

2 Demographic, Social and Economic Trends

Minnesota is changing and so is Richfield. Between 1990 and 2000, the state's foreign-born population increased 130%. The influx was massive enough to rank Minnesota 12 nationally in the rate of immigrant population growth, ahead of California, Florida and Texas. Minnesota has the largest population of Somali immigrants in the country – 9,300 according to the 2000 census and the second largest population of Hmong, after California. About 42,000 Minnesotans were born in Mexico, making that country the largest single nation of origin for immigrants in the state. Immigrants have been attracted to jobs and a dynamic economy that was particularly strong in the latter half of the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s.

In Minnesota, the Twin Cities captures roughly 80 percent of all immigration. Being a close-in suburban community, Richfield has seen significant increases in immigrant populations. The 2000 census counted over 113,000 immigrants in the Twin Cities suburbs and exurbs, more than the total living in the central cities and a 150 percent increase over 1990.

This trend of increased immigration and changing demographics is likely to be one of the defining elements

of Richfield over the next decade. The changing Richfield population will influence housing choices, jobs, schools and recreation in ways that we can only begin to anticipate.

One of the frustrations in interpreting how demographic, social and economic changes will influence Richfield in the future is the age of the available historical data. The only comprehensive data (exclusive of school enrollment) available is information from the 2000 census, data that is eight years old at the time of the updating of this plan. Although dated, information from 1990 and 2000 does still serve as an indicator of future influencing factors.

School Enrollment

School enrollment data is published annually. The Richfield school district includes all of the City and a small portion of Edina. Since the boundaries of the school district and the City vary slightly, school population characteristics are not a perfect indicator of trends specific to Richfield but they are close enough to reflect general trends. Information on schools is presented below:

Table 2.1 School Population – Racial Characteristics

Year	Hispanic Male	Hispanic Female	Black Male	Black Female	White Male	White Female	Total Male	Total Female	Total Minority	Total All
1998-1999	117	122	303	286	1624	1526	2222	2107	1179	4329
2005-2006	539	433	432	465	1025	904	2181	1983	2235	4164
Change	+78%	+72%	+30%	+38%	-58%	-68%	-2%	-6%	+90%	-4%

Table 2.2 School Population – General Characteristics

Year	K-12 Enrollment	Free Meals	Reduced Price Meals	Limited English Proficient	Special Education
1998-1999	4269	720	342	294	417
2005-2006	4113	1661	351	896	449
Change	-4%	+57%	+3%	+67%	+7%

The Richfield school population has seen significant declines in past decades. In the 2005 – 2006 school year, the population totaled 4,164 students compared to 4,329 students in the 1998 – 1999 school year. The school population is also being heavily influenced by state and regional immigration trends. From 1999 to 2006, the Hispanic male and female student populations increased

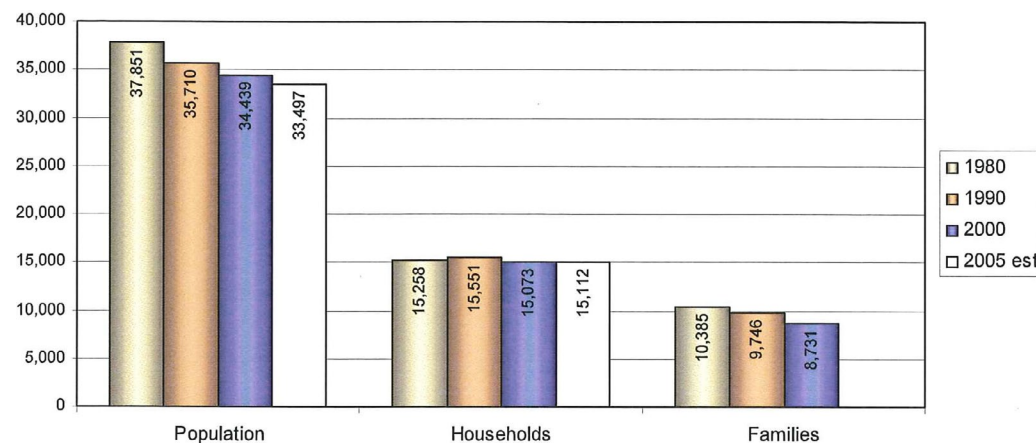
78% and 72% respectively. Black student populations also increased significantly (30% - 38%). During the same period, white male and female populations dropped 58% and 68% respectively.

