

Population & Demographics

Outstanding Questions/Comments:

- What is the seasonal population in Freeport? Is it significant? What is the town's dependence on seasonal tourism? Need to coordinate with local business organizations and businesses.
- Are additional efforts required to serve a daytime population that is larger than its resident population due to an influx of tourists/shoppers/etc. visiting retail establishments?
- Freeport is a service center with several large employers and a strong retail sector. Need to add information to the "Daytime Population" section of the chapter related to:
 - The number of people commuting into Freeport each day for work
 - Any issues resulting from the daytime population – parking, traffic, etc.

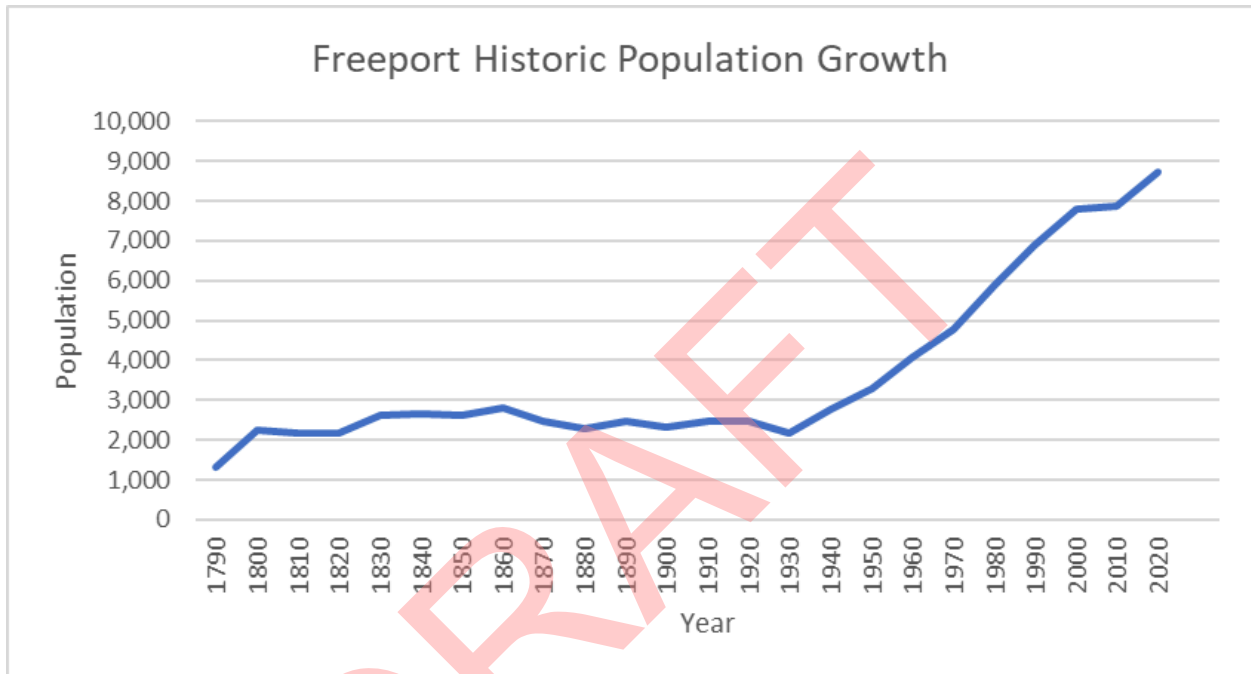
Highlights

- Freeport's population increased by 83% between 1970 and 2020, with the greatest growth period occurring between 1970 and 1990.
- Freeport has seen higher rates of population growth between 1970 and 2020 compared to the county and the state.
- Freeport's population is aging. In 2020 Freeport's median age was 47.2 which is older than the county and the state.
- Freeport's age distribution consists of younger people and those people of childbearing age who are moving to town with those older populations, age 65 and over who are aging in place.
- Educational attainment in Freeport has increased. In 2010, 92% had a higher school degree or higher and 37% had a bachelor's degree or higher. In 2021, 96% of Freeport residents had a higher school degree or higher and 55% had a bachelor's degree or higher.
- Freeport is majority white, but has slowly become more diverse with an increase in population of those who identify as two or more races.
- Between 2010 and 2021, the median income increased by about 44%. Freeport's income distribution has trended towards those in higher income brackets.
- Freeport's median income is lower than surrounding peer communities, with the exception of Brunswick.
- The State Economist predicts that Freeport's population will increase by about 2.5% through 2040. The alternative projection based on historic population growth from the decennial census shows an increase of about 11% through 2040.

Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24

Historic Population

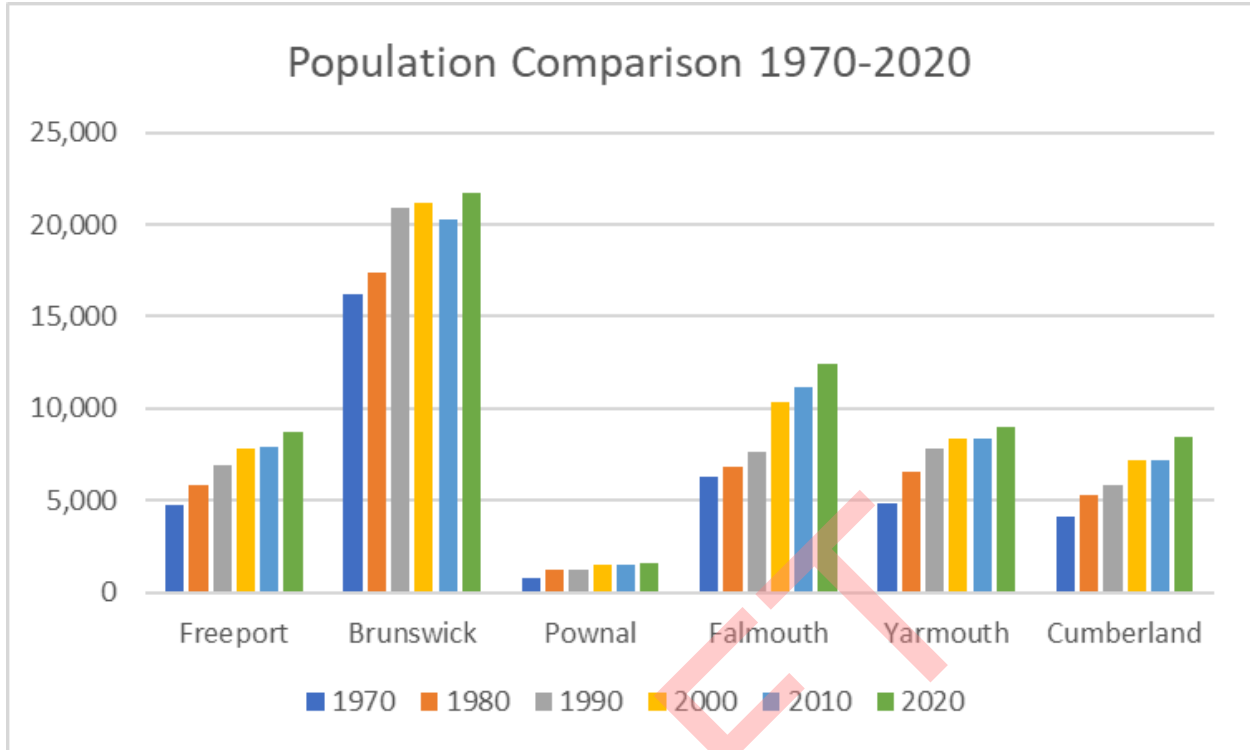
Understanding trends and changes in population growth is essential for planning for future needs and services. Based on the Decennial census, historically, Freeport’s population remained fairly stable between 2,237 people in 1800 to 2,339 people in 1900. Following 1930, the population grew significantly from 2,184 to 8,622 by 2021. There also was a noticeable 11% increase from 2010 to 2020, likely due in part to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Source: U.S. Census Decennial estimates

