

# 1. HANOVER TODAY

## Planning Context

### Location and Access

The Town of Hanover, Massachusetts is a primarily residential community located about 25 miles southwest of Boston within Plymouth County. It is bordered by the Town of Norwell to the north and east, Hanson and Pembroke to the south, and Rockland to the west and northwest. Compared to other communities in Plymouth County, Hanover is one of the smaller towns with a total area of 15.7 square miles.

Hanover is regionally accessible via State highway routes 3, 53, 123, and 139, which run through the town. Route 3, a limited-access highway, provides convenient access to both the Boston metropolitan area and Cape Cod. Running four miles north and south between Norwell and Pembroke, Route 53 was once the major route to Cape Cod and today continues to be the main commercial thoroughfare for the town. Routes 123 and 139 both traverse Hanover in an east-west direction and also provide an assortment of business and professional establishments.

While there is no Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) Commuter Rail stop in Hanover, the Plymouth & Brockton Street Railway provides weekday service from Marshfield to the Braintree MBTA Station via Hanover. The Greater Attleboro Taunton Regional Transit Authority (GATRA) offers transportation services to Hanover senior for rides to Boston area hospitals.

### Local Governance and Services

The Town of Hanover's executive branch is made up of a five-member Board of Selectmen along with a Town Manager. The executive powers of the town—with the exception of the powers granted to the Town Manager—are vested in the Board of Selectmen. Each selectman is elected for a term of three years. The Board is responsible for appointing the Town Manager as well as citizens to fill positions on Town commissions and committees.

The Town Manager also serves a term of three years, though he or she may be appointed for successive terms of office. This position was established by Town Charter, Chapter 67 of the Acts of 2009. The Town Manager is the chief executive officer of Hanover and is charged with overall operation of the town. He or she is responsible to the Board of Selectmen for the effective management of town affairs and is charged with implementing the town policies established by the Board. The Town Manager appoints and removes all non-elected department heads and approves the appointments and removals of all other Town employees, with the exception of the School Department. In addition to supervising day-to-day operations and facilities in

Hanover, the Town Manager prepares the town's budget, negotiates collective bargaining agreements, and acts as the chief procurement officer.

Like many other communities in the Commonwealth, Hanover has an annual Town Meeting in the first week of May of each year. Special Town Meetings during other months of the year may also be called. Town Meeting represents the legislative branch of Hanover's government where all registered voter residents vote on the budget and other articles in the warrant. The Town Clerk maintains all town records and documents the votes and actions of the Town Meeting. The Town Moderator directs the progress of the meeting and appoints the town's Advisory Committee, a group of nine registered voters in the town who help balance the budget and review all articles in the warrant.

Both the Town Clerk and Town Moderator are elected. Other elected officials in Hanover include the Board of Public Works, Board of Assessors, School Committee, Board of Health, Trustees of the Public Library, Planning Board, and Housing Authority. The School Committee, which is also elected, is responsible for the educational needs of Hanover's children. The School Superintendent carries out the day-to-day operational responsibilities of the school system.

## Historical Context

Hanover has a long and rich history. Its first settlers were evident as early as the mid 1600s and the Town of Hanover was officially incorporated in 1727 with a population of approximately 300 people. William Barstow is considered Hanover's first settler in 1649 and he later constructed the first bridge across the North River. Prior to the arrival of European settlers, the natural waterways of Hanover served as fishing and hunting grounds for local Native Americans. At the time of its incorporation, Hanover consisted of about 11,000 acres of land, or 17 square miles. In 1754, about one-tenth of this land was annexed to Pembroke in area that is now a part of Hanson.

The town's early economy was based on agriculture and lumbering though it evolved to shipbuilding and manufacturing along the North River and smaller streams. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many of the town's former farmers were employed in shoe factories or the Clapp Rubber Mill. Hanover's population in 1900 was 2,152. The largest employer at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the National Fireworks Factory. Though many residents of Hanover were employed in factories at this time, the majority of the population still consisted of subsistence farmers.

Rail service via the Hanover Branch Railroad provided service from the Four Corners area, through South and then West Hanover, and eventually on to Boston between the years 1864 and 1938. In addition, a trolley service ran through North Hanover from 1893 to 1921 which provided transportation for both workers and vacationers traveling to Nantasket. Freight service went to West Hanover until the late 1970s and early 1980s, though the tracks are now used as walking trails. Construction of Route 53 began in 1930 as automobile use in the country continued to grow.

