only a statistical sample. Because of the random sampling, recent data exists only for Winchester as a whole and not for individual neighborhoods. The first part of this chapter explains trends and current conditions in the city using neighborhood data from ~~2000~~ 2010 and citywide survey data from ~~2007and 2008~~ the 2014-2018 ACS five-year estimate.

Some charts in this chapter compare Winchester to peer localities. The Commonwealth of Virginia provides a baseline. Farther down the Shenandoah Valley, Martinsburg has some similar characteristics of population and history. Closer to Washington, D.C., Leesburg and Manassas predict trends related to urbanization. The peer cities have similar commitments to strong downtowns, historic preservation, and sustainable growth.



For planning purposes, city staff divided Winchester into ten geographic planning areas. The map on the left shows their borders. The boundaries reflect some of the diversity of Winchester's neighborhoods. For example, the west central area has distinctive low density housing and the Glen Burnie historic sites. The south central area has higher density housing, businesses oriented around Valley Avenue, and industrial sites. The planning areas' boundaries also align with boundaries used by the U.S. Census, making it easy to compare neighborhoods using reliable data.

This having been said, the data maps below divide Winchester into its five census tracts, which merge the 10 planning districts. Data for these maps was drawn from the 2013-2017 ACS 5 year estimate.

Population Change

In ~~2000~~ 2010, the city of Winchester had ~~23,585~~ 26,203 residents. The preliminary population count for ~~2010~~ 2019 was ~~26,203~~ 28.803, a ~~11.1%~~ 6% increase. However, certain demographic groups grew more than others. If current trends continue, Winchester's population will continue to grow, and the city will also become more diverse in many ways.

The graph below shows Winchester's population growth during the 20th century and the best projection through ~~2030~~ 2040. The city's population has grown steadily, except for a surge during the 1920s and a slump during the 1960s. Annexation of land from Frederick County contributed to the sharp increase during the 1970s.

Population change has two causes: natural increase and migration. Natural increase is births minus deaths, but local government policy does not have much effect. Migration is

movement into or out of the community, and government policy can make a place more or less attractive for new families and the businesses who serve and employ them.

The table below shows population change in Winchester and its peers. Winchester's population grew during the last 20 years, but Frederick County grew at a much faster pace. New immigrants preferred the county and cities of the D.C. suburbs. (Recommend replacement of the below chart with chart at bottom, taken from Winchester City Data powerpoint.)

Population Growth for Winchester and Peer Localities
Source: US Census, VEC, Town of Leesburg

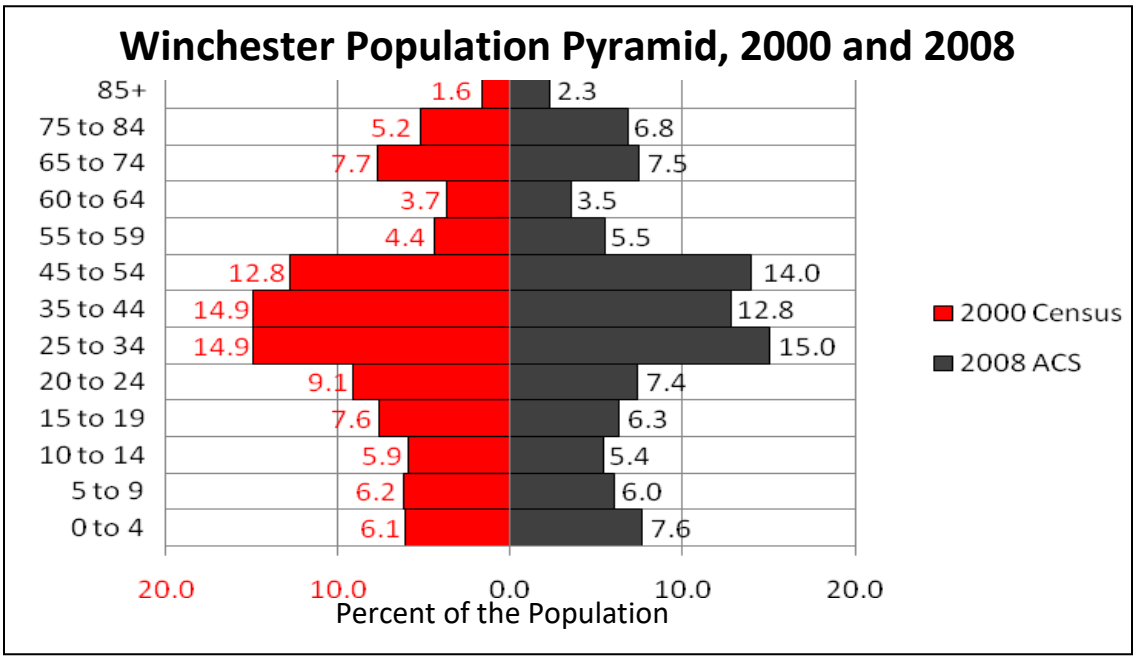
Locality	2000 Population	2010 Population	2020 Population	% Change, 2000-2020
Winchester	23,585	26,203	28,705	22
Leesburg	28,311	42,616	53,917	90
Manassas	35,135	37,821	45,212	29
Martinsburg	14,915	16,450 in 2007	17,497	17
Virginia	7,079,030	8,001,024	8,744,273	24

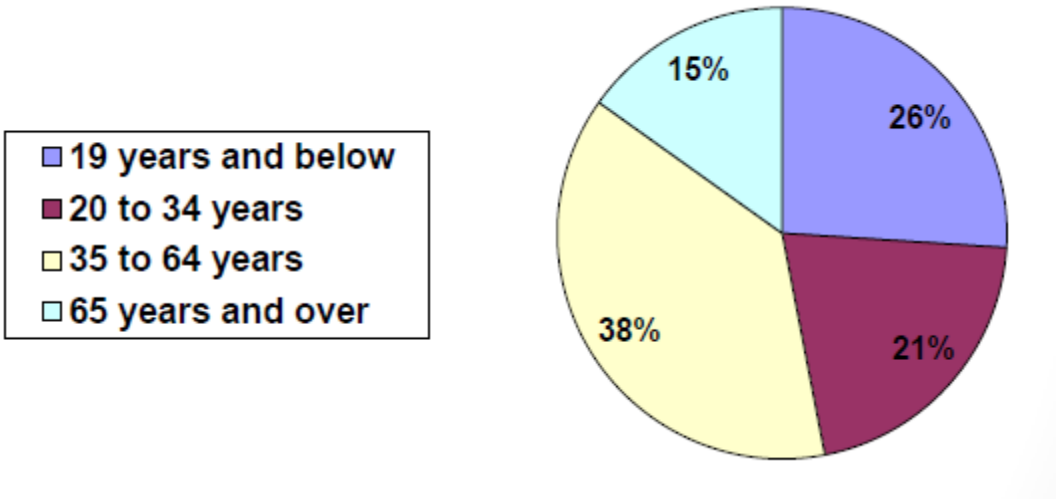
Geography Name	Total Population		
	2020	2030	2040
Virginia, Statewide	**8,744,273**	**9,546,958**	**10,201,530**
Clarke County	14,337	15,266	15,965
Frederick County	86,574	101,471	114,663
Page County	23,387	23,583	23,450
Shenandoah County	42,363	46,803	50,507
Warren County	39,925	44,444	48,256
Fredericksburg city	29,596	34,481	38,790
Hopewell city	23,302	23,557	23,482
Salem city	25,979	26,256	26,165
Staunton city	25,238	25,519	25,442
Waynesboro city	22,493	23,842	24,835
Winchester city	28,705	31,107	33,031

