

Escanaba's declining population of young children and adults coupled with an increasing elderly population is a common trend throughout the state, as well as the United States as a whole.



INTRODUCTION

Demographics—age, income, gender, education and occupation, combined with other factors—shape the development of a community as well as its growth. This chapter looks at demographics in the City of Escanaba for the past, present, and projected future. Analysis of these trends and patterns will prove to be a useful tool for determining the needs and demands of the future population of Escanaba. Included in this section is a thorough review of the current population, historic population trends, population projections, and age distribution. Concluding each section of this chapter is a description and explanation of the foreseen impacts of the analysis.

POPULATION TRENDS

As reported in the 2000 Census, the population of the City of Escanaba is 13,140. The 2000 figures show a 3.74% decline in population from the 1990 Census reporting a population of 13,659. Concurrently, the adjacent city of Gladstone saw a dramatic population increase of 10.45% during this same ten-year period. Similar population increases were reported for the surrounding townships and municipalities in Delta County. Table 3.1 represents the historic population trends for the City of Escanaba and surrounding areas from the 1960 Census to the 2000 Census.



Table 3.1: Historic Population Trends

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
City of Escanaba	15,391	15,368	14,355	13,659	13,148
% Change		-0.15%	-6.59%	-4.85%	-3.74%
City of Gladstone	5,267	5,237	4,533	4,565	5,042
% Change		-0.57%	-13.44%	0.71%	10.45%
Ford River Twp..	1,308	1,762	2,136	2,002	2,241
% Change		34.71%	21.23%	-6.27%	11.94%
Wells Twp..	3,295	4,003	5,181	5,159	5,044
% Change		21.49%	29.43%	-0.42%	-2.23%
Escanaba Twp..	1,485	1,948	3,229	3,340	3,587
% Change		31.18%	65.76%	3.44%	7.40%
Brampton Twp..	589	737	1,113	1,142	1,090
% Change		25.13%	51.02%	2.61%	-4.55%
Bark River Twp..	1,361	1,299	1,571	1,548	1,650
% Change		-4.56%	20.94%	-1.46%	6.59%
Delta County	34,298	35,924	38,947	37,780	38,520
% Change		4.74%	8.41%	-3.00%	1.96%
State of Michigan	7,824,965	8,875,083	9,262,078	9,295,297	9,938,444
		13.42%	4.36%	0.36%	6.92%

Source: U.S. Census - 2000

How will this impact Escanaba?

Escanaba is experiencing a demographic change that is common in major urban centers in northern Michigan and throughout the United States. Cities are developing along major thoroughfares, resulting in sprawling commercial corridors leading outward into surrounding townships and rural areas. Therefore, residents are migrating into these less densely populated areas that offer lower property costs and large lot development opportunities. Sprawl development, combined with an outward migration from the urban core, leads to declining downtown centers and increased traffic congestion. Escanaba is currently experiencing similar outward migration, leading to the under utilization of the downtown district and increased traffic along the Lincoln Road and US-2 commercial corridors. As more people migrate away from the central urban area, an increase in strip development has occurred to accommodate the needs of these residents living on the outer reaches of Escanaba. Residents wish to reverse this outward trend by making the city a more attractive and desirable place to live. Residents voiced concern about the declining downtown district as well as increased development along US-2 and Lincoln Road. Some of the suggested strategies to maintain and attract a strong population base were:

- Market & Promote Escanaba: capitalize on Escanaba as a gateway into the Upper Peninsula by creating an attractive entry into Escanaba from US-2, 41 and M-35.
- Clean up the city and redevelop downtown as an important destination; encourage mixed-use, walkability, facade improvements, and infill development.
- Encourage patronage of hometown or homegrown businesses.
- Enhance the existing school system.



POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Just as historical population trends are a useful planning tool, population projections are especially helpful for determining what the needs and demands will be for Escanaba's future population. Analysis of this projected population allows the city to determine demands on public facilities and infrastructure, as well as the need for jobs and housing opportunities. The 2000 Census reported population projections figures at the county level, provided in table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Population Projections to the Year 2020