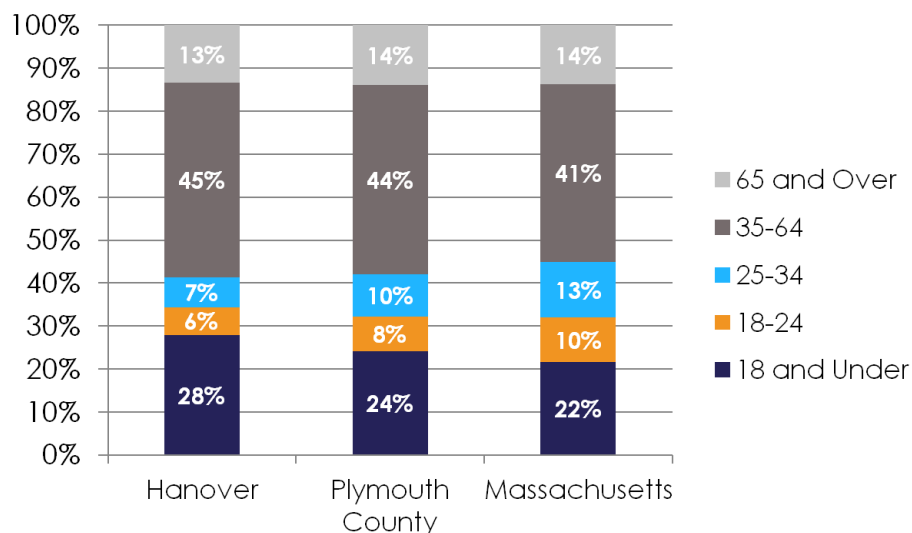
## Demographic Trends

Hanover's population as of the 2010 Census was 13,879. According to ACS 2014 5-Year Estimates, the population has continued to grow to 14,360. In comparison to nearby communities, Hanover's population is larger than Norwell's and smaller than Hingham's. Overall, the town's population has grown steadily over the past few decades, but the pace is slowing. Between 2000 and 2010, Hanover's population rose by 5%.

### Age Trends

Compared to the rest of Plymouth County and Massachusetts, Hanover's population is relatively younger. The largest age cohort in Hanover is between 35 and 64 years old, making up 45% of the population. The next largest cohort is residents 18 and under who make up 28% of the population, followed by those 65 and older (13.3%), 25 to 34 (7%), and 18 to 24 (6.5%).

**Figure 1: Age Trends (Census 2010)**



While Hanover's population may be slightly younger compared to other communities, it is still an aging community. Due to the aging Baby Boomers, Hanover, like other cities and towns in the Boston region, is getting older overall. At the time of the 2000 Census, Hanover's median age was 37.5 years old. By 2010, it had increased to 41.8 years old.

### Household Trends

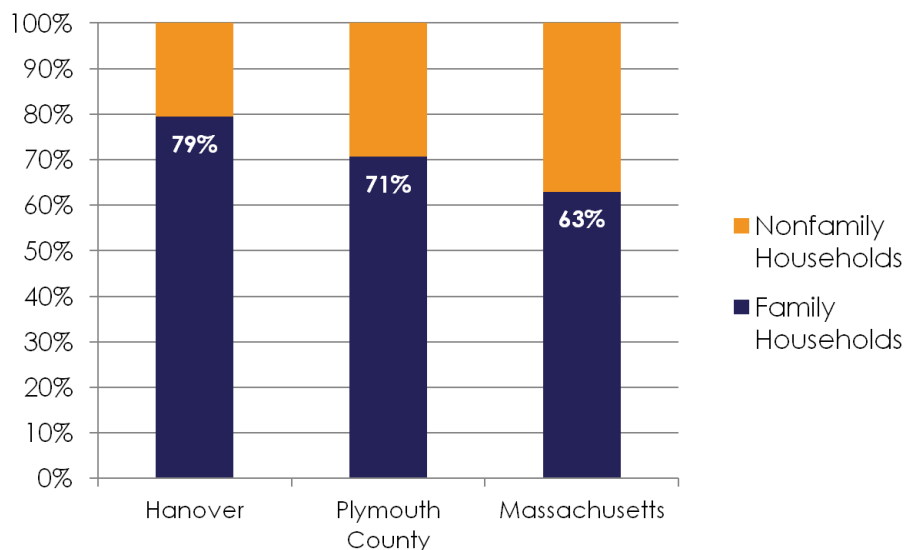
The number of households in Hanover remains virtually unchanged between the 2010 Census and the 2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates. As of the 2010 Census, Hanover had a total of 4,709 households. This represents an increase of 9.3% from the number of households in 2000. Concurrently, the town's population grew only 5% between 2000 and 2010, indicating that household growth is exceeding population growth in Hanover.