Forecasting population is not easy. The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) created an estimate generated from migration, birth and death, and job forecast data. They project Winchester's population to reach 31,000 by 2030, and more than 33,000 by 2040. ~~28,000 by 2016; 30,000 by 2023; and more than 32,000 by 2030.~~ However, population change depends on local policies like zoning and tax rates as well as national economic trends and immigration policies.

From ~~2010 to 2030~~ 2020 to 2040, the VEC projects Winchester's population to increase by ~~22~~ 15 percent. It projects a ~~47~~ 32 percent increase for Frederick County's during the same period. Land costs less in the county, and if all laws and conditions stay the same, more people will move there, and businesses will follow the residents away. This population shift means that without policy changes in Winchester and Frederick County, the city's historic role as an economic hub will diminish.

Over time, Winchester's demographics have also changed. The following pages discuss racial and ethnic change, but age is also important. The chart below shows the continued aging of the City's population since 2010. ~~a slight aging of the city's population since 2000 2010~~. From ~~2000 to 2008~~ 2010 to 2018, persons older than 65 became a larger part of Winchester's population. There was also growth in the youngest two age brackets of children. These children will soon cause elementary and especially middle school enrollments to grow.



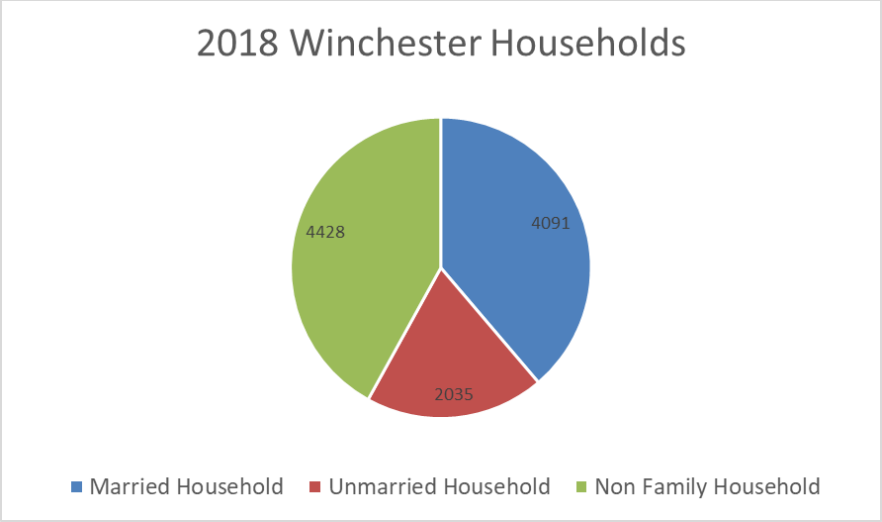


The table ~~on the next page~~ below shows age statistics for Winchester and its peers. A median age figure of 37.3 means that half the residents are younger than 37.3. The youngest and oldest residents tend to place greater demands on city services. Sometimes called the primary workforce, the 18-64 age group pays taxes which fund most city services. An aging population could mean less revenue for the city from sales and property taxes. Universities attract young residents and reduce the average age in a city. Winchester has a smaller primary workforce, and it is becoming known as a good place for retirement and aging. Like most changes, this trend presents both problems and opportunities.

Age Distribution in Winchester and Peer Localities, 2018
Source: 2010 Census and 2014-18 American Communities Survey

Locality	% Under 18	% 20 - 64	% 65 and Older	Change in Median Age, 2010 to 2018
Winchester	22.9	61.8	15.6	37 to 37.3
Leesburg	27.6	61.6	8.2	32.1 to 35.1
Manassas	26.9	61.7	9.1	33.3 to 33.7
Martinsburg	25.2	58.6	14.3	36.3 to 35.3
Virginia	22.2	60.3	14.6	37.2 to 38.1

