

CHAPTER 20

POPULATION AND HOUSING

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will look at population and housing trends for St. Lawrence Borough, Exeter and Amity Townships, Berks County as a whole, and surrounding municipalities. The focus will be on past population trends and projections and expected population increases.

The tables found in Appendix 2 include:

- Gender
- Land Area and Population Density per Square Mile
- Racial Characteristics
- Average Persons Per Occupied Housing Unit
- Income, Poverty and Education Characteristics
- Persons by Age
- Employment by Industry
- Employment by Occupation
- Housing Occupancy, Tenure and Value
- Housing Type
- Households by Type
- Tenure by Age of Householder
- Place and Means of Transportation to Work

Population and Housing Trends

Table 1 gives total population for St. Lawrence Borough, Exeter and Amity Townships, and Berks County in 1980, 1990 and 2000.

TABLE 1

TOTAL POPULATION

ST. LAWRENCE BOROUGH, EXETER TOWNSHIP, AMITY TOWNSHIP,
BERKS COUNTY

Year	St. Lawrence Borough			Exeter Township			Amity Township			Berks County		
	Persons	Number Change	Percent Change	Persons	Number Change	Percent Change	Persons	Number Change	Percent Change	Persons	Number Change	Percent Change
1980	1,376	-	-	14,419	-	-	5,883	-	-	312,497	-	-
1990	1,542	166	12.0	17,260	2,841	19.7	6,434	551	9.3	336,523	24,014	7.6
2000	1,812	270	17.5	21,161	3,901	22.6	8,867	2,433	37.8	373,638	37,115	11.0

Source: U.S. Census

The rates of growth in St. Lawrence Borough and Exeter and Amity Townships were greater than those of Berks County as a whole. From 1980 to 1990, the population of Exeter increased 19.7% and from 1990 to 2000, it increased 22.6%. Amity Township increased 9.3% from 1980 to 1990 and 37.8% from 1990 to 2000. The population also increased in St. Lawrence Borough between 1980 and 1990 and between 1990 and 2000, 12.0% and 17.5 respectively. The Berks County increases were 7.6% from 1980 to 1990 and 11.0% from 1990 to 2000.

Table 2 gives total population in 1980, 1990 and 2000 and the percentage of change from 1990 to 2000 for St. Lawrence Borough, Exeter and Amity Townships, Berks County and adjacent municipalities.

TABLE 2

TOTAL POPULATION

**ST. LAWRENCE BOROUGH, EXETER TOWNSHIP, AMITY TOWNSHIP,
ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES, AND BERKS COUNTY**

1980-2000

Municipality	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000
Alsace Township	3,456	3,459	3,689	6.6
Amity Township	5,883	6,434	8,867	37.8
Cumru Township	11,474	13,142	13,816	5.1
Douglas Township	3,128	3,570	3,327	-6.8
Earl Township	2,607	3,016	3,050	1.1
Exeter Township	14,419	17,260	21,161	22.6
Lower Alsace	4,906	4,627	4,478	-3.2
Mt. Penn Borough	3,025	2,883	3,016	4.6
Oley Township	3,024	3,362	3,583	6.5
Reading City	78,686	78,380	81,207	3.6
Robeson Township	4,729	5,954	6,869	15.3
St. Lawrence Borough	1,376	1,542	1,812	17.5
Union Township	2,815	3,440	3,453	0.3
Berks County	312,497	336,523	373,638	11.0

Source: U.S. Census

There were no municipalities that grew at faster rates than St. Lawrence Borough and Exeter and Amity Townships from 1990 to 2000. Robeson Township had the closest growth rate at 15.3%.

Table 3 indicates Total Housing Units for St. Lawrence Borough, Exeter and Amity Townships and Berks County in 1990 and 2000 and the Percent Change from 1990 to 2000.

TABLE 3

TOTAL HOUSING UNITS

**ST. LAWRENCE BOROUGH, EXETER TOWNSHIP, AMITY TOWNSHIP,
BERKS COUNTY**

2000

	Total Housing Units		Change 1990-2000	
	1990	2000	Number	Percent
St. Lawrence Borough	622	781	159	25.6
Exeter Township	6,780	8,208	1,428	21.1
Amity Township	2,422	3,323	901	37.2
Berks County	134,482	150,222	15,740	11.7

Source: U.S. Census

The total number of housing units increased at a rate either almost equal to or greater than the population. For instance, from 1990 to 2000, the increase in housing units in St. Lawrence Borough was 25.6, while the population increased 17.5%. In Amity Township, the increase in housing units was 37.2%, while the population increase was 37.8%. In Exeter Township, the increase in housing units was 21.1%, while the population increase was 22.6%.