The fact that the number of households increased faster than population is due mostly to declines in average household sizes. While the average household size in Hanover was 3.02 at the time of the 2000 Census, it decreased to 2.93 by 2010. These declines

are likely the result of a number of factors, one of which is also related to aging Baby Boomers and seniors making up a growing proportion of the town's population. Another likely explanation is the tendency for younger households to wait longer to form families which are, on average, smaller than those of their predecessors.

While couples may be waiting longer to start families, based on household figures, Hanover can certainly be considered a family-friendly community. Over 79% of the town's households are families, a half of which have children under 18. This rate is higher than in both Plymouth County and the Commonwealth, whose percentages of family households are 71% and 63%, respectively. Hanover's percentage of family households has decreased somewhat from 2000 when it was 82%.

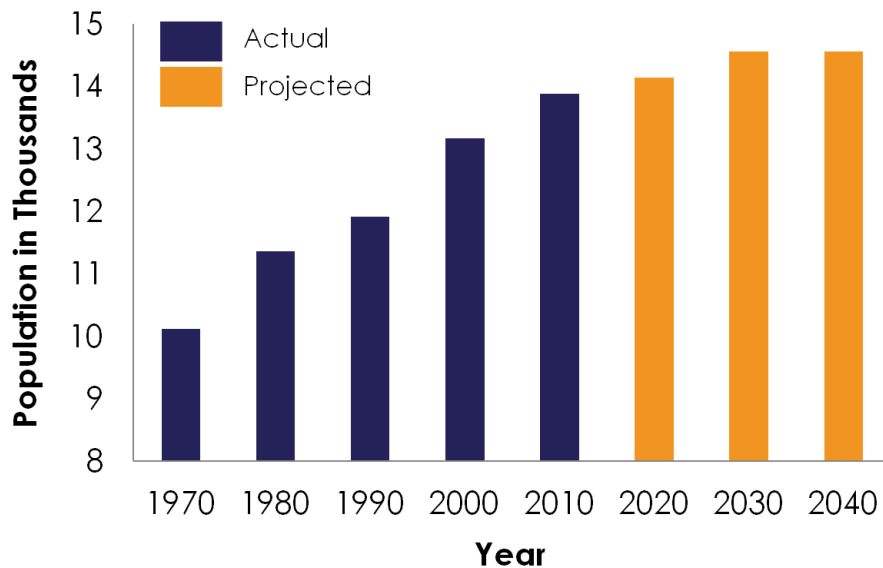
**Figure 2: Family and Nonfamily Households (Census 2010)**



The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) has prepared population projections through 2030 for the Metro Boston region. These projections are based on two scenarios: Status Quo (SQ), based on the continuation of existing rates of births, deaths, migration, and housing occupancy; and a Stronger Region (SR) that assumes higher population growth, greater housing demand, and a larger workforce.

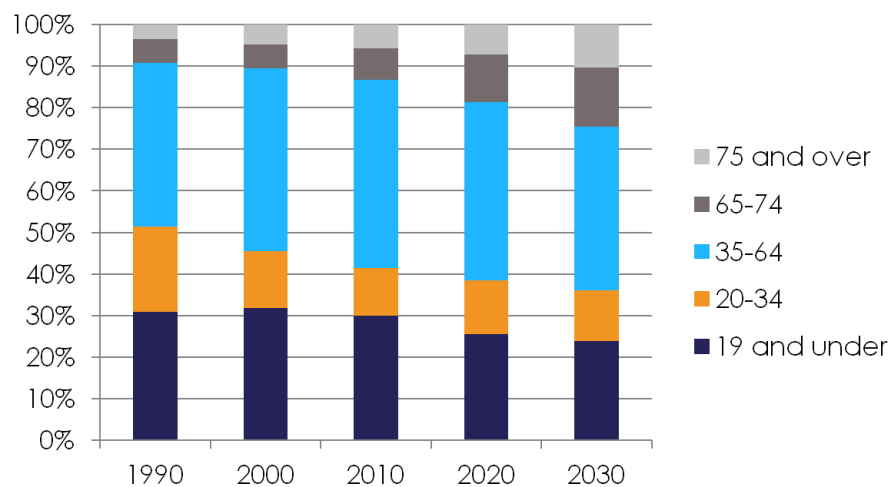
According to MAPC SR projections, Hanover's population is likely to plateau by 2030 at 14,554 people. The town's population is expected to grow only 2% between 2010 and 2020, and 2.8% between 2020 and 2030. No growth is expected between 2030 and 2040.