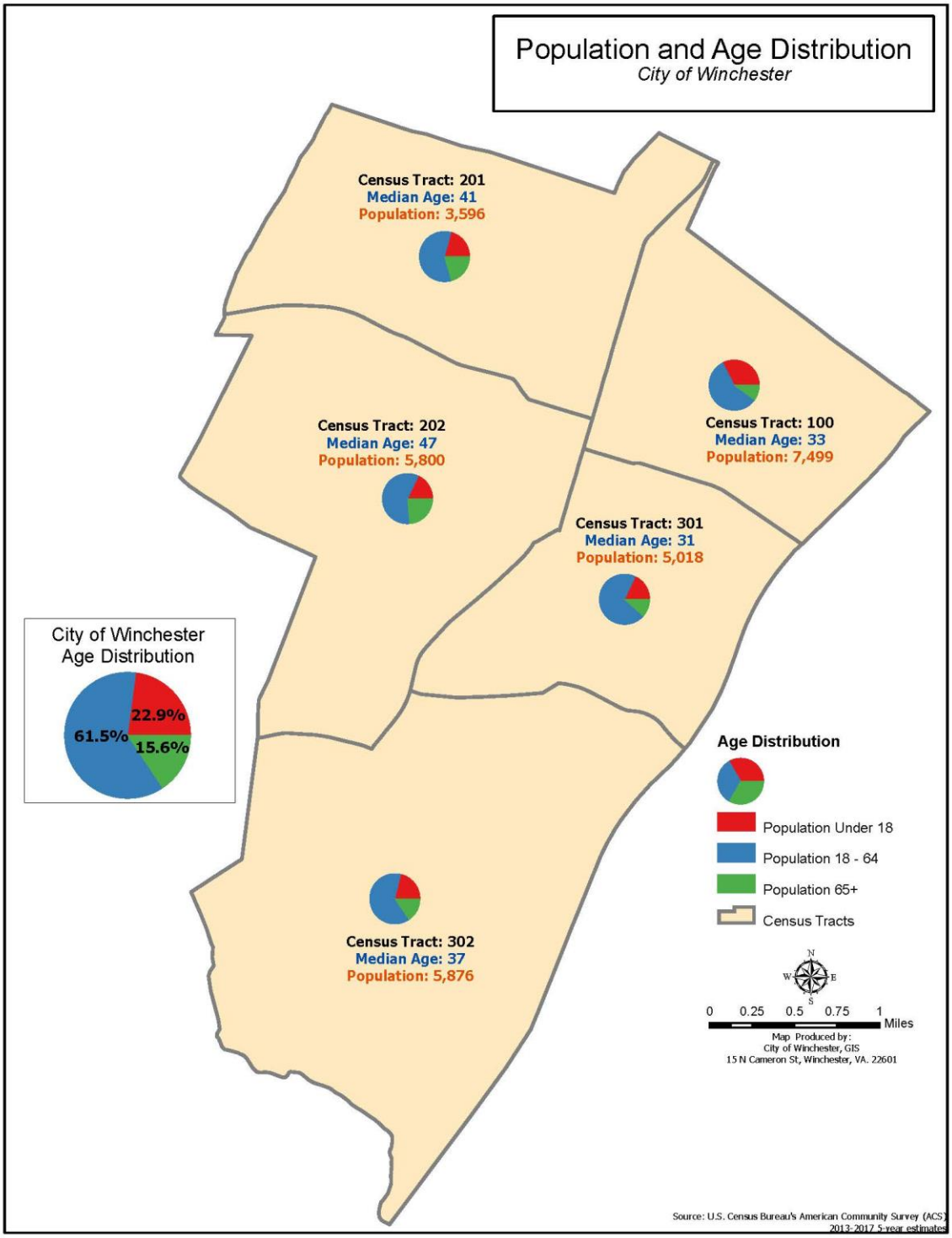
Household size and family size measure another facet of communities. The Census defines a household as all the people who live together, whether or not they are related. A family is a group of related people who live together. So a married couple with one child and tenant renting a basement suite is a family of three and a household of four.



Household and Family Size in Winchester, 2000-2008		
	Average Household	Average Family
2008 ACS	2.41	3.34
2018 ACS	2.54	3.32

The graph shows that almost half of Winchester's households are not families. These may be college students, young professionals, widows, or transient residents. The increase in both household and family size is partly due to recession –in 2008, more families included a grandparent or high school graduate. Recent trends resulting in higher rent prices have resulted in more young people living with family members for longer periods. More often, renters shared houses and apartments.

The map on the next page shows the population and age distribution for ~~the ten Planning Areas of Winchester from the 2010 census.~~ Winchester's five census tracts as of the 2017 ACS 5 year estimate. These are the most recent data on this level. The downtown and eastern neighborhoods are most populous, while the western and southern areas are among the least dense.

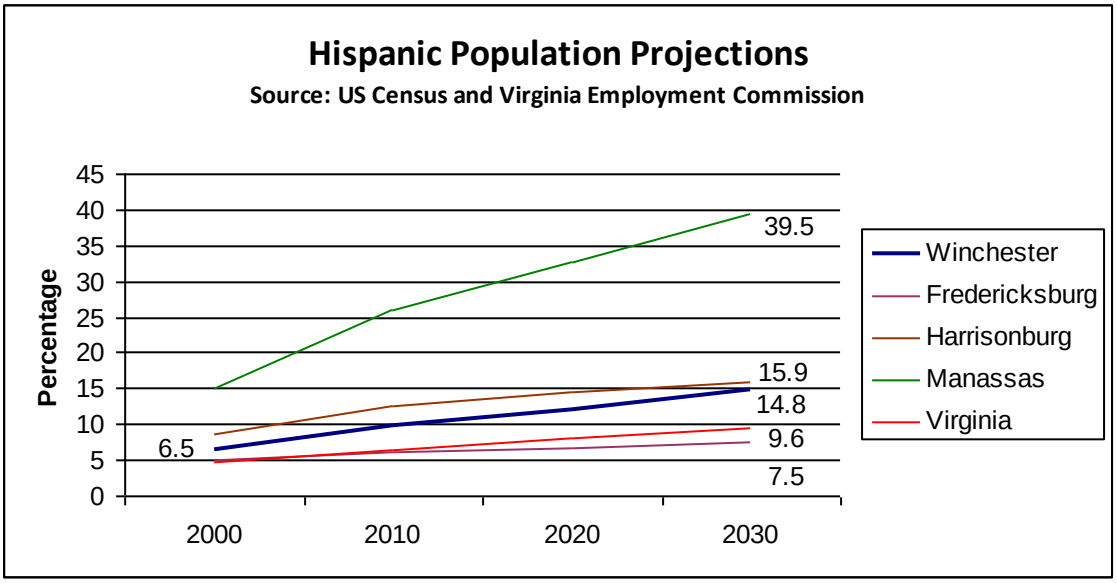


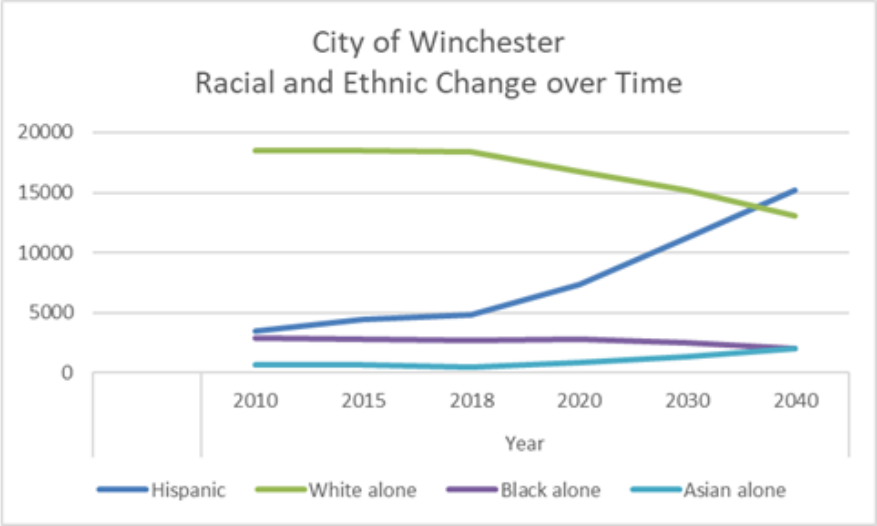
Older and younger residents tend to live in different neighborhoods. The area around Shenandoah University has the lowest median age because of the many students living there. Shenandoah's student body of 3,800 does not make Winchester as much of a "college town" as Harrisonburg, where the city median age is 23, or Blacksburg, where it is 22. The central neighborhoods are home to many families with children; western areas have larger populations of older families and retirees.