Table 4 provides population projections for St. Lawrence Borough and Exeter and Amity Townships for the years 2010, 2020 and 2030. Two projection techniques have been used to provide a range of possible population outcomes for the region. Due to a number of variables that can affect population projections, a single projection cannot be viewed as the sole source on which to base planning decisions. For this reason a range of population levels calculated to 2030 are

provided. The Low Range projections use the average rate of growth per decade for each municipality from 1980 to 2000. The High Range projections use the average rate of growth per decade for each municipality from 1990 to 2000.

TABLE 4
POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2000-2030 USING
PAST POPULATION GROWTH RATES

ST. LAWRENCE BOROUGH, EXETER TOWNSHIP, AMITY TOWNSHIP

	2000	2010	2020	2030
St. Lawrence Borough				
Low Range	1,812	2,030	2,250	2,470
High Range	1,812	2,078	2,344	2,610
Exeter Township				
Low Range	21,161	24,530	27,900	31,275
High Range	21,161	25,625	30,090	34,560
Amity Township				
Low Range	8,867	10,360	11,850	13,345
High Range	8,867	10,950	13,040	15,125

Source: U.S. Census, SSM 2001.

The range of projections calculated for municipalities indicate that population has the potential to increase by forty-seven to sixty-four (47-64%) by the year 2030. Exeter Township has a projected population of between 24,530 and 25,625 for 2010 and a projected population between 31,275 and 34,560 for the year 2030. Amity Township has a projected population between 10,360 and 10,950 for 2010 and a projected population for the year 2030 of between 13,345 and 15,125. St. Lawrence Borough is projected to grow to between 2,030 and 2,078 for 2010 and 2,470 and 2,610 by the year 2030.

Table 5 provides residential construction information for St. Lawrence Borough and Exeter and Amity Townships in 2001, 2002 and 2003, as published by the Berks County Data Book.

TABLE 5

**ST. LAWRENCE BOROUGH, EXETER TOWNSHIP, AMITY TOWNSHIP,
BERKS COUNTY**

**RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION SURVEY
(Based on No. of Units Authorized by Permit)
2001 and 2002, from Assessment Office 2003**

Municipality	No. of Single Family	No. of Semi-Detached	No. of Town Houses	No. of Apartment Units	No. of Manuf. Homes	No. of Conversions	No. of Apts. Formed	No. of Units Demolished	Net Increase
St. Lawrence Borough 2001	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
St. Lawrence Borough 2002	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
St. Lawrence Borough 2003	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Exeter Township 2001	366	---	---	---	14	---	---	3	377
Exeter Township 2002	154	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	154
Exeter Township 2003	143	---	---	24	14	---	---	---	181
Amity Township 2001	No Information								
Amity Township 2002	240	---	---	---	2	---	---	1	241
Amity Township 2003	214	---	---	---	2	---	---	---	216

Source: U.S. Census

From 2001 to 2003, St. Lawrence Borough saw no new residential development. However, Exeter and Amity Townships continued to experience substantial construction, with Exeter Township having 712 net units permitted/constructed and Amity Township having 457 net units permitted/constructed over 2 years.

U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates 2003 St. Lawrence population as 1791, a slight decrease from 2000. Amity is estimated as 10,371, a 17% increase from 2003. Exeter is estimated as 23,450, a 10.8% increase from 2000. These appear to be reasonable estimates based on permit/construction activity. It also indicates that population projections for the Borough based on past trends are high. A subdivision of about 30 dwelling units is currently before the Borough. Given limited open land available within the Borough, population growth is likely to be below the Low Range number. For Amity Township, the 2010 Low Range projection was already exceeded in 2003, and the High Range projection will be exceeded well before 2010. At the current growth rate, 2010 population would be approximately 13,900.

Exeter Township is also on pace to exceed the 2010 High Range projection, though not by as high a percentage as Amity Township. At the current growth rate, 2010 population would be approximately 28,800.

Additional Population and Housing Observations

No major population, income, or housing problems have been identified in the area.