**Figure 3: Population, 1970-2040 (Census and MAPC Projections)**



Though Hanover's population may not necessarily grow, its composition is expected to change quite a bit. The population 65 and older is expected to increase 48% by 2030 (based off 2010 values), by far the greatest population growth the town will see. At the same time, the population 18 and under is expected to decrease by 20%, the population 20 to 34 will increase by 10%, and the population 35 to 64 will decrease by 9%.

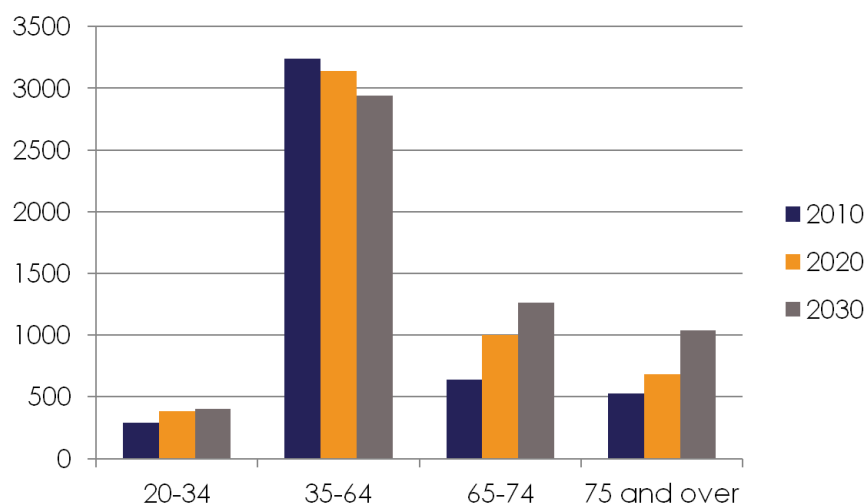
**Figure 4: Population Projections by Age (Census and MAPC Projections)**



The number of households in Hanover is expected to increase substantially by 2030. According to MAPC SR projections, the number of households is expected to grow 20% by 2030 (based off a 2010 value of 4,709 households). This includes a growth of about 11% between 2010 and 2020 and a growth of 8% between 2020 and 2030. Between

2000 and 2030, the number of households with a householder 65 years old and above is expected to rise almost 50%. At the same time, the number of households with a householder 35 to 64 years old is expected to decline by 9%.

**Figure 5: Household Projections by Age of Householder (Census and MAPC Projections)**



### School Population

During the 2015-2016 school year, 2,632 students were enrolled in the Hanover School District. There have only been slight fluctuations in this number over the past decade and it has remained consistent even as the town's population has increased. Of these students, about 6% come from economically disadvantaged families, compared to over 27% of students in the public school system throughout the state. Only 1.7% of Hanover students have a first language other than English, compared to 19% of students in the state.

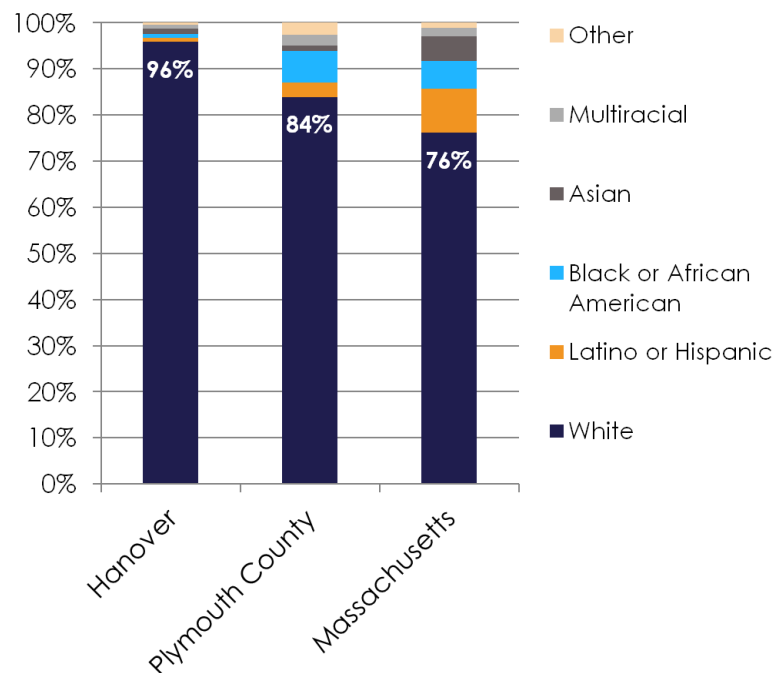
The adjusted graduation rate (does not include transfers) for Hanover's 2015 cohort was 98.4%. For the 2014-2015 school year, the dropout rate for all grades was less than 1%. Of students who graduated in 2013-2014, 87% went on to college or university. However, of the low-income student population, only 68% went on to pursue higher education.