Other social and economic trends are evident in comparing the 1999 and 2006 information. Over the 7 years, a substantial (57%) increase in students receiving free meals occurred and there was a 67% jump in individuals who indicated that they have a limited proficiency in English.

Population, Households and Families

The population of Richfield has steadily decreased over the past three decades. In 2000, the City had a population of 34,439 which was down 9% from the 1980 total of 37,581 (Figure 2.1). While Richfield's population has been dropping, population changes for Hennepin County and the State of Minnesota have been up significantly, increasing almost 21% from 1980 to 2000. The number of households peaked in Richfield in 1990 at 15,521 dropping to 15,073 in 2000. Since 2000, it is estimated that the total number of households has increased again slightly due to an expanded supply of housing arising from redevelopment activities. Families which the census defines as one or more people living in the same household who are related by birth, marriage or adoption dropped by almost 12% from 9,746 to 8,731.

Figure 2.1 Population, Households and Families



Source: US Census and Hennepin South Services Collaborative

The Metropolitan Council foresees Richfield growing over the next 20 to 25 years, reaching a population of 41,300 in 2020 and 45,000 in 2030 (Table 2.3). Should that occur, the community would still not match its 1970 population level. Attaining the population and household growth anticipated by the Metropolitan Council will only occur if significant redevelopment efforts occur in the future. Redevelopment efforts will be substantially impacted by the availability or lack of private market incentives and funding tools.

Table 2.3 Metropolitan Council Projections

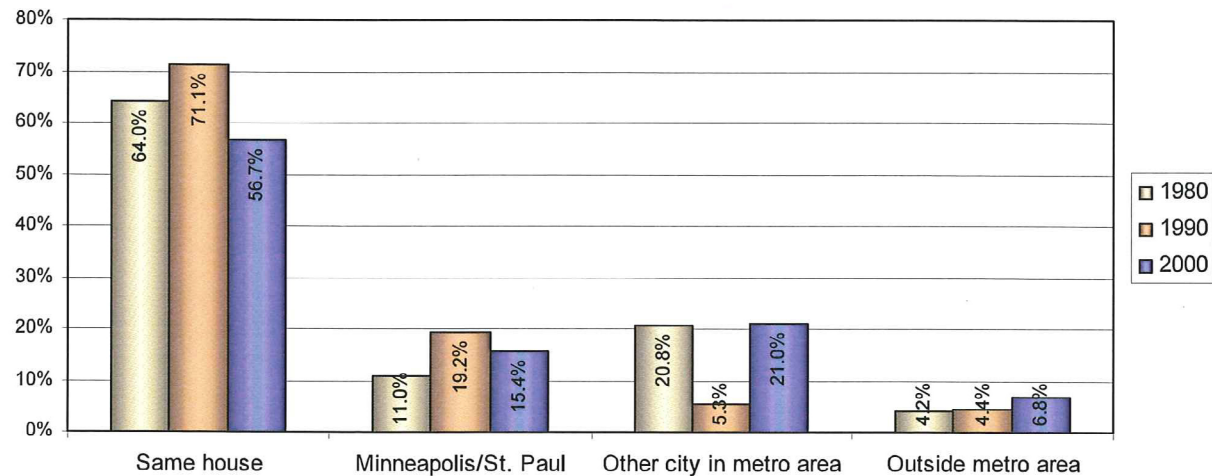
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030
Population	47,231	37,851	35,710	34,310	37,700	41,300	45,000
Households	14,801	15,258	15,551	15,073	16,500	18,000	19,500
Employment	10,328	10,698	10,844	11,602	17,100	17,600	18,100

Source: Metropolitan Council

Richfield's population is also becoming somewhat more transient (Figure 2.2). In 1990, 71.7% of the population reported living in the same house five years prior to the census. By 2000, only 56.7% of the population had remained in the same home. Of the Richfield residents

who reported that they lived somewhere other than in the same house in 2000, the largest share (21%) were living in other suburban cities while 15.4% reported having lived in either Minneapolis or St. Paul.