Freeport’s population trends can be compared with surrounding communities, as well as county and state trends. The last comprehensive plan compared Freeport’s population with Brunswick, Cumberland, Falmouth, Pownal, and Yarmouth. For the purposes of this planning study, the same towns will be used to contextualize Freeport’s population.

Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24

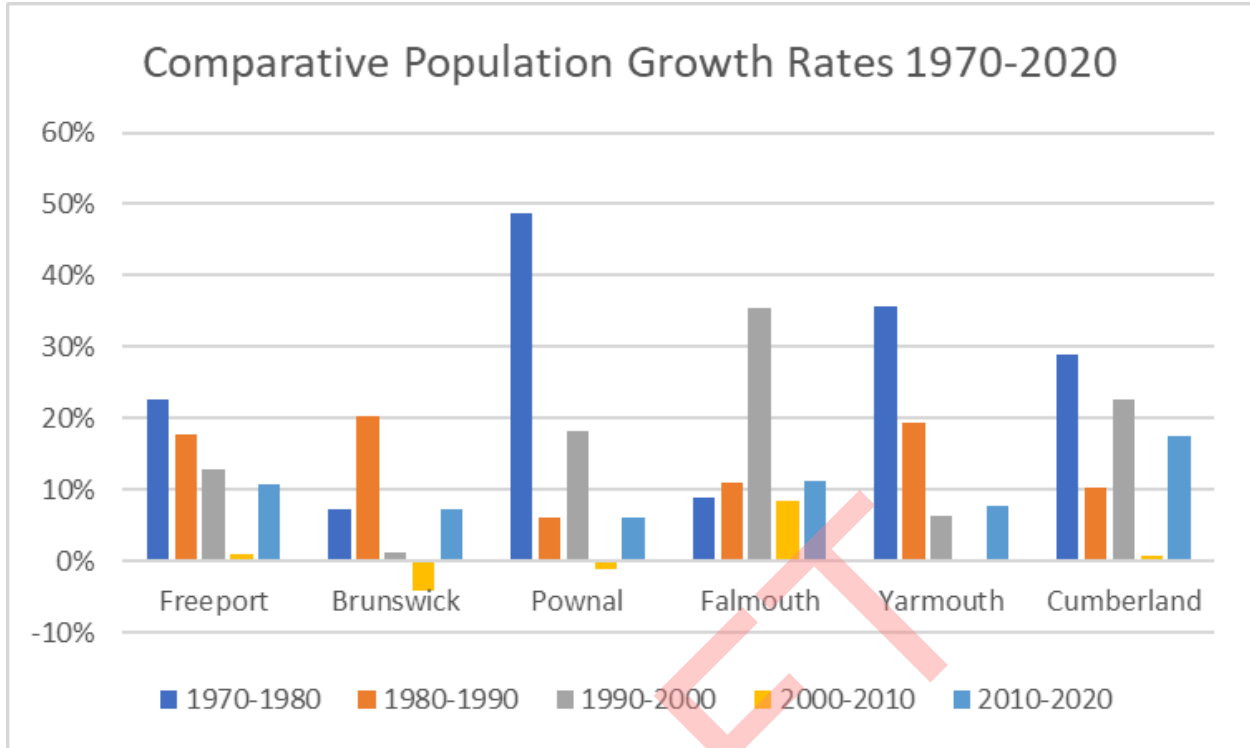


Source: U.S. Census Decennial estimates

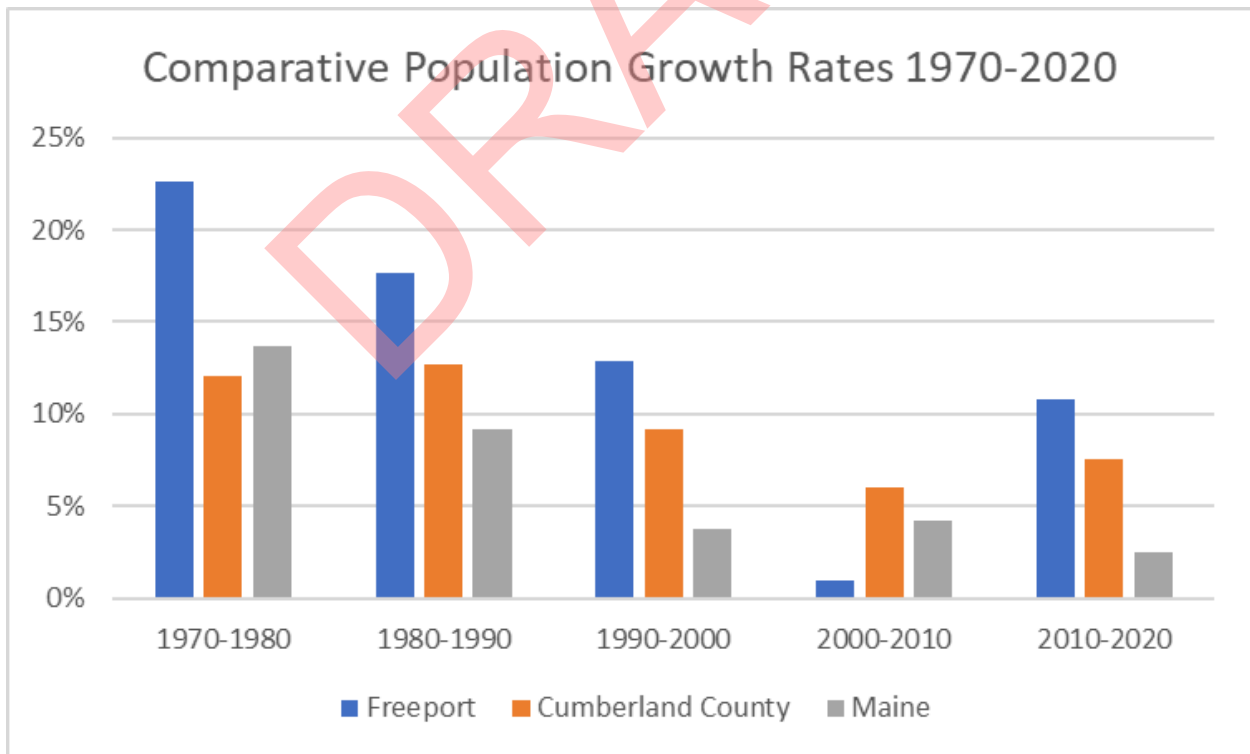
Freeport is similar in size to the towns of Cumberland, Falmouth, and Yarmouth, and has seen similar rates of population growth between 1970 and 2020. Brunswick is a much larger community and Pownal is much smaller in size.