Racial and Ethnic Diversity

Shawnee, Iroquois, and Piscataway tribes hunted and traded in this area during the 17th century. Settlers from Britain and Germany founded the town in 1744. Slaves of African ancestry comprised up to 15 percent of the population in the mid-19th century, but after emancipation many African-American families moved north. More recently, Winchester has proved attractive to newcomers from across the United States and around the world, especially Latin America. The city is becoming more culturally diverse.

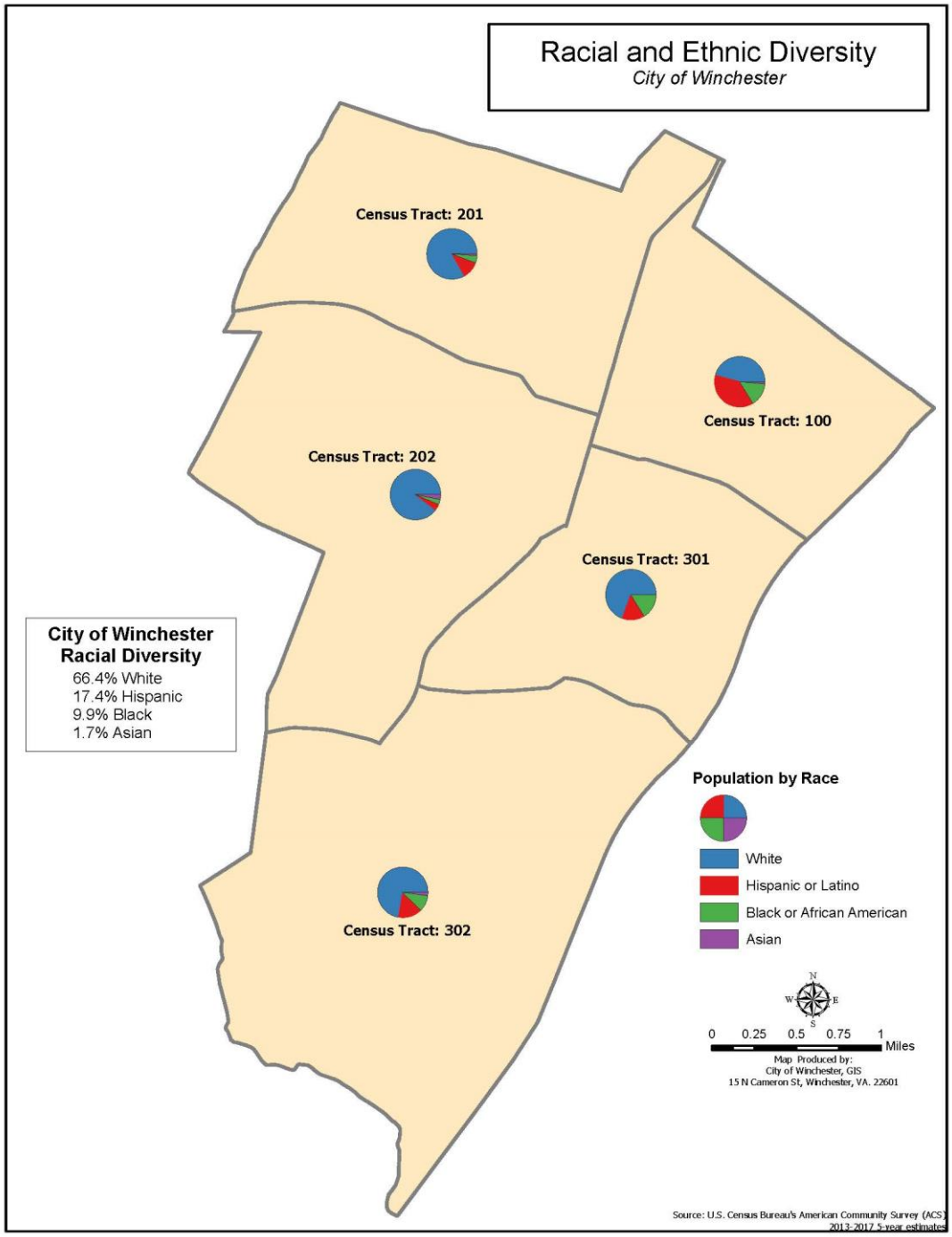
The growth of Winchester's Hispanic population is one of the most important demographic changes in the city. Depending on their background, some Hispanics may also consider themselves white, black, Native American, or multiracial: "Hispanic" is not a race, but an ethnic label based upon national origin. Winchester's Hispanic community is not a homogenous group. Slightly under half (2,128 of 4,842 in the 2018 ACS) declared Mexican ancestry, but others arrived from the many nations of Central and South America. According to the 2018 ACS, 47 percent of Latinos speak English very well, and ~~10 percent do not speak English at all~~ about 5 percent of the population does not speak English very well at all.





The graph above shows projected growth of Hispanic communities in Winchester and some peer localities. Winchester will see a larger increase than the state average. According to the Census, the median age of Winchester's Hispanic community (Not available) ~~is 25,~~ much younger than the overall median of 37.3. This difference, combined with continued immigration, means that a diverse Hispanic community will become larger in years to come. The Virginia Employment Commission estimates that the number of Latinos in Winchester will increase ~~by 84 percent~~ significantly through 2030. ~~Put another way, 39 percent of Winchester's population growth in the next two decades will be the result of Latinos~~ a little under half of The City's population will be Hispanic by 2040. The city's future growth entails increased diversity.

The map below shows the distribution of different racial and ethnic groups in Winchester. More minority families live in the central and eastern neighborhoods, especially the northeast. ~~More than 90 percent~~ An overwhelming majority of residents in the western areas are white. In ~~2000~~ 2010, the ~~central~~ eastern neighborhoods had the largest Hispanic populations, and the concentrations shown in the map remain fairly accurate. The 2020 Census will likely reveal larger Hispanic communities in every part of Winchester.