Figure 2.2 Place of Residency Five Years Before

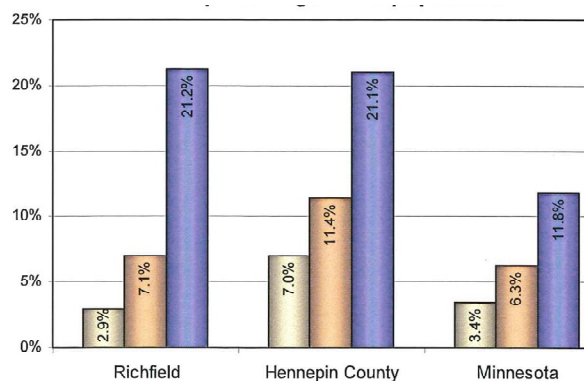


Source: US Census and Hennepin South Services Collaborative

Richfield's population continues to become increasingly diverse (Figure 2.3). People of color represented 21.2% of the City's population in 2000, an increase of almost 629% from 1980. Almost every non-white racial/ethnic group experienced substantial growth as a percentage of the total population between 1980 and 2000. In 2000, the Black population was the largest racial minority comprising 6.6% of the total population. From 1980 to 2000, the Black population increased over 710%.

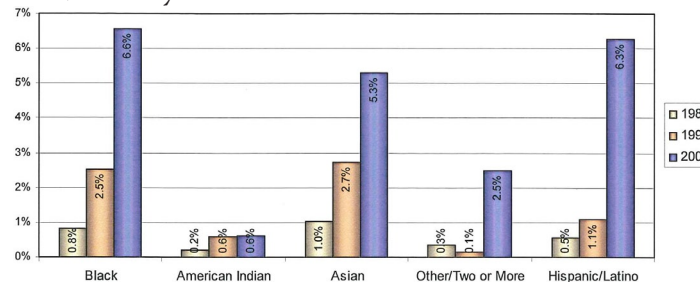
In 2000, the Hispanic/Latino population became the second largest racial minority comprising 6.3% of the population. By 2000, the Asian population which had been the largest racial minority in 1980 and 1990 dropped to third comprising 5.3% of the total population.

Figure 2.3 People of Color as a Percentage of the Population



Source: US Census and Hennepin South Services Collaborative

Figure 2.4 People of Color as a Percentage of the Population by Race/Ethnicity

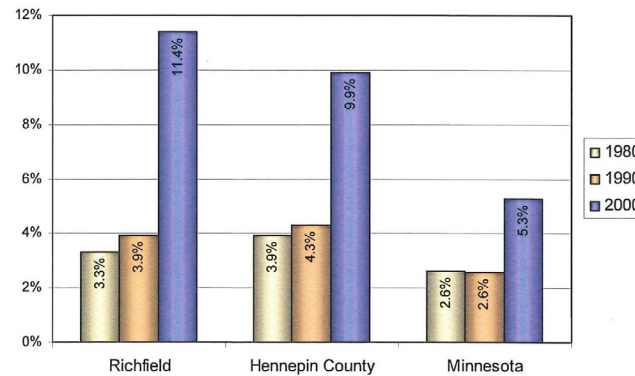


Source: US Census and Hennepin South Services Collaborative

The school enrollment data provided a glimpse into Richfield's foreign-born population. Figure 2.5 shows that the foreign-born population was 11.4% of the total population in 2000, an increase of 242.5% from 1980. Asia remained the most common place of birth of the foreign-born population in 2000 followed by Latin America and Africa. Foreign-born Richfield residents from Europe declined from 43% in 1980 to 12% in 2000.

The share of Richfield's population that speaks a language other than English at home has also increased. In 1980, 5.1% of the Richfield population was non-English speaking. By 2000, that number had increased to almost 14%. People that indicated that they spoke English either "not well" or "not at all" increased from 7.5% in 1980 to 26.3% in 2000. In 2000, Spanish was the most commonly spoken language followed by Asian languages.