Generally, all regional towns saw higher rates of growth between 1970 and 2020, with the greatest population growth from 1970-1980. There was less growth from 2000-2010. Two peer communities, Brunswick and Pownal, experienced a decline in population from 2000-2010. From 1970 to 2020, Freeport saw higher rates of population growth than the county and state, except between 2000 and 2010.

Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24



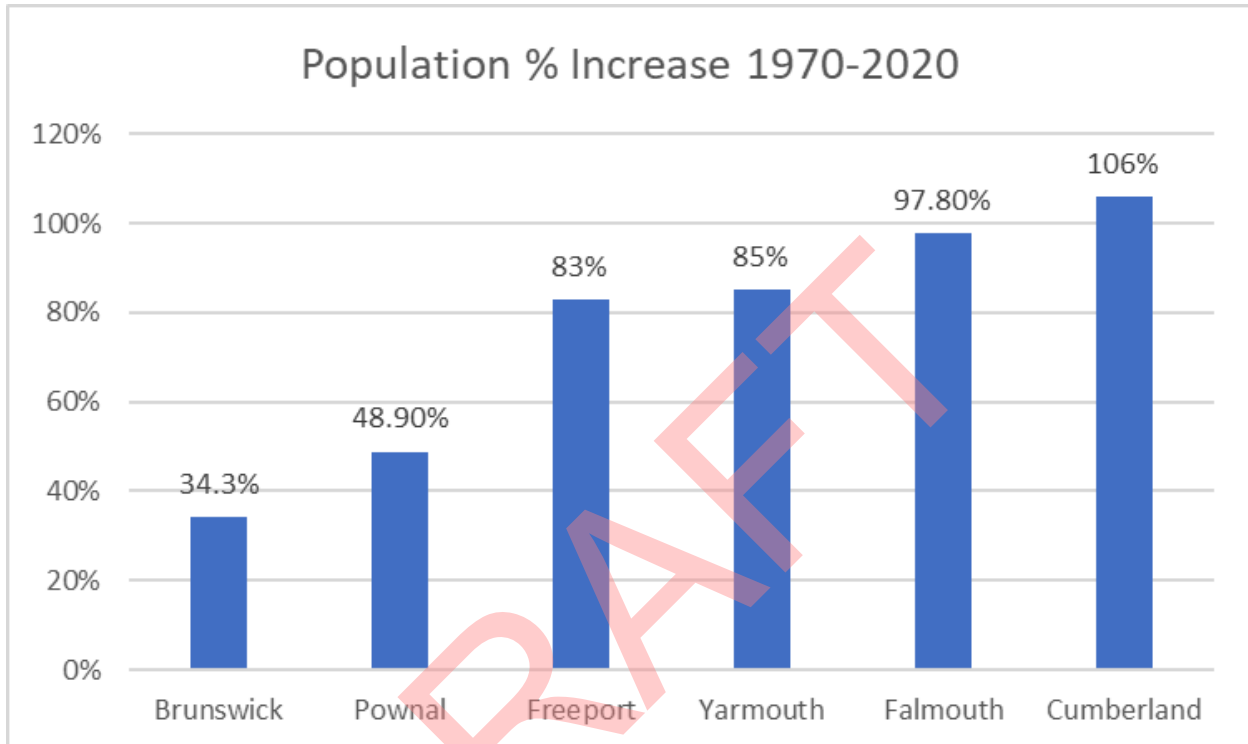
Source: U.S. Census Decennial estimates



Source: U.S. Census Decennial estimates

Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24

The following graph compares Freeport's population percent increase between 1970 and 2020 with the surrounding peer communities of Brunswick, Cumberland, Falmouth, and Yarmouth. Freeport's population increased by 83% between 1970 and 2020. Though this is a large increase, it is still less than the surrounding towns of Yarmouth, Falmouth, and Cumberland.



Source: U.S. Census Decennial estimates

Freeport Natural Population Growth

Population change is made up of two components: natural population change, based on the total number of births and deaths, and migration, based on the movement of people from one place to another. In 2015, 2016, and 2022, Freeport's population remained close to or at net zero, with a similar number of births and deaths for those years. During the other years, deaths outnumbered births, which contributed to population decline.

Compared to Cumberland County, between 2013 and 2017 births outnumbered deaths county-wide, while from 2018 to 2022, deaths outnumbered births.

Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24

Freeport Natural Population

Year	Births	Deaths	Difference
2013	67	95	-28
2014	71	79	-8
2015	70	69	1
2016	87	85	2
2017	84	97	-13
2018	83	94	-11
2019	62	82	-20
2020	63	78	-15
2021	74	85	-11
2022	79	79	0

Cumberland County Natural Population

Year	Births	Deaths	Difference
2013	2,874	2,582	292
2014	2,843	2,530	313
2015	2,718	2,701	17
2016	2,824	2,620	204
2017	2,724	2,720	4
2018	2,711	2,760	-49
2019	2,672	2,812	-140
2020	2,750	2,950	-200
2021	2,870	3,093	-223
2022	2,909	3,127	-218

Source: Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Office of Data, Research, and Statistics

Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24

Migration

The other component of population change is migration. According to the U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates, in 2021, 462 Freeport residents were estimated to have moved to town within the past year. Of those, 326 moved within Cumberland County, 40 moved from a different county in Maine, and 96 moved from out-of-state. Based on age, the younger population to middle-aged population (between ages 19 to 39) tended to move within the same county, while more of the older population (between ages 40 to 65) had more people moving to Freeport from a different county or different state.