Income, Poverty, and Education

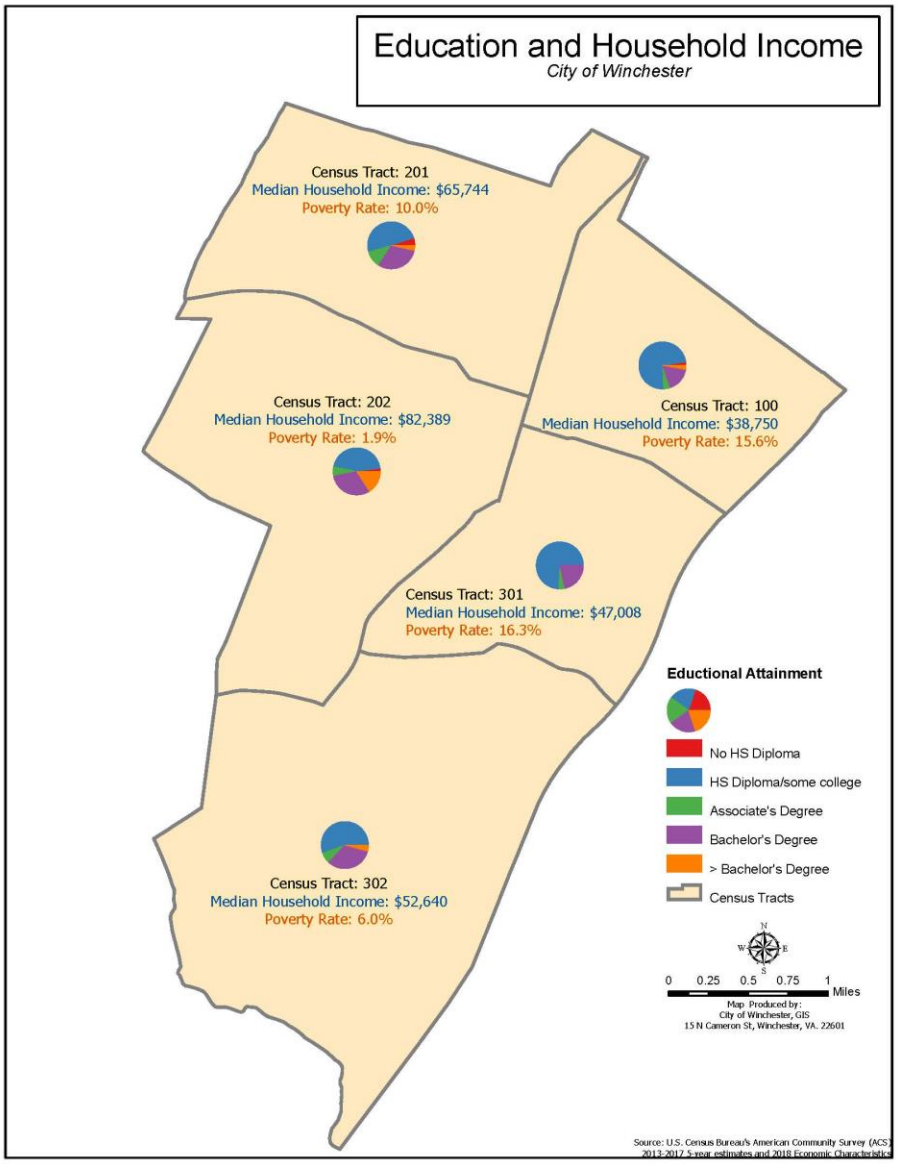
Winchester currently faces challenges related to income, poverty, and education. While many city residents enjoy high incomes and hold advanced degrees, many others live in or near poverty. 16% of the city's adults aged 25 years of age or older have no high school diploma, and in a given year, 15% of residents live in poverty. ~~In part because city services attract dependent populations, Winchester has more poverty than Frederick County.~~ 48% of Frederick County's households were at or below the poverty, compared to 37% for Winchester. Additionally, a significant portion of the City's population fit the ALICE profile, being Asset-Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed. In surrounding Frederick County, 63% of the population fit the ALICE profile, as opposed to 26% in Winchester.

The table below shows the most recent income statistics for Winchester and peer localities. The city's residents have incomes around the group average, but lower than the state average despite lower unemployment. This table shows that half of the city's families (related persons living together) earn less than $66,557 per year. The figure for nonfamily households is lower partly because it includes students, retirees living alone, and many households where only one person works. The table shows the impact of proximity to high-wage government and technology jobs in the capital area. Please note that these figures are from before the coronavirus pandemic.

2018 Income Statistics for Winchester and Peer Localities

Source: ACS and 2000 Census and BLS for Martinsburg	Median Family Income	Median Nonfamily Income	Persons Living in Poverty, Past Year	Persons Unemployed
Winchester	$66,557	$37,739	15%	3.8%
Leesburg	$127,975	$67,558	4.9%	2.7%
Manassas	$83,744	$54,000	8.6%	5.7%
Martinsburg	$47,328	$32,414	27.1%	11.9%
Virginia	$86,628	$43,168	10.9%	5%

The map on the next page shows an association between income, poverty, and education in Winchester's neighborhoods. The western neighborhoods' residents are most likely to have undergraduate and graduate degrees, and they also have the least poverty and highest income. Central and eastern neighborhoods' residents are less likely to have finished high school and more likely to have low incomes. Chapter Four examines Economic Sustainability.



City-wide, ~~38%~~ 41% of adults have no college education. 14.9% of Winchester's adults have graduate degrees. The city's neighborhoods reflect this gap: the median household income of the wealthiest area, ~~the West Central~~ census tract 202, is more than double that of census tract 100 in the north east ~~three other areas~~. City-wide, the median household income for 2018 was $53,797, but the average household income was much greater, $75,613. This means that half of Winchester's families make less than $53,797 per year, but a small number are much wealthier. With a majority of its working adults lacking any college education, Winchester faces constrained prospects for attracting high-wage jobs. Chapter Eight examines Education as part of Community Services and Facilities.

(Note: info on map supplemented with 2018 Economic Characteristics because ESRI's published dataset that looks at poverty levels took into account the past 12 months of income data. This accounted for significantly higher poverty rates in each census tract.)

Housing

Winchester currently lacks enough high-quality rental housing. The 2014-2018 ACS reported 5.9% of rental units vacant; some of these vacant properties are blighted and unsafe to use, though this number has decreased significantly over the decade. The median rent payment is $1011. Because Winchester's rental housing tends to be at lower rents and of lower quality, some citizens associate home ownership with a higher standard of living and a healthier neighborhood.