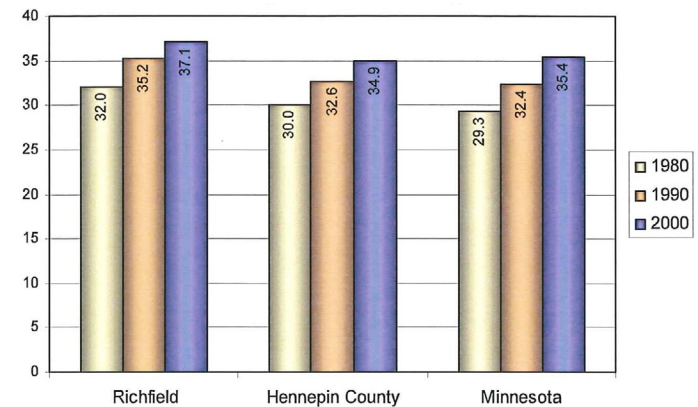
Figure 2.5 Foreign-Born Population



Source: US Census and Hennepin South Services Collaborative

Richfield is aging (Figure 2.6). The median age of the population increased by 5.1 years to 37.1 years from 1990 to 2000. The City's population has had a higher median age than either Hennepin County or the State of Minnesota for the past thirty years.

Figure 2.6 Median Age

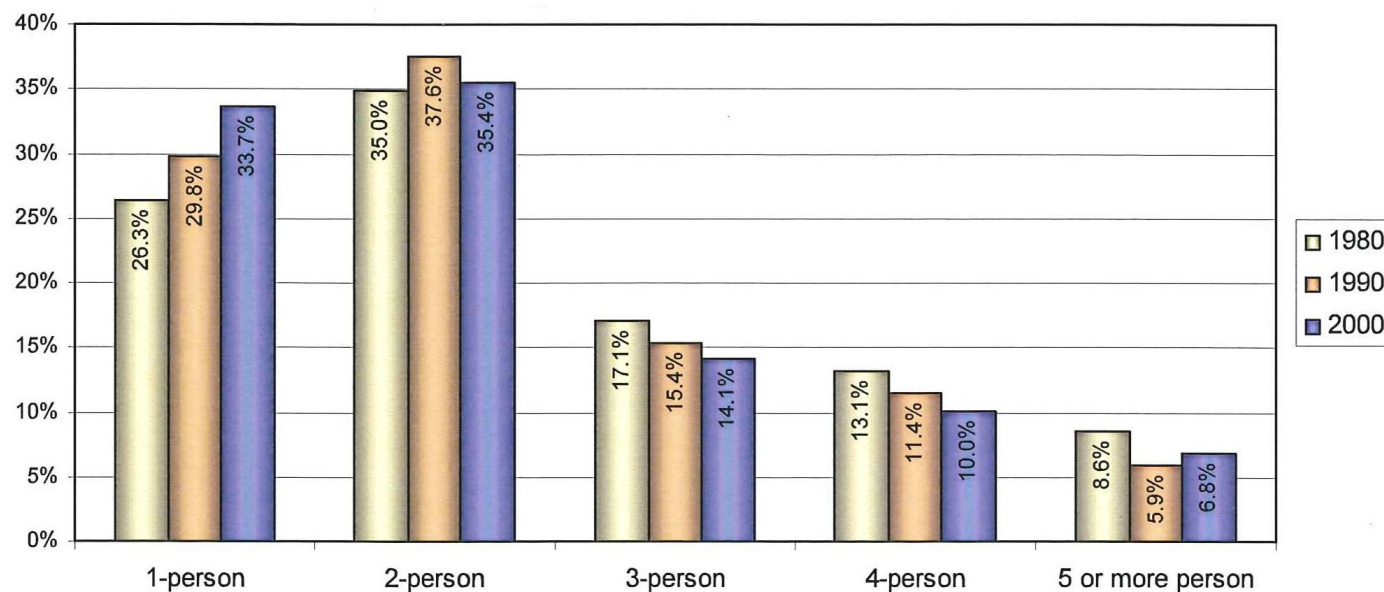


Source: Hennepin South Services Collaborative

Households

Richfield's average household size has been decreasing, dropping from 2.5 people per household in 1980 to 2.3 people per household in 2000. This decrease is illustrated in Exhibit 2.10 which shows the pattern of increasing shares of small households and decreasing shares of larger households. One and two-person households continue to be the most common types of households in Richfield and in 2000, they made up over two-thirds (69.1%) of all households.