Central Upper Peninsula	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Delta County	38,520	38,906	39,064	39,244	39,400
% Change		1.00%	0.41%	0.46%	0.40%
Menominee County	25,326	22,518	21,497	20,565	19,581
% Change		-11.09%	-4.53%	-4.34%	-4.78%
Schoolcraft County	8,903	8,861	8,926	8,970	8,929
% Change		-0.47%	0.73%	0.49%	-0.46%
Alger County	9862	10,009	10,114	10,192	10,205
% Change		1.49%	1.05%	0.77%	0.13%
Marquette County	64,634	68,916	68,393	67,616	66,661
% Change		6.62%	-0.76%	-1.14%	-1.41%
Dickinson County	27,416	27,547	27,746	27,942	28,096
% Change		0.48%	0.72%	0.71%	0.55%
TOTAL	174,661	176,757	175,740	174,529	172,872
% Change		1.20%	-0.58%	-0.69%	-0.95%
Western Upper Peninsula	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Baraga County	8,372	8,225	8,082	7,967	7,868
% Change		-1.76%	-1.74%	-1.42%	-1.24%
Gogebic County	16,871	15,860	14,931	14,096	13,329
% Change		-5.99%	-5.86%	-5.59%	-5.44%
Houghton County	36,490	36,941	37,497	38,087	38,614
% Change		1.24%	1.51%	1.57%	1.38%
Keweenaw County	1,889	1,822	1,775	1,736	1,678
% Change		-3.55%	-2.58%	-2.20%	-3.34%
Ontonagon County	8,345	8,043	7,726	7,381	7,015
% Change		-3.62%	-3.94%	-4.47%	-4.96%
Iron County	12,709	12,257	11,893	11,554	11,225
% Change		-3.56%	-2.97%	-2.85%	-2.85%
TOTAL	84,676	83,148	81,904	80,821	79,729
% Change		-1.80%	-1.50%	-1.32%	-1.35%
Eastern Upper Peninsula	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020
Chippewa County	39,323	41,883	44,646	47,720	50,979
% Change		6.51%	6.60%	6.89%	6.83%
Luce County	5,591	5,579	5,556	5,507	5,432
% Change		-0.21%	-0.41%	-0.88%	-1.36%
Mackinac County	11,331	11,867	12,691	13,820	15,266
% Change		4.73%	6.94%	8.90%	10.46%
TOTAL	56,245	59,329	62,893	67,047	71,677
% Change		5.48%	6.01%	6.60%	6.91%
Upper Peninsula	315,582	319,234	320,537	322,397	324,278
% Change		1.16%	0.41%	0.58%	0.58%
State of Michigan	9,786,685	9,963,788	10,121,298	10,284,960	10,454,737
% Change		1.81%	1.58%	1.62%	1.65%

Source: State of Michigan; Michigan Information Center 2004.



HOW WILL THIS IMPACT ESCANABA?

Analyzing the population projections for Delta County along with the historic population trends presents the city with the direction of Escanaba's population through the life of the master plan. The 2000 Census projections for Delta County show a slow growth rate of 1% or less over the next fifteen years. Though this is not a high rate of growth, with a potential renewal in interest in revitalizing the urban center, this may have an impact on the immediate area surrounding the city core. The city will then need to address needs such as an improved and upgraded infrastructure, public facilities, and transportation. It also presents the opportunity to better use existing residential and commercial sites and to promote infill development in the city center. Furthermore, it presents the opportunity to better utilize the existing sites and promote infill development within the city center.

Undeveloped property that could facilitate residential or mixed-use development exists along the "North Shore" and the area west of 30th Street and north of US-2. However, each of these undeveloped areas contains unique issues that may impede development. Both private ownership and wetlands present development problems for each area respectively. Given these factors, it would be beneficial to encourage infill development and the use of existing sites for residential development as needed by a slow growing population.

AGE DISTRIBUTION

Age distribution, in conjunction with population dynamics, helps to determine which age groups are staying in Escanaba and which age groups are declining in population. The geographic concentration of age groups also helps to identify those areas that may require specific amenities and facilities. Differentiating between those areas with a higher concentration of elderly from those with a higher concentration of children aids in locating specific facilities, such as parks, recreation centers and schools. Walkability, safety, and recreation opportunities are important characteristics that need to be recognized for the vitality of any area. Furthermore, by assessing the age distribution of Escanaba, health care demands and school enrollment can be predicted.