This is not necessarily true. Homeownership has more to do with density than poverty. The outer neighborhoods have many owner-occupied detached houses. Rented duplexes, townhouses, and apartments are common in central neighborhoods. In the central corridor of planning areas, and in the southwest, detached single-family units comprise a minority of the housing stock. More densely populated neighborhoods tend to have more rented properties. Neighborhoods with little homeownership may not be poor: for example, an area might have many luxury apartments and wealthy residents but little homeownership.

While many persons in many stages of life may choose to rent, homeownership has often been a path to safe investment and wealth creation. There is some evidence that homeowners are more attentive to maintaining their property, to the benefit of the entire community. Homeowners may also be more likely to live in the same place for many years.

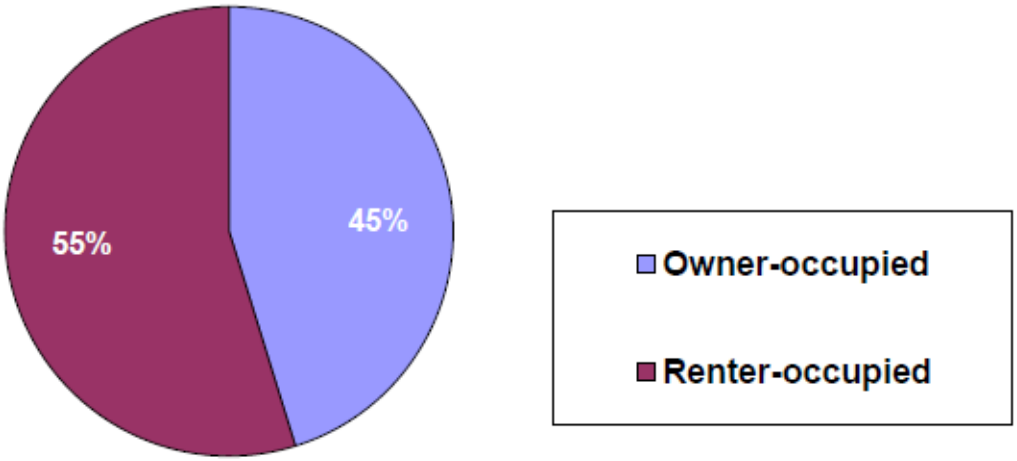
With the city's population ~~greater than 25,000~~ nearing 30,000, and with little open space left to build on, only denser construction and mixed use can accommodate new residents. Planning goals emphasize high-quality, denser housing in appropriate mixed use neighborhoods. New buildings and renovations of current ones will provide new opportunities for both renting and owning. Chapter Seven examines Housing.

Transience

Transience refers to residents living in a community for a short time. There are many reasons for a person to live in Winchester for only a few years. A university student may graduate and move elsewhere. A contracted builder or computer programmer may finish a job and move on. Or a young family may have just moved in from another city. So some transience is not necessarily unhealthy for a neighborhood or a city.

The U.S. Census asks residents how long they have lived at their current address. Between 2010 and 2014, 30% of the Winchester population moved to a different house; the rest lived in the same house through that entire period. Compared to surrounding communities and the United States as a whole, Winchester has lower rates of owner-occupied housing and higher rates of renter occupied housing. ~~The 2008 American Community Survey reported that during that year, about 36 percent of the population moved, and the remaining 64 percent lived in the same place the whole year. The depressed real estate market probably reduced transience.~~

Housing Tenure, 2018



In 2010, Winchester's northwestern, central, and northeast neighborhoods had the most stable populations. The residents there are more likely to have children in school or be retired and also have a working-class or greater income. Parts of the central corridor, east central, and southwest also have considerable transience, but for various reasons, including:

1. Turnover in apartments. Some apartments are meant for short lease terms. Many university students, for instance, do not live in the same place a full year.

2. New construction. When a new house is built, the owner cannot have lived there for a long time. New houses in Winchester's southwest create a temporarily high transience figure, even if those families intend to stay there for many years.

3. Job-related turnover. Some good careers require workers to move frequently. These jobs may be in consulting, sales, or construction. Winchester is a temporary home for some of these workers, who may inflate transience figures.

4. Poverty. A person or family with unsteady income may frequently move to find affordable housing. There is a rough correlation between poverty and transience. Everything else the same, a poorer neighborhood may have higher transience than a wealthier one.

Workforce and Commuting

The table below shows Winchester's workforce by industry according to the ACS. The table illustrates the city's role as a regional hub for education, healthcare, and retail. The city also has a balanced base of manufacturing, management, and information services. Chapter Four addresses specific industry analyses and growth potential in greater detail.