	Moved within the same county	Moved from a different county	Moved from a different state	Age Total
Total	326	40	96	
Under 19 years	116	9	27	152
20 to 29 years	13	0	2	15
30 to 39 years	142	4	32	178
40 to 49 years	0	10	29	39
50 to 64 years	12	1	0	13
65+years	43	16	6	65

Source: U.S. Census ACS 5-year Estimates table B7001

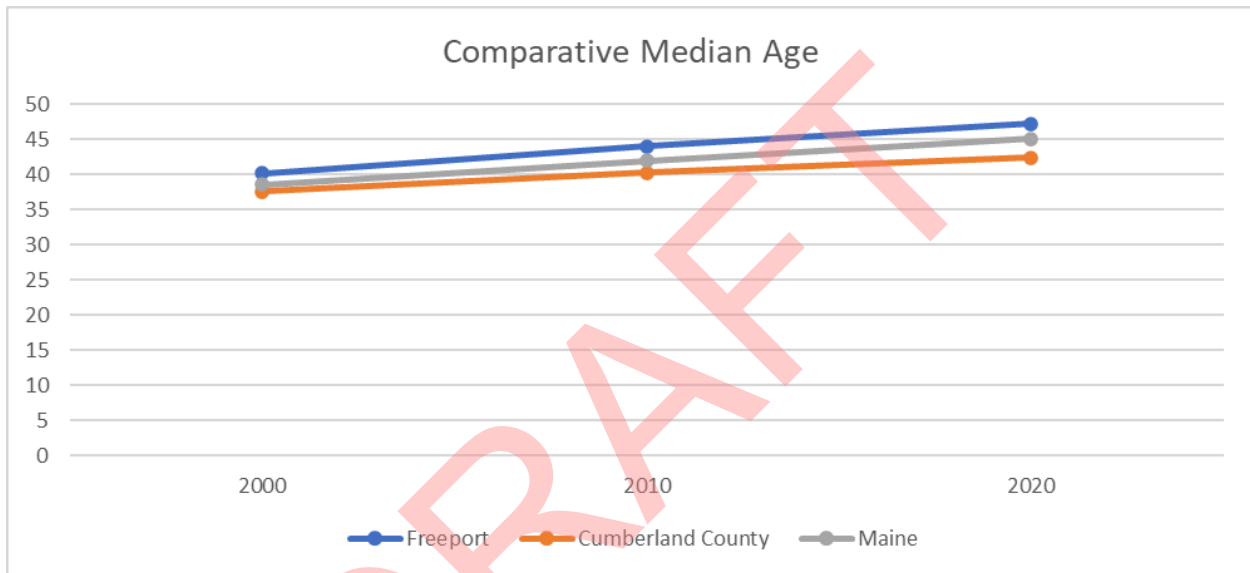
Age Distribution

According to the 2020 Decennial census, Freeport’s median age in 2020 was 47.2 years old, which is older than the Cumberland County median (42.4 years old) and the State median (45.1 years old). Freeport’s median age has increased over the past two decades.

Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24

Median Age

	2000	2010	2020
Freeport	40.2	44	47.2
Cumberland County	37.6	40.3	42.4
Maine	38.6	42	45.1



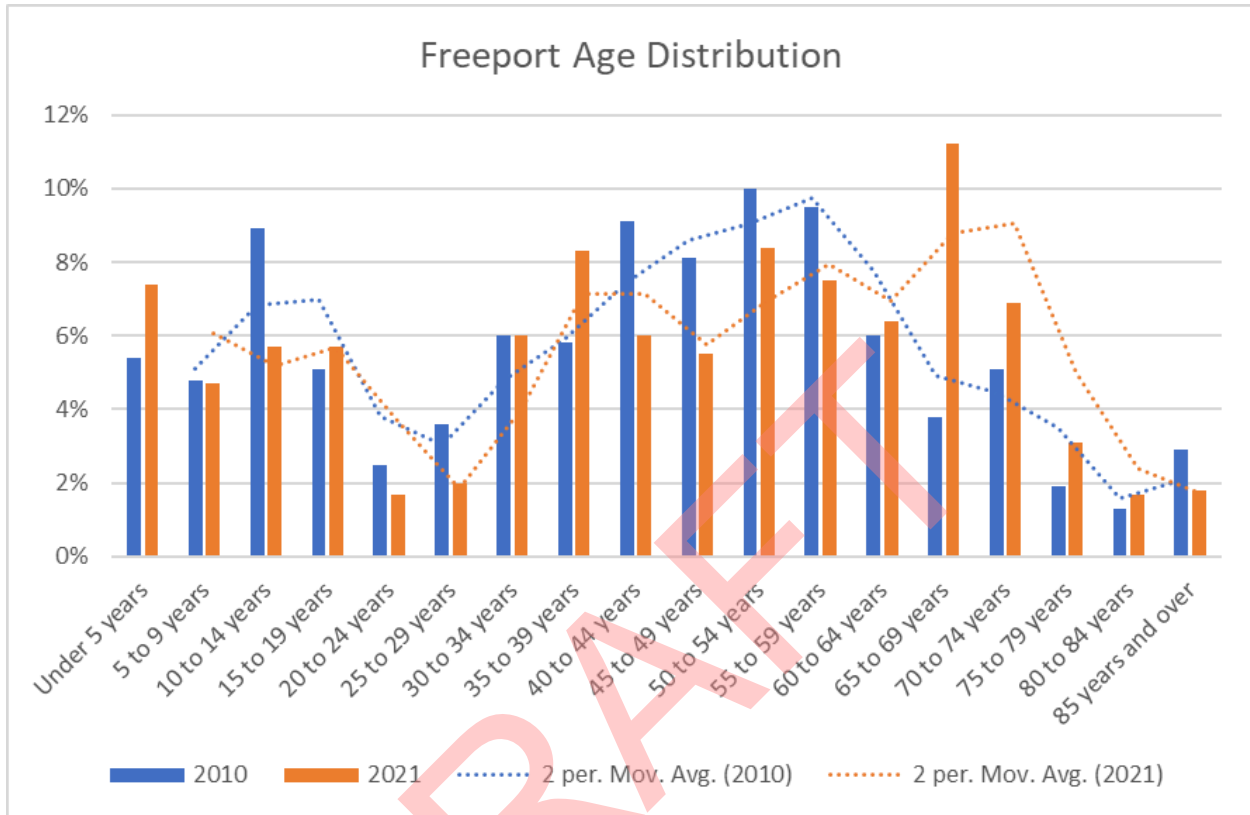
Source: U.S. Census Decennial estimates table DP1

Age Distribution

The following graph compares the percentage of the population within each age cohort between 2010 and 2021. The graph trendline shows that the age distribution peaks have shifted from 55-59 years in 2010 to 70-74 years in 2021, which indicates that a relatively stable cohort has lived in Freeport over the last ten years and are aging in place. There is more noticeable change where the trendline crosses at the 35 to 39 year age group.

