

# Town of Harrison

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Comprehensive Plan Committee

4/8/26



# Disclaimer

- High level snapshot → Tip of the iceberg
- Margins of error noted where available
- Our interpretation of the data

# About the (Census) Data

## Decennial Census

- Full count of every person in the U.S. every 10 years (2000, 2010, 2020, etc.)
- Basic demographics (age, sex, race, housing units)
- No sampling error
- Used for baseline counts, redistricting, funding formulas

## ACS Estimates

- Ongoing sample survey with annual data releases (1-yr. and 5-yr estimates)
- 5-year estimates reflect a rolling average of responses collected over 5-years (eg. 2020-2024)
- Includes margins of error
- Much more detailed demographic questions (est. time to complete = 40 min.)

## Population Estimates Program (PEP)

- Annual official population updates based on births, deaths, migration
- Fills in population changes between decennial census years
- Considered most accurate population number for the current year
- Best for tracking population totals

# Population & Demographics

## Required\* Elements

### Analysis

- Is the rate of population change expected to continue as in the past, or to slow down or speed up? What are the implications of this change?
- What will be the likely demand for housing and municipal and school services to accommodate the change in population and demographics, both as a result of overall change and as a result of change among different age groups?
- Does your community have a significant seasonal population, is the nature of that population changing? What is the community's dependence on seasonal visitors?

- If your community is a service center or has a major employer, are additional efforts required to serve a daytime population that is larger than its resident population?

### Conditions & Trends

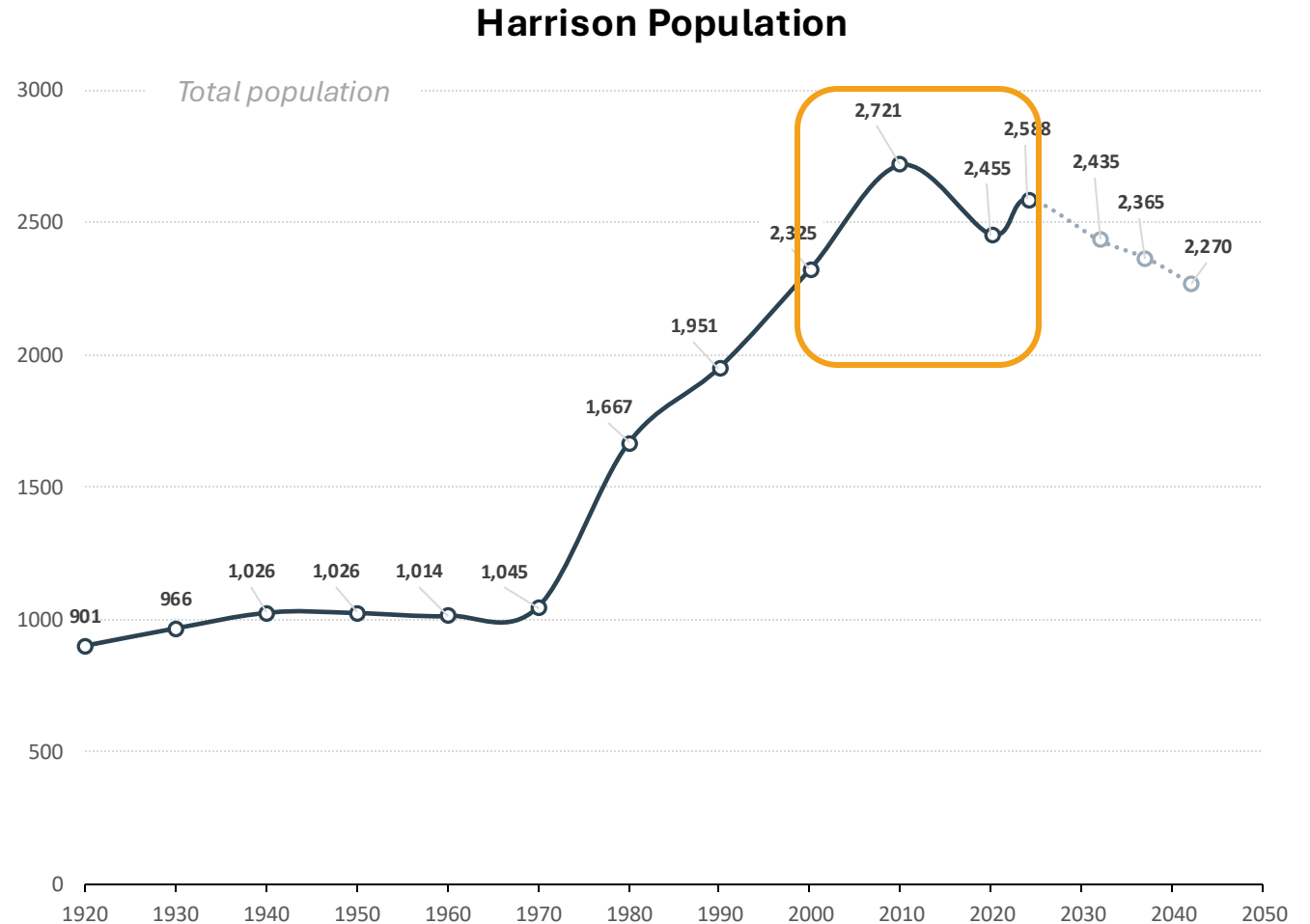
- The community's Comprehensive Planning Population and Demographic Data Set (including relevant local, regional, and statewide data) prepared and provided to the community by the Office or its designee.