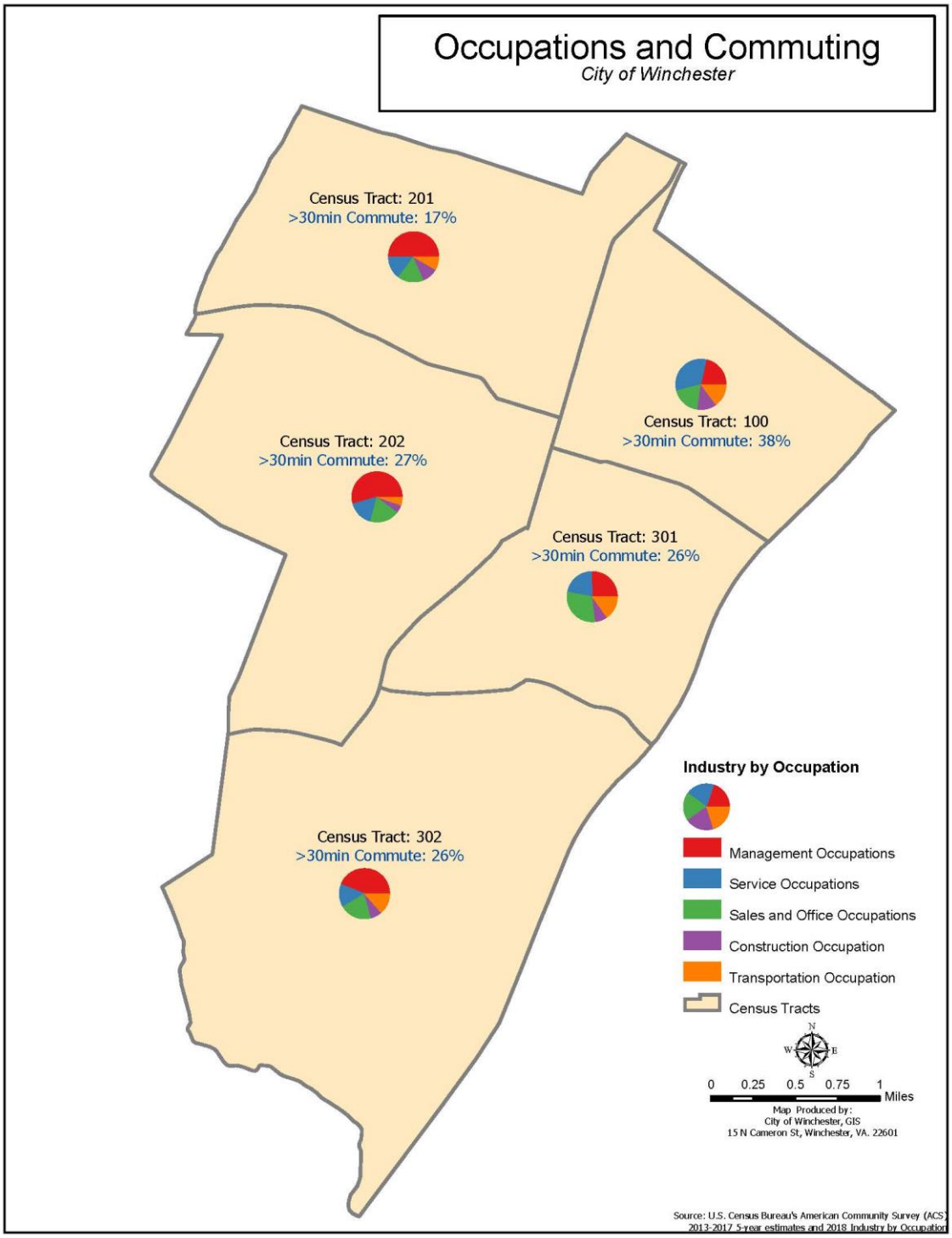
Winchester Workforce by Industry, 2014-2018 ACS

Civilian employed population 16 years and over	Education, Healthcare, and Social Assistance	Retail trade	Agriculture, Forestry, and Mining	Construction	Arts, Hospitality, and Food Services
14,253	3,197	1,668	271	912	1,776
64.3%	23.3%	12.2%	2%	6.6%	12.9%

Other services, except public administration	Professional, Scientific, Management, and Administrative services	Manufacturing (Includes food production)	Transportation, Warehousing, Wholesaling, and Utilities	Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	Public administration
746	1,611	910	503	668	883
5.4%	11.7%	6.6%	3.7%	4.9%	6.4%

The map on the next page shows what kinds of jobs are most common in each neighborhood and how long residents commute each morning. Work in the Management/Professional category tends to pay the most. The western neighborhoods of the city have the highest concentrations of workers in this category. They also have the highest incomes.

A fraction of workers in every neighborhood have long commutes. ~~Residents near Shenandoah University, often students or staff there, are least likely to have long commutes.~~ Residents in census tract 201 in the northwest corner of the map have the shortest commutes, as it contains residential areas close to one of the city's largest employers: Winchester Medical Center ~~Most other neighborhoods send about 25 percent of their workers on commutes longer than 30 minutes.~~ From Winchester, a commute of 30 minutes or more includes jobs to the north beyond Martinsburg and to the west beyond Capon Bridge in West Virginia, to the south beyond Front Royal, and to the east beyond Round Hill in Loudoun County. Likewise, most residents of Frederick, Clarke, Berkeley, and Jefferson counties can easily commute to Winchester. Many Winchester residents commute east towards Washington. They may work there as welders, teachers, or lawyers, but they face the same transportation problems. Only about three percent of Winchester's adults walk to work.



(Note: map supplemented with Industry by Occupation table from 2018 because ESRI did not have a ready to use dataset published.)

Existing Land Use in Winchester

Euclidean Zoning ordinances segregate many sections of the city for certain uses. Winchester created such zoning between 1940 and 1960. This long history of segregated land use result in the following characteristics today:

- The downtown area has a mix of businesses and apartments.
- The western neighborhoods feature a regional medical center and many single-family homes.
- The northern and eastern neighborhoods have important commercial and industrial areas, along with housing spanning a range of densities and values.
- To the east is a university, a large park, and several neighborhoods of single-family homes.
- The southern areas contain commercial and industrial projects along the main roads, and a variety of housing in a range of densities and values.
- Newer single-family homes and a large battlefield preserve dominate in the southwest.
- Schoolyards, the Glen Burnie Estate, the Kernstown Battlefield, and cemeteries supplement the green space of parks.
- There are three small farm properties, two of which have conservation easements, still inside the city limits.

Chapter 11 describes the bounds and character of each planning area in greater detail.

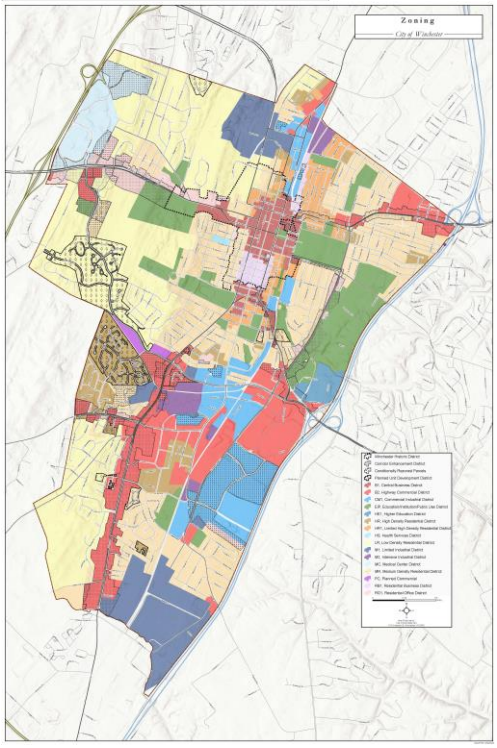
The zoning map shows the location of Winchester's 16 zoning districts. Each district has a set of rules for what kind of structures may be built and how those structures may be used. These rules specify the maximum height of buildings in different parts of the city, how large a space must separate buildings, what kinds of business may be conducted, how many people may live in a building, and so on. The zoning map generally shows:

- Low-Density Residential districts in the western neighborhoods.
- Medium-Density Residential districts in the eastern and central neighborhoods.
- High-Density Residential areas downtown and in pockets of the north, south, and east.
- A Central Business District area which allows mixed uses.
- Industrial activity mostly on the northern and southern edges with two large industries in the south central portion of the city.
- Large commercial districts along the main roads into the city.
- The university on the eastern edge and the hospital in the northwest corner.