Based on this trend there will be a greater need for elderly services in town and possibly services for younger families based on more people in the 35-39 age bracket. The population increase in Freeport is being driven by the younger generation which could include younger parents and/or first time homebuyers.

Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24



Source: U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates table B7001

Household Composition

Average Household Size

According to ACS 5-year estimates, the average household size in Freeport has increased between 2010 and 2022. The average household size in Freeport is higher than the County and the State.

	2010	2022
Freeport	2.29	2.5
Cumberland County	2.33	2.3
Maine	2.34	2.29

Source: U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates table S1101

Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24

Household and Family Characteristics

According to the U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates, the number of households and number of family households in Freeport increased slightly between 2010 and 2021. While the overall percentage of households living alone has decreased, the percentage of those age 65 and over living alone has increased slightly. There are also fewer households with children under 18 and more households with people over 65.

Freeport Households

	2010	2021
Total Households	3,356	3,427
Family Households	2,170	2,565
Average Family Size	2.9	2.8
Householder Living Alone	30.5%	19.6%
Householder 65 + alone	7.3%	12%
Married couple households	1,749	2,105
With children under 18	1,004	965
Households with children under 18	31.6%	29.5%
Households with people over 65	32.4%	39.7%

Source: U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates table B11001, B09020, S1101

Seasonal Population

Freeport does not have a significant seasonal population. However, the town does have a significant tourist draw for visitors. According to the U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates, there were 320 vacant seasonal properties in Freeport, which is approximately 9% of housing units in town. One way to estimate the seasonal population in town is to multiply the number of seasonal units by the average household size. The average household size in Freeport is 2.47, which would suggest that the seasonal population in Freeport is around 790. According to the data from the town, the number of short-term registrations as of January 2024 is 104.

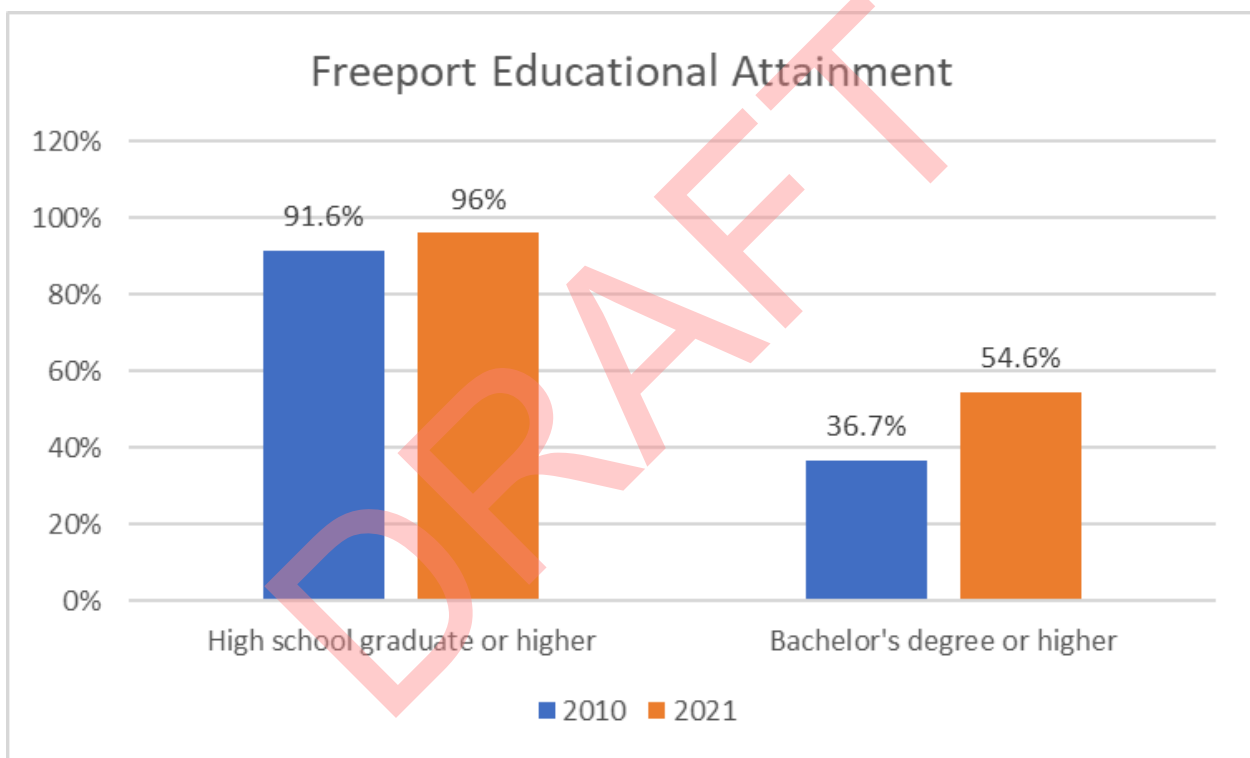
Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24

Daytime Population

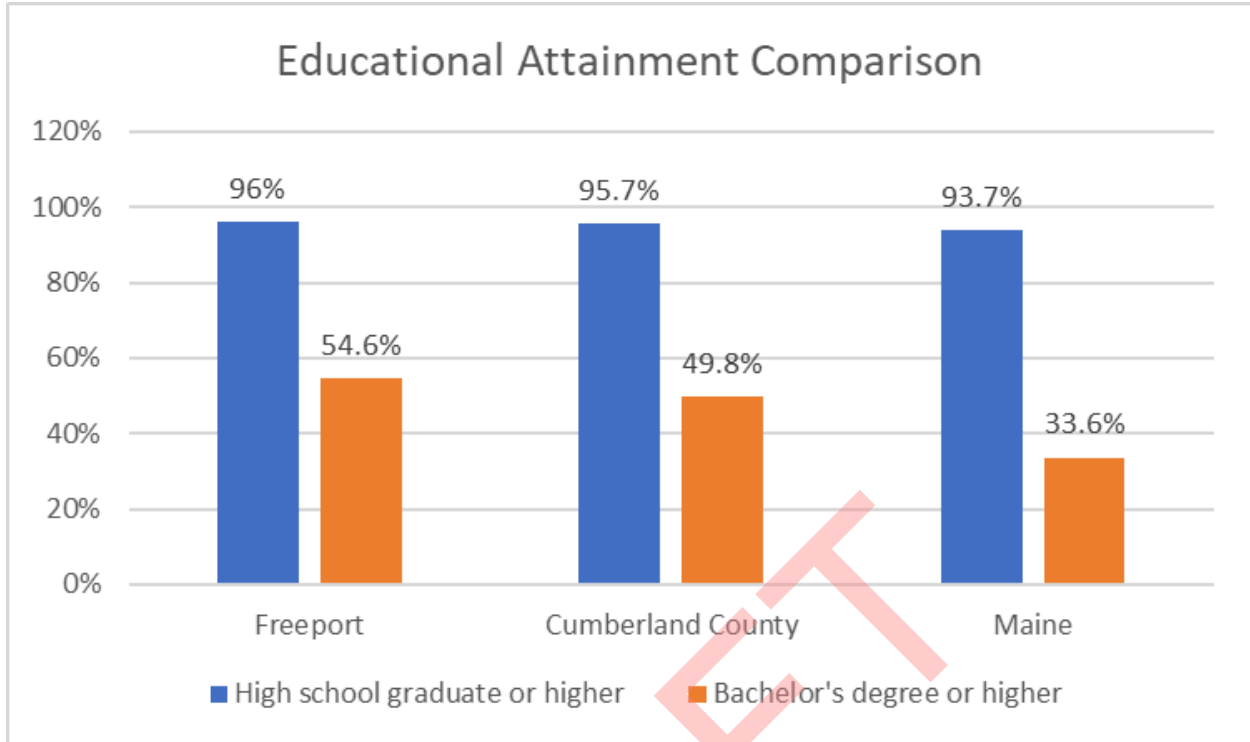
Freeport is a service center with several large employers and a strong retail sector. According to 2020 Census data, ## people commute in for work each day. Any issues or needs resulting from the daytime population? Parking, traffic, etc