Figure 2.7 Household Size

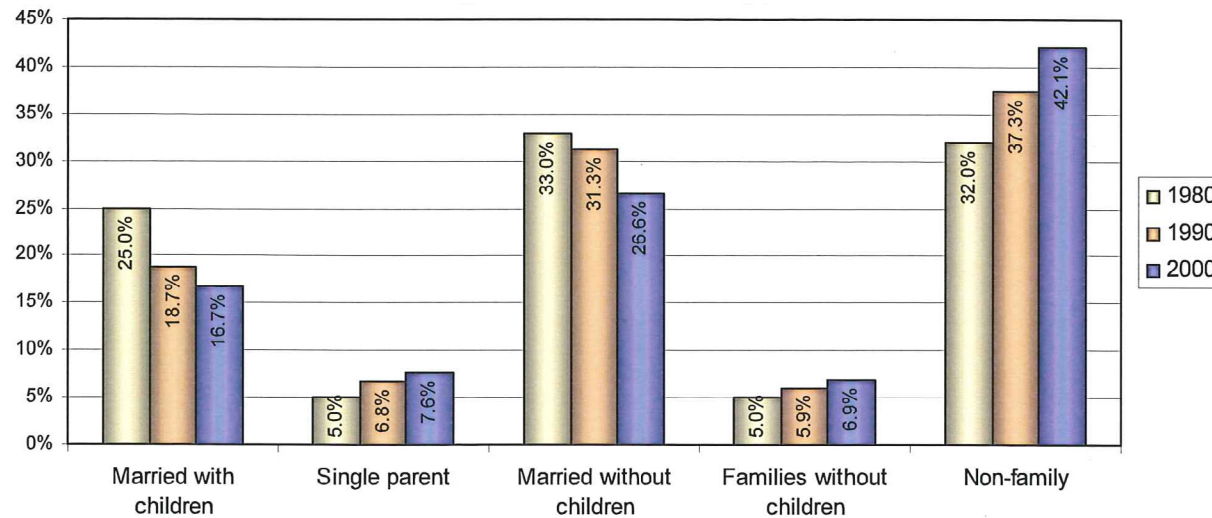


Source: Hennepin South Services Collaborative

Married couple households as shown on Exhibit 2.11, both with and without children, have steadily declined since 1980, down to 6.7% and 26.6% of households in 2000. The portions of all other households have steadily increased, most notably, non-family households grew to 42.1% in 2000 making it the most common household

type followed by married couples without children and married couples with children. The number of single parent households has grown steadily, up to 7.6% in 2000 (an increase of 52.5% from 1980) and families without children constituted almost 7% of households in 2000, an increase of 38.9%.

Figure 2.8 Household Types



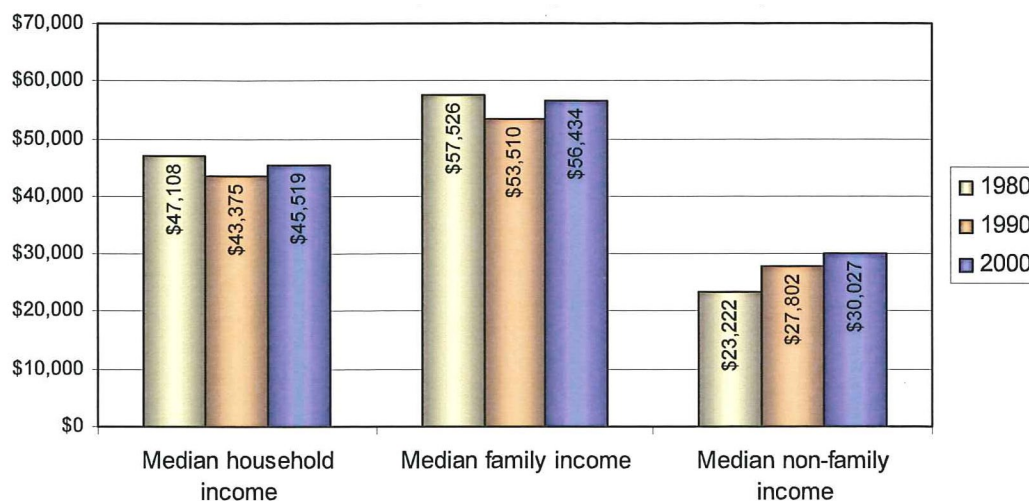
Source: Hennepin South Services Collaborative