Analysis of the spatial distribution of age groups in Escanaba is represented in maps 3.1 and 3.2 below. In map 3.1, the spatial distribution of children under age 15 is concentrated in three primary areas. The highlighted area adjacent to M-35, containing the Delta County Airport presents deceptive information. This is a large, sparsely populated block of land with a high percentage of children under the age of 15. On the map it looks more imposing than the true numbers bear out. There are smaller areas in the heart of the city with a much higher population of children under 15. Therefore, this airport area is not considered to have a significant population of children under age 15. The two remaining areas of concentration have a population of children under age 15 that reaches 20% to 39% of the total population of each Census Block. The most significant concentration of this age cohort is located between

2nd Avenue N and 3rd Avenue S, east of Stephenson Avenue, west of S 10 Street, and between 1st Avenue S and Lake Shore Drive, east of S 10 Street. The other high concentration area is located east of Lincoln Road, west of Sheridan Road, and south of College Avenue.

These areas will have similar needs and demands to those depicted in map 3.2, representing the spatial distribution of seniors over age 64. Senior distribution follows the north-south, linear pattern running along Lincoln Road. (M-35). An additional area which contains a 40% or greater concentration of seniors, exists between 13.75 Road and US-2, west of Lincoln Road, east and south of Willow Creek Road.

As table 3.1 represents, Escanaba has seen a decline in total population over the ten-year period between the 1990 and 2000 Census. This trend can be further analyzed by looking at which age cohorts have declined, remained, or increased. Looking at those age groups that have declined and those that have remained presents the possible reasons for population loss. The total number of children under age 5 in 1990 was 956 representing 7.0% of the total population. That same age group dropped to 762 in 2000, representing 5.8% of the total population. This age group (less than age 5) experienced the greatest population decline and the greatest percentage loss of population.

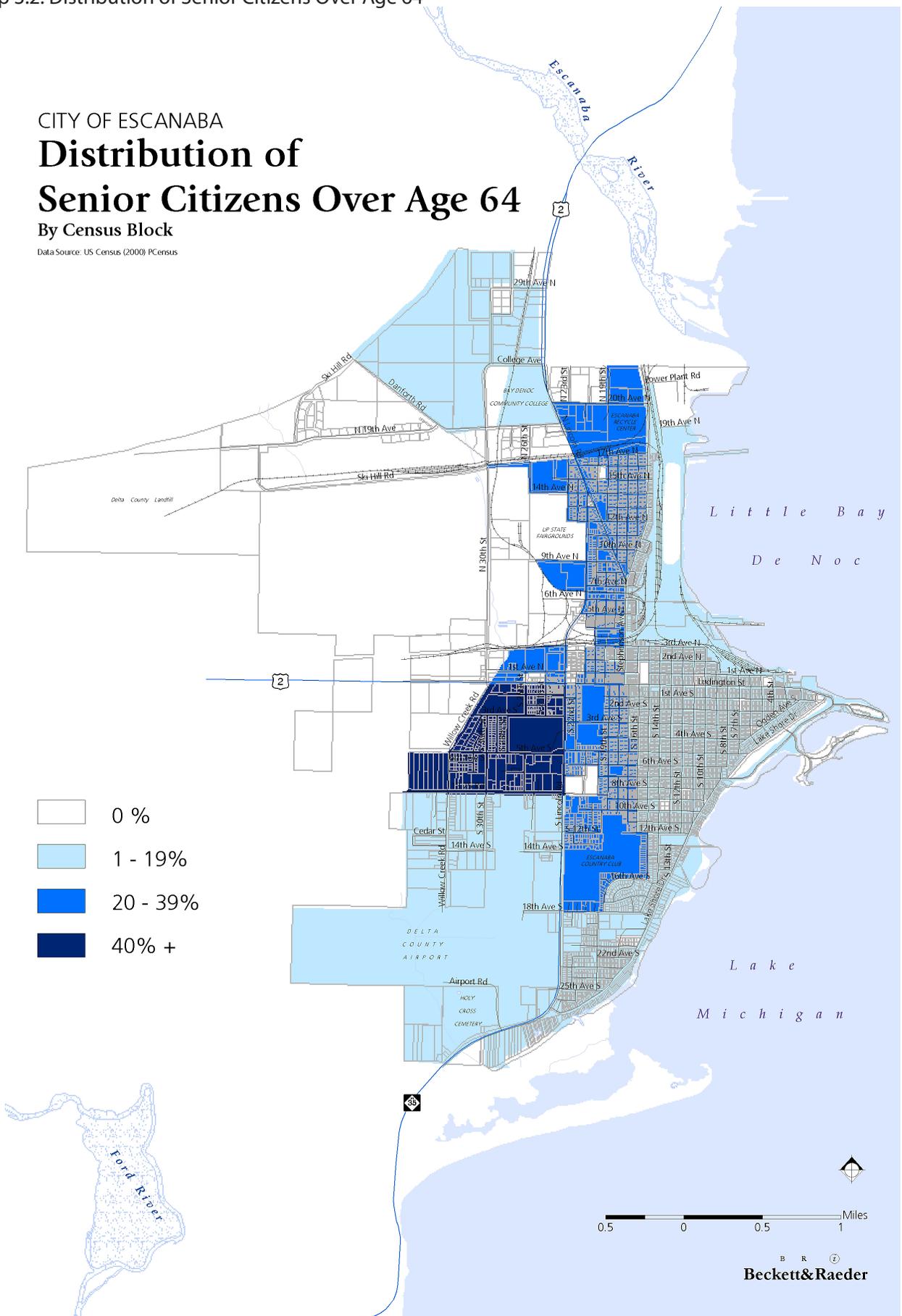
The number of individuals between ages 25 and 44 experienced a slight decrease from 28.18% of the 1990 population to 25.07% of the 2000 population. This may be a characteristic similar to that of the under 5 year age group, representing an outward migration of young families and younger individuals.