The zoning map also shows three special overlay zoning areas. Each of these overlays several zoning districts but establishes additional rules. The Historic Winchester District downtown preserves traditional architecture and design. Multiple Corridor Enhancement Districts follow main roads into the city and promote mobility and good first impressions.

And Planned Unit/Planned Commercial Districts regulate new flexible design development to protect the environment and prevent crowding. Finally, the Floodplain Districts described in the Zoning Ordinance does not appear on the Zoning Map.

The City Council can change the rules for each zoning district. It can also rezone parcels of land into a different zoning district. Because they affect the choices of builders, businesses, and home buyers, these two actions are important ways that Winchester's government influences the future of the city. The Zoning Ordinance is a powerful tool to realize the future vision of Winchester.



Euclidean Zoning

Like most towns and cities, Winchester has until recently used Euclidean zoning to plan land use. Euclidean zoning segregates different land uses. Houses can only be built in some places, apartment buildings in others, shopping centers and factories in yet others. The biggest benefit of Euclidean zoning is that it prevents unpleasant mixing of land uses. It ensures that a factory will not be built in the middle of a quiet neighborhood. Under Euclidean zoning, some districts of a city may be exclusively residential, others may have only shops and stores, and still others will have only offices and factories.

Euclidean zoning works best when it is easy to move between districts. In a town where almost everyone has a personal automobile, where roads are wide and parking is ample, residents and visitors can move between residential, industrial, and commercial areas without stress or delays. They can drive to work and then to a commercial area and still have a peaceful neighborhood. This is the ideal of the American suburb.

On the other hand, if a city becomes larger and lacks good mobility options, Euclidean zoning quickly becomes dysfunctional. When residential, industrial, and commercial areas are separated, it takes a long time to move between them. Every resident and visitor has to drive across the city to enjoy any part of it. Too many cars delay everyone, waste time and money, cause residents to feel stressed, and pollute the environment.

Today, Winchester suffers some negative effects of Euclidean zoning. Residents and visitors rely on cars for most movement around the city, which causes several problems:

1. Parking lots waste space which could be used for businesses or parks.
2. Traffic congestion wastes time, and high fuel costs waste money.
3. Exhaust emissions pollute the air.
4. Traffic endangers pedestrians and bicyclists.

Additionally, reliance on cars tends to push new development to the edges of Winchester, where wider roads and bigger parking lots make driving easier. This pattern neglects the downtown area, which may become increasingly blighted. Finally, recent commercial development just beyond the city limits creates competition for sales tax revenue with Frederick County, potentially harming cooperation and service delivery in both places.

This Comprehensive Plan recognizes the limitations of Euclidean zoning, and has instead opted to embrace New Urbanist principles of compact, mixed use development. ~~and aims to improve its shortcomings while maintaining its strengths.~~ The plan preserves quiet, stable neighborhoods while revitalizing unproductive and blighted areas. Revising ~~Euclidean~~ the City's zoning promises to make Winchester more economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable.

New Urban Development

In some ways, New Urbanism resembles ~~the Winchester's growth~~ Winchester's growth patterns during its first 200 years. New Urban, mixed use development recognizes that some land uses complement each other. It zones areas of land so a variety of buildings can exist together, with an eye for improving mobility without the use of a car.

In a mixed use area, residents and visitors do not have to drive as much. Some of the places they like to go are close enough to walk to. These neighborhoods can be more sustainable and more fun to live in. They also advance the basic property rights of landowners by providing more freedom to build and use different structures. The picture below is an example of New Urbanist Development. The main street running left to right across the middle of the image shows Berryville Avenue, one of the City's vital arteries.

Rather than dividing the area up between commercial and residential zones, this mixed use development proposes the construction of buildings with commercial space on the ground and residential space on the floors above. By positioning the new street's entrance in front of the highway ramp, visitors will be able to access things like restaurants and lodging without needing to merge onto Berryville Avenue. Residents and workers, both here and in surrounding areas, will be able to access new commercial space by foot or bike, further decreasing traffic congestion.

Mixed Use development has its dangers and drawbacks. When residential and commercial areas mix, some residents may be offended by noise, foot and vehicle traffic, or the kinds of business activity which occurs: for example, some people like living close to a bar, and some do not. ~~If mixed uses dominate an entire city, residents may find no peace and quiet.~~ They may leave, and then many of the businesses will fail. It is important to strike a balance between land use patterns. Recognizing that, this plan strives to preserve stable neighborhoods and focus new mixed use construction in areas of blight and neglect.

Urban and Suburban Growth in Winchester

In previous decades, developers of new homes and businesses in Winchester could easily build on vacant land or farmland inside the city limits. Such construction cost relatively little and increased the city's tax base.

The oldest part of the city is the current downtown area. Many of the buildings there date to the eighteenth and nineteenth century and retain historic value. The next ring of growth came during the first half of the twentieth century, in what are now the central and northeast planning areas. Before personal automobiles became common, the city grew in a dense and compact way. Businesses and homes mixed together, and most residents could easily walk to work, school, and shopping.

After World War II, the city's population grew steadily, and in 1974 Winchester annexed land from Frederick County. Many of the homes in the east central, northwest, and west central planning areas were built during this period, along with the commercial areas along Valley Avenue. In the last thirty years, new residential construction filled the west central and southwest areas, and large commercial chains concentrated in the southeast, including the Apple Blossom Mall and the South Pleasant Valley Road "big box" corridor.

Since the 1950s, many more families have bought homes, and multiple automobiles per household have become the norm. ~~and multiple automobiles~~. Winchester grew "out" rather than "up," as cheap land on the edge of the city was developed from farms into homes and businesses. With cars, families could easily move between residential subdivisions and commercial strips. ~~Since the 1950s~~ Winchester's growth has thus been more suburban that truly urban. Population density today is lower than it was in 1950. Downtown is less important to residents' daily routines.

Winchester's population is projected to grow steadily and reach 33,000 by 2030. Nearly all of the available grassy land has already been built on, and what remains is precious to the community: Glen Burnie Farm, Jim Barnett Park, and Mt. Hebron Cemetery, among other places. ~~So~~ The only way for more people and businesses to come to Winchester is for denser housing and shopping to replace the current ~~less dense~~ low density construction. Planners call this "infill redevelopment."

Chapter Ten of this Plan addresses Historic Preservation and Urban Design.