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment levels in Freeport have increased from 2010 to 2021. In 2010, 92% of the population had a high school degree or higher, and 37% had a bachelor's degree or higher. In 2021, 96% had a high school degree or higher, and 55% had a bachelor's degree or higher. Freeport has a higher rate of educational attainment than the county and the state.



Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24



Source: U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates table S1501

School Enrollment

According to the Maine Department of Education, there were 927 students from Freeport enrolled in Freeport public schools. Generally, educational enrollment has remained relatively stable over the past ten years. School enrollment data was available between 2014 and 2023 as shown in the table below.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	10-year average
Freeport High School	519	484	490	513	535	582	580	606	597	620	545.11
Freeport Middle School	301	310	308	316	356	351	347	314	296	307	322.11

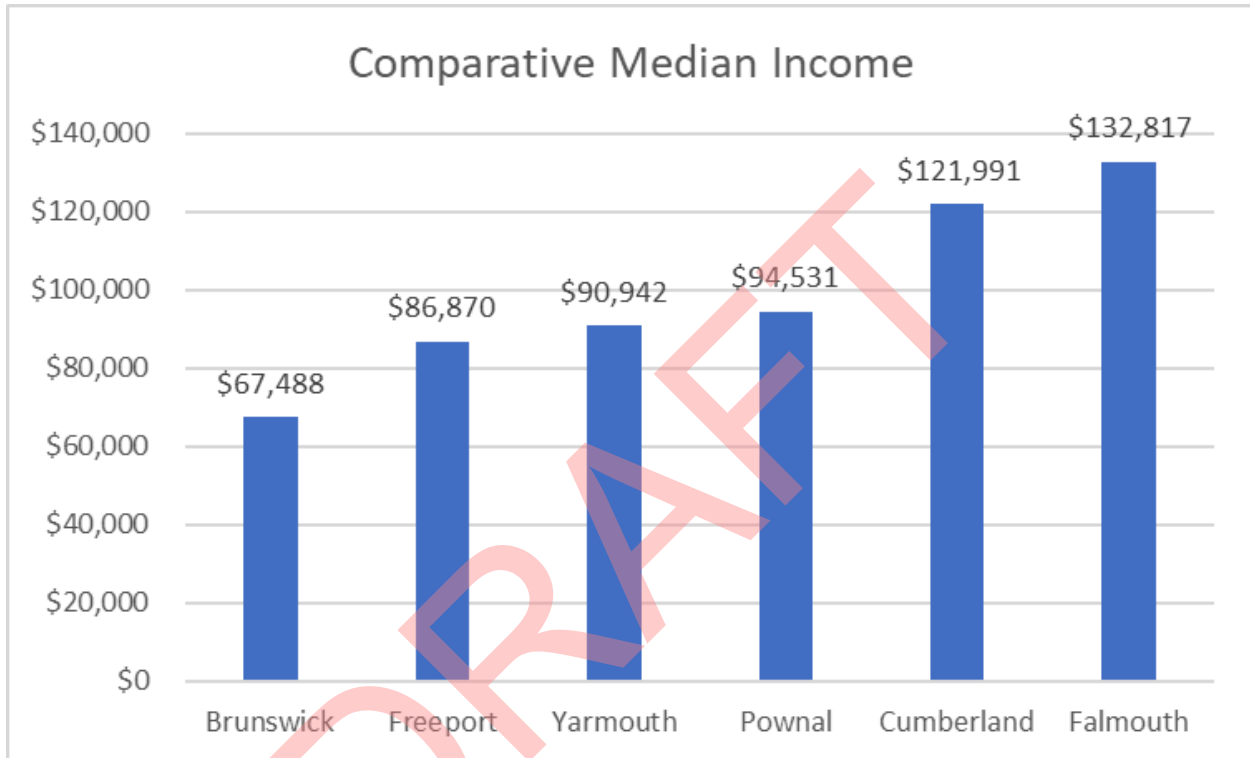
Source: Maine Department of Education School Enrollment Data, 2023

Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24

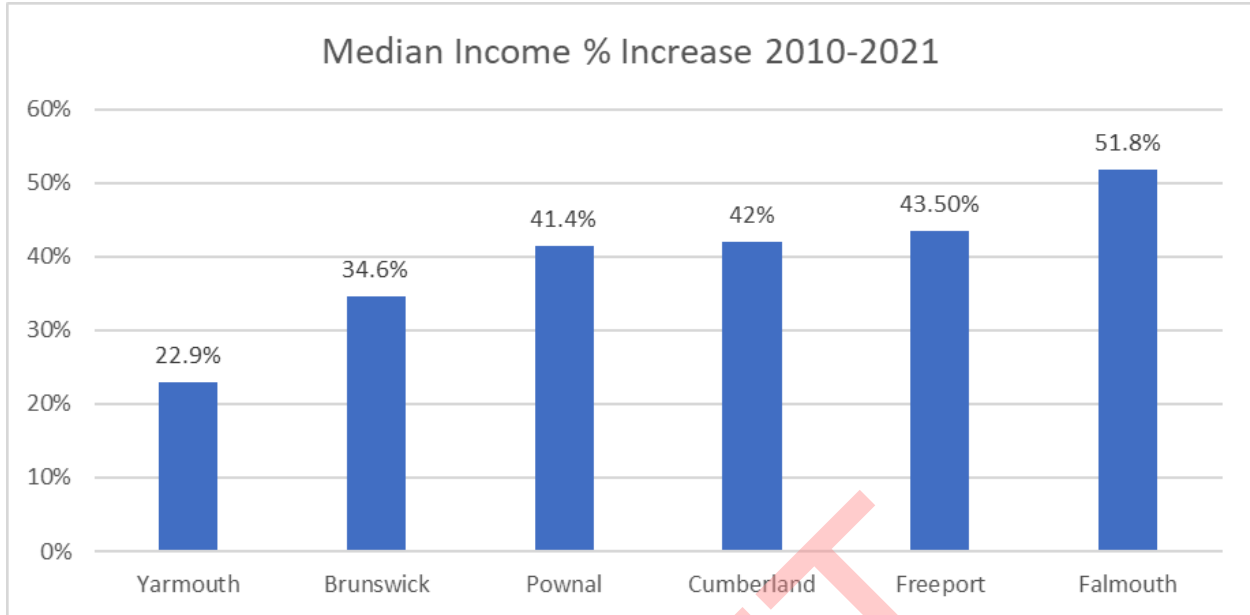
Income & Poverty

Median Income

In 2021, Freeport's median income was \$86,870, which is higher than the county (\$80,982) and the state (\$69,543). Freeport's median income is lower than surrounding towns, with the exception of Brunswick. Between 2010 and 2021, Freeport had the second greatest percent increase in median income behind Falmouth.

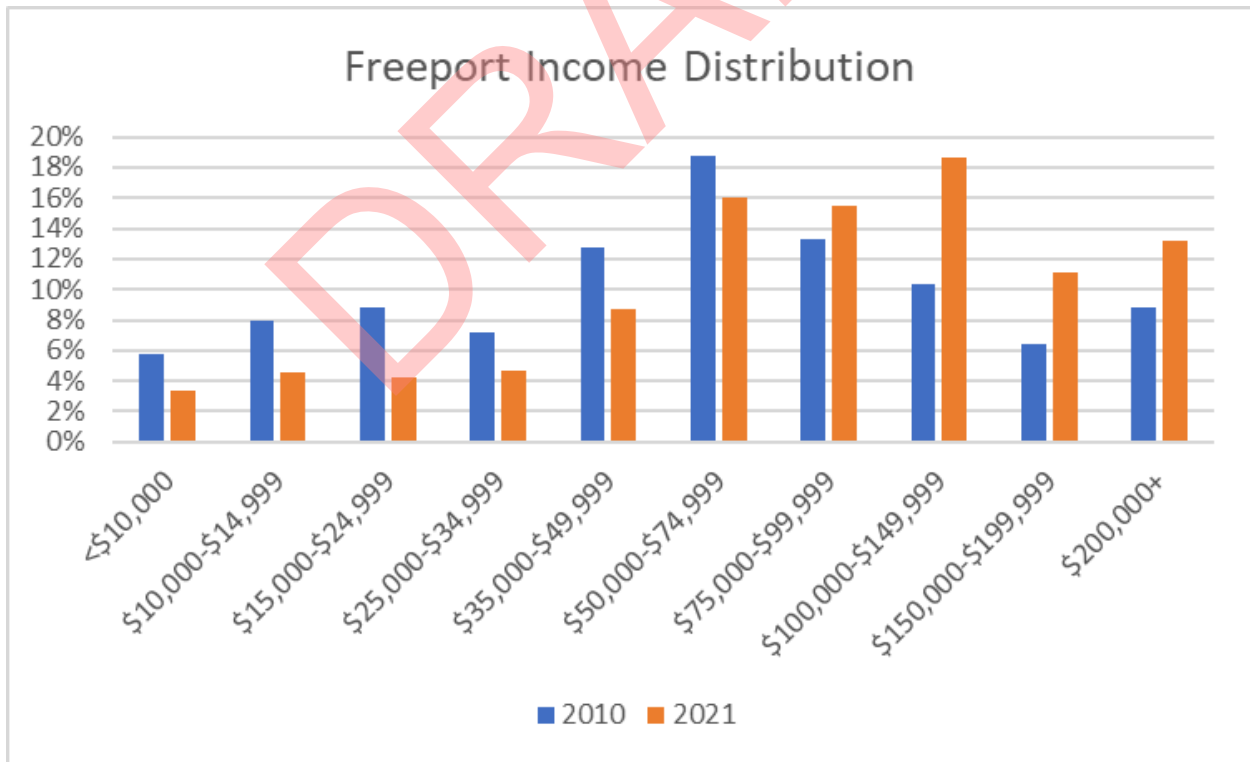


Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24



Source: U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates table S1901

Changes in Freeport’s income distribution from 2010 to 2021 show fewer households earning less than \$50,000/year, and more households in higher income brackets earning between \$75,000-\$200,000/year.



Source: U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates table S1901

Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24

Poverty

The U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates records poverty status in the past 12 months between 2012 and 2022. Over the last ten year, the percent of the population in Freeport below the federal poverty line has remained stable. The percent of the population below the federal poverty line in Freeport has remained lower than the county and state.

	Freeport Poverty Rate	Cumberland County Poverty Rate	Maine Poverty Rate
2012	6.1%	11.1%	13.3%
2022	6.2%	7.2%	10.9%