Map 3.2: Distribution of Senior Citizens Over Age 64

CITY OF ESCANABA
Distribution of Senior Citizens Over Age 64
 By Census Block

Data Source: US Census (2000) PCensus





In contrast, individuals over age 65 experienced an increase in both number and percentage of the total population. Escanaba saw a 7.4% increase in the number of residents over age 65 from 1990 to 2000. This trend is the result of the aforementioned decline in younger populations that continues to increase the mean age of Escanaba. Additional increases occurred in those individuals between ages 45 and 54. Age distributions for all cohorts are listed in table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3: Age Distribution 1990 vs. 2000

Age Distribution						% Change	
1990			2000			1990-2000	
Age Group	Number	% of Total	Age Group	Number	% of Total	Number	%
Total Population	13,659		Total Population	13148			
Under 5 years	956	7.00%	Under 5 years	762	5.80%	-194	-1.20%
5 to 20 years	2,950	21.60%	5 to 19 years*	2612	25.66%	-338	-4.06%
21 to 24 years	704	5.15%	20 to 24 years	873	6.64%	169	1.49%
25 to 44 years	3,849	28.18%	25 to 44 years	3,296	25.07%	-553	-3.11%
45 to 54 years	1,231	9.01%	45 to 54 years	1,648	12.53%	417	3.52%
55 to 59 years	635	4.65%	55 to 59 years	582	4.43%	-53	-0.22%
60 to 64 years	713	5.22%	60 to 64 years	551	4.19%	-162	-1.03%
65 to 74 years	1,360	9.96%	65 to 74 years	1,233	9.38%	-127	-0.58%
75 to 84 years	905	6.63%	75 to 84 years	1,048	7.97%	143	1.35%
85 years and over	356	2.61%	85 years and over	535	4.07%	179	1.46%

* Age cohort divisions changed between 1990 and 2000.

Source: U.S. Census - 2000



HOW WILL THIS IMPACT ESCANABA?

Escanaba's declining population of young children and adults coupled with an increasing elderly population is a common trend throughout the state, as well as the United States as a whole. An increased mean age has evolved from advances in health care and an aging baby-boomer population. Escanaba attracts these young retirees and elderly due to the attractive, safe, small town, along with quality housing, abundant recreational resources, and close proximity to quality health care.

An aging population will be an important element to consider for planning related issues. For example, the Escanaba School District in 2004-2005 had a blended enrollment of 3,013 students. Over the past seven years, the District has been forced to close five elementary buildings due to declining student enrollment. Current trends have leveled off. As the community ages, an increased demand for senior housing and entertainment facilities will emerge, especially in areas where a high percentage of seniors are located.

Observing the aging trend of Escanaba presents the need to find new ways to attract younger generations of families and individuals to the area to help support an aging community. Additionally, Escanaba would greatly benefit by attracting more young retirees to the community. These young retirees seek out small town communities that provide cultural, educational, and quality medical facilities. Young retirees would not require jobs and characteristically have high discretionary incomes resulting in increased investment in local businesses without increased demand for local jobs. Marketing Escanaba's premiere waterfront and small town charm would attract these young retirees to the area and help to transform the local economy.