Income

Richfield residents have incomes that vary widely by household, family type, race/ethnicity and age. Since 1979, both the median household income and the median family income have slightly decreased to \$45,519 and \$56,431 in 1999 (down 3.4% and 1.9% but up from their lows in 1989). The median non-family income steadily increased to \$30,027 (up 29.3%) but remains significantly lower

than the median household and family incomes. The median household income decreased for all racial/ethnic groups from 1980 to 2000 except for White households which increased slightly. The largest decrease was for Hispanic/Latino households (down 49%) followed by Black households (down 6.2%) and Asian families (down 1.5%).

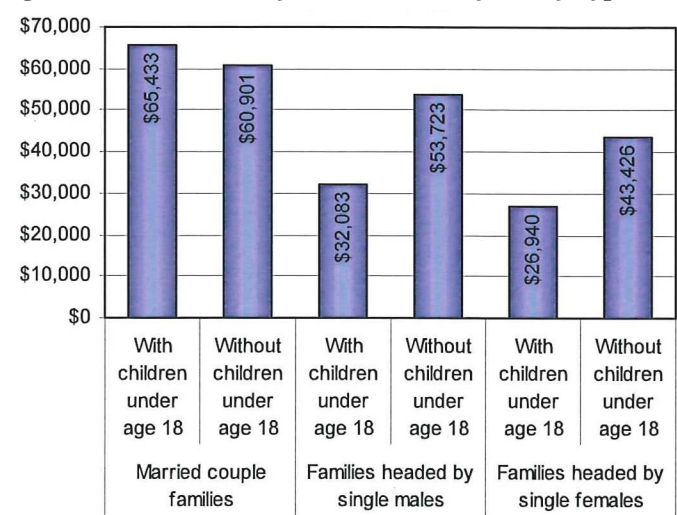
Figure 2.9 Median Household, Family and Non-family Income
(in 1999 dollars)



Source: US Census and Hennepin South Services Collaborative

There is a great disparity in median family income in Richfield depending on family type (Figure 2.10). In 1999, the median family incomes for married couple families were significantly higher than the median family incomes for families headed by either single males or single females. Married couple families with children had the highest median income (\$65,433) while single female headed families with children had the lowest median income (\$26,940). Within family types, families without children under the age of 18 typically had substantially higher median incomes than those with children, the exception being married couple families where those with children earned more.

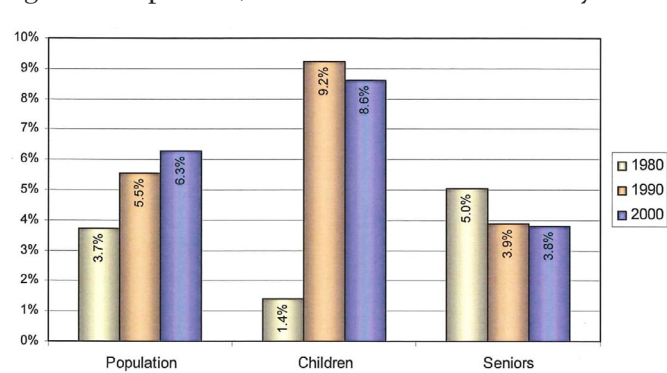
Figure 2.10 Median Family Income in 1999 by Family Type



Source: US Census and Hennepin South Services Collaborative

The portion of Richfield's population that is living in poverty has steadily increased over the past 20 years to 6.3% in 1999 which is a 68.3% increase from 1979 (Figure 2.11). While the portion of seniors in poverty has steadily declined, the portion of children in poverty has dramatically increased. The portion of seniors in poverty in 2000 was less than the portion of the general population in poverty unlike the portion of children in poverty which was substantially higher than the general population.