### Racial Composition

Hanover is less racially and ethnically diverse than the county and the state. The town is primarily White (96%), with a small percentage of Latino or Hispanic (1%), Black or African American (1%), Asian (1%), and multiracial (1%) residents. By comparison, Plymouth County is 85% White, 3% Latino or Hispanic, 7% Black or African American, 1% Asian, 2% multiracial, and 3% other. Massachusetts is more diverse overall at 76% White, 10% Latino or Hispanic, 6% Black or African American, 5% Asian, 2% multiracial, and 1% other.

While the majority of Hanover's population is White, the nonwhite percentage of the population increased slightly from 2.3% in 2000 to 4.2% in 2010.

**Figure 6: Race and Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity (Census 2010)**

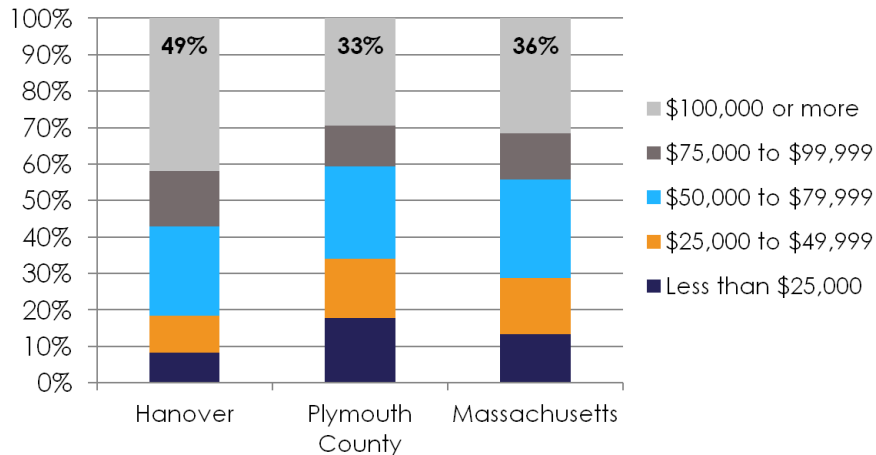


### **Income Profile**

According to ACS 2014 5-Year Estimates, Hanover's median household income is much greater than the rest of Plymouth County and Massachusetts: \$98,750 per year for the town, \$75,816 for the county, and \$67,846 for the state. The town's median family income is \$120,398 a year, much higher than most families in the state who have a median of \$86,132.

Almost half (49.3%) of Hanover's households earn over \$100,000 per year while 33% of Plymouth County households and 36% of Massachusetts households earn that amount. Less than 10% of households in Hanover earn under \$25,000 a year, compared to 20% in the county and 15% in the state. Only 2.2% of Hanover families are living below the poverty line, half of the county's poverty rate for families and a quarter of the state's rate. Approximately 4% of all residents in Hanover are living in poverty.

**Figure 7: Household Income (ACS 2014 5-Year Estimates)**



### Educational Attainment

Higher incomes are often associated with high levels of educational attainment. Almost half (46%) of Hanover residents age 25 and older have completed college, with 33% obtaining an associate or bachelor degree and another 13% obtaining a master degree or higher. Within the rest of Plymouth County, 40% of residents age 25 and older have completed college. This figure is 34% for the state.

Hanover lags behind the rest of Plymouth County somewhat in terms of proportion of residents who have a master degree or higher. While 13% of Hanover residents age 25 and older have a master degree or higher, 17% of Plymouth County residents do.

**Figure 8: Educational Attainment (ACS 2014 5-Year Estimates)**