Source: U.S. Census ACS 5-year estimates table S1701

Race & Ethnicity

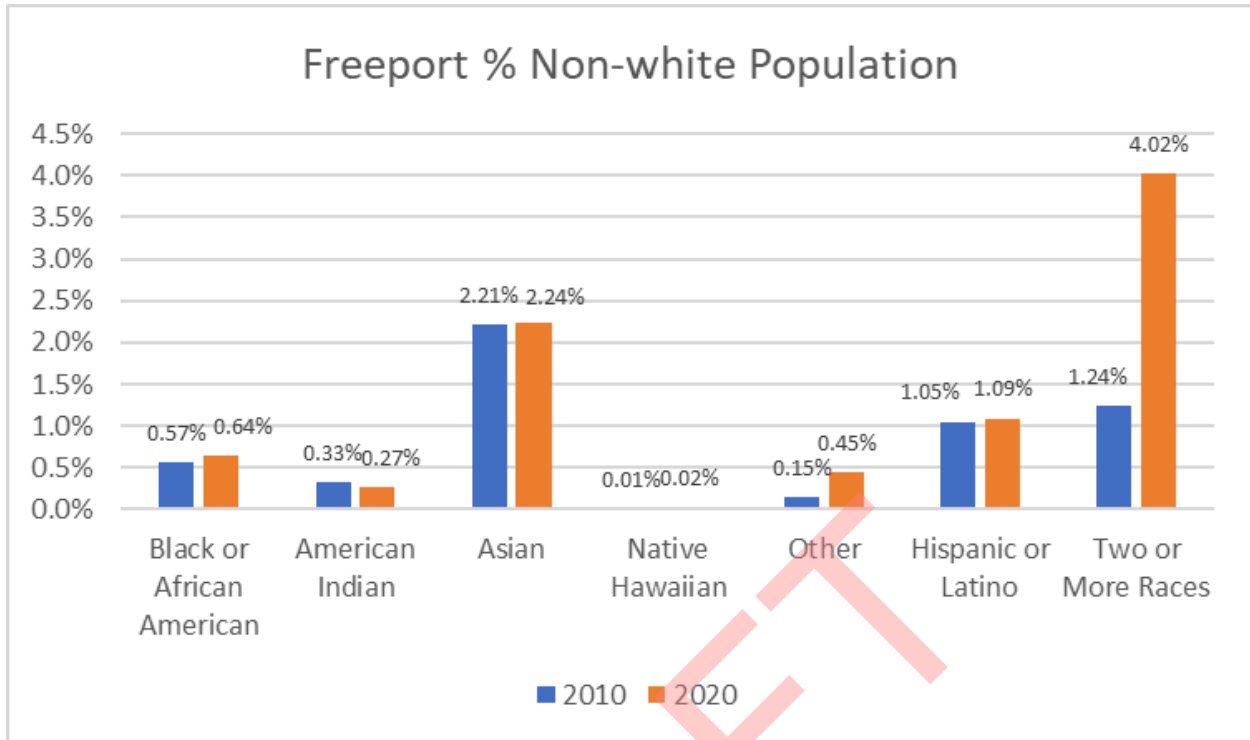
Similar to the county and state, Freeport’s population is majority white, and all have become slightly more racially diverse since 2010. In 2010, the percentage of Freeport’s population that identified as “white alone” was 94%; in 2020 that percentage was 90%.

% White Population	2010	2020
Freeport	94.4%	90.3%
Cumberland County	92.8%	87.2%
Maine	95.2%	90.8%

Source: U.S. Census Decennial estimates table P9

Within the non-white population in Freeport, the greatest increase is in people who identify as two or more races.

Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24



Source: U.S. Census Decennial estimates table P9

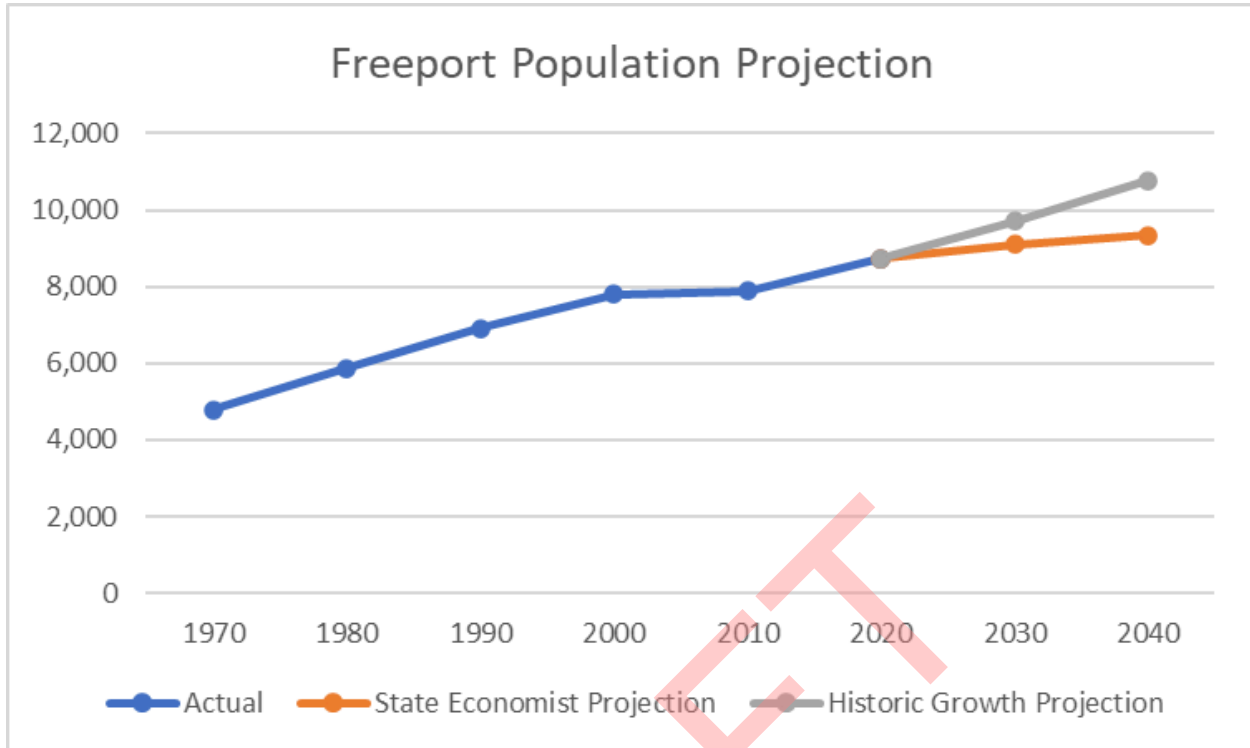
Population Projection

Changes in the age distribution and size of the population impact the needs and demands on public facilities and services like schools, recreation, emergency medical services, health care, housing, and retail services.

The State Economist releases population projections at five-year intervals. The current projections are based on 2018 US Census population estimates. Projections from each town are based on the town's share of the County population. In this projection, Freeport's population will slowly increase from 8,892 in 2025 to 9,341 by 2040.

A projection based on Freeport's historic growth rate over the past two decades assumes an 11% population increase, which is higher than the State Economist projection. This projection shows Freeport's population increasing to 9,698 in 2030 and 10,765 in 2040.

Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24



Source: Maine State Economist Demographic Projections

Freeport's increasing population, whether at the slower rate predicted by the State Economist, or the more rapid rate based on recent actual population growth, will impact town growth, facilities, and services. Continued growth in the aging population will result in higher numbers of senior citizens in need of services, such as fire and rescue services and healthcare services and can impact the working population available to fill jobs. At the same time, the growth in families with children will increase in the school-age population and the need for related services like recreation and the school programming and services.

Freeport Comprehensive Plan Inventory DRAFT 1 – 1/25/24

Planning Implications

- Most people moving to Freeport are either younger (under age 19) or within child-bearing age (30s+)
- Greater percentage of people age 65 and over living alone than in 2010, also a greater percentage of households with people age 65 and over
- More services for the elderly, but the younger population (next generation) will drive the population increase in Freeport

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