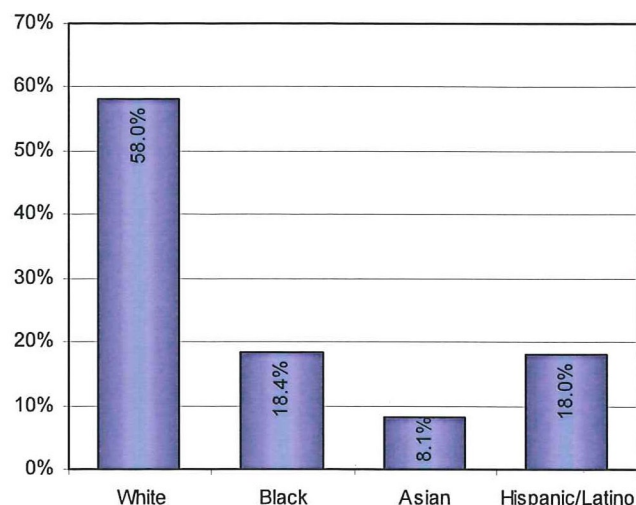
Figure 2.11 Population, Children and Seniors in Poverty



Source: US Census and Hennepin South Services Collaborative

In 1999, the majority of Richfield's population living in poverty was White (Figure 2.12). However, people of color are disproportionately represented in the population in poverty. Blacks comprised 6.6% of the general population in 2000 but were 18.4% of the population in poverty. Asians and Hispanic/Latinos comprised 5.3% and 6.3% respectively of the general population but were 8.1% and 18% of the population in poverty.

Figure 2.12 Race/Ethnicity of Population in Poverty in 1999



Source: US Census and Hennepin South Services Collaborative

The portion of the population that is living below 200% of the poverty threshold is often called the “working poor”. That portion of Richfield’s population has steadily increased to 17.9% in 1999 which is up 28.8% over the numbers recorded in 1979.

Impacts of Demographic, Social and Economic Trends

Richfield is about people. People live in the community, play in the community, work in the community and shop in the community. Therefore, the characteristics of the people in Richfield heavily influence future development

patterns as well as the physical form of the community. Income levels have a direct correlation to transit use. Family and household characteristics correlate to consumer demand for specific housing types. Changes in the racial/ethnic composition of the community may have an impact on recreational demand. Observations from the trend data presented in this section as well as data presented later in the housing section of the plan include:

- The characteristics of the Richfield school district closely mirror the rest of the community. Since school district enrollment information is available annually, it can be used as a barometer of current conditions. Enrollment information in recent years reflects changes in the diversity of Richfield, income levels and language issues. Based on that information, Richfield is getting more racially and ethnically diverse, the level of poverty in the community is likely rising and the number of non-English households is increasing. These trends are likely to influence housing and transportation over the next 10 to 20 years. Affordable housing will continue to be a significant issue and transit alternatives will become increasingly important.
- The information on population, households and families depicts a pattern of an increasingly older population and an increasing population of one and two-person households. These trends will have a direct impact on land use, housing and transportation.

As the population ages and households become smaller, the demand for new housing will have a focus on attached units. This trend could actually bode well for Richfield because future redevelopment is likely to include only multi-family housing. The aging of the population combined with high energy costs and increasing environmental awareness will increase the demand for transit.

- From 1970 to 2000, Richfield's population dropped from 47,231 to 34,310, a loss of almost 13,000 people. During this time, the total enrollment of Richfield's school district dropped from approximately 11,000 to approximately 4,200. Metropolitan Council forecasts predict a reversal of the 30 year population loss. Richfield has the potential to add a significant number of households between now and 2030 resulting from redevelopment activities. Redevelopment; however, is contingent on a number of complex factors not the least of which is the health of private investment markets and the tools afforded to cities to encourage redevelopment.
- Even if Richfield grows to an excess of 40,000 people by 2020 or 2030, the impact on school enrollment will not be profound. Due to the aging of the population and the types of units likely to be built as part of redevelopment efforts, significant numbers of households with children are not likely to be part of the mix. Energy costs combined with higher density

household growth is likely to emphasize the need for walkable development patterns that provide convenient access between homes, businesses and parks.