\*Requirements may change due to the passage of LD1751

# Population Growth

## Key Takeaways

- Population consistently grew between 1970 and 2010, decreased between 2010 and 2020, and has been increasing since 2020



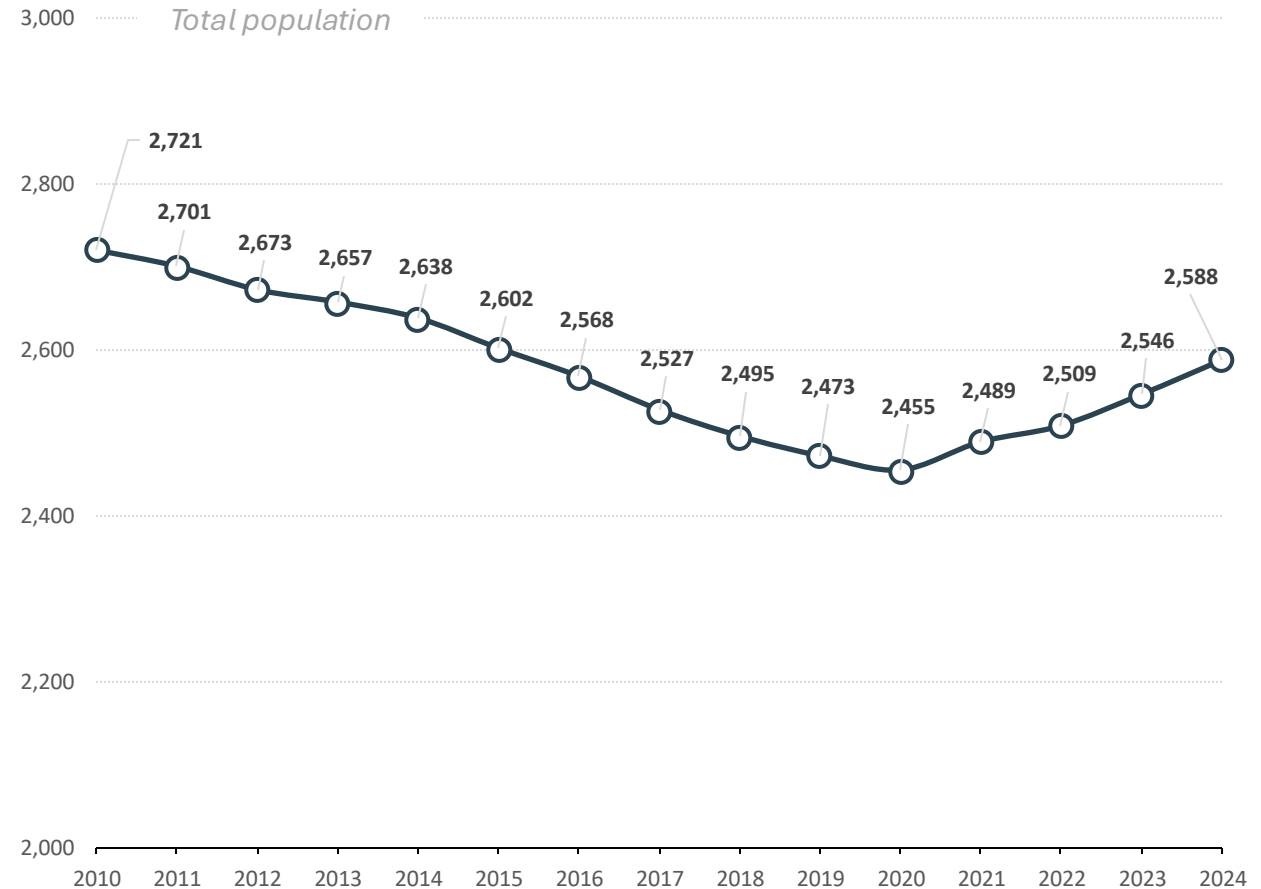
Source: Population Estimates Program

# Population Growth

## Key Takeaways

- The town shrank by 50 residents (or 2%) between 2014 and 2024
- While population has been growing since 2020, it hasn't reached the peak 2010 population
- Population decreased an average of 1.0% per year throughout the 2010s and has been increasing at a similar but slightly higher rate since 2020 (1.3%)

## Harrison Population



Source: Population Estimates Program  
\*y-axis does not start at zero to better highlight trends

# Population Growth

## Key Takeaways

- Neighboring towns, the county, and the state all grew in population over the last decade
- Harrison was the only town to shrink in population (-50)

	2014	2024	Net	Percent
<b>Harrison</b>	<b>2,638</b>	<b>2,588</b>	<b>-50</b>	<b>-1.9%</b>
Naples	3,924	4,062	138	3.5%
Otisfield	1,775	1,885	110	6.2%
Norway	5,006	5,326	320	6.4%
Waterford	1,535	1,639	104	6.8%
Bridgton	5,327	5,896	569	10.7%
Cumberland County	290,532	314,665	24,133	8.0%
Maine	1,336,617	1,408,438	71,821	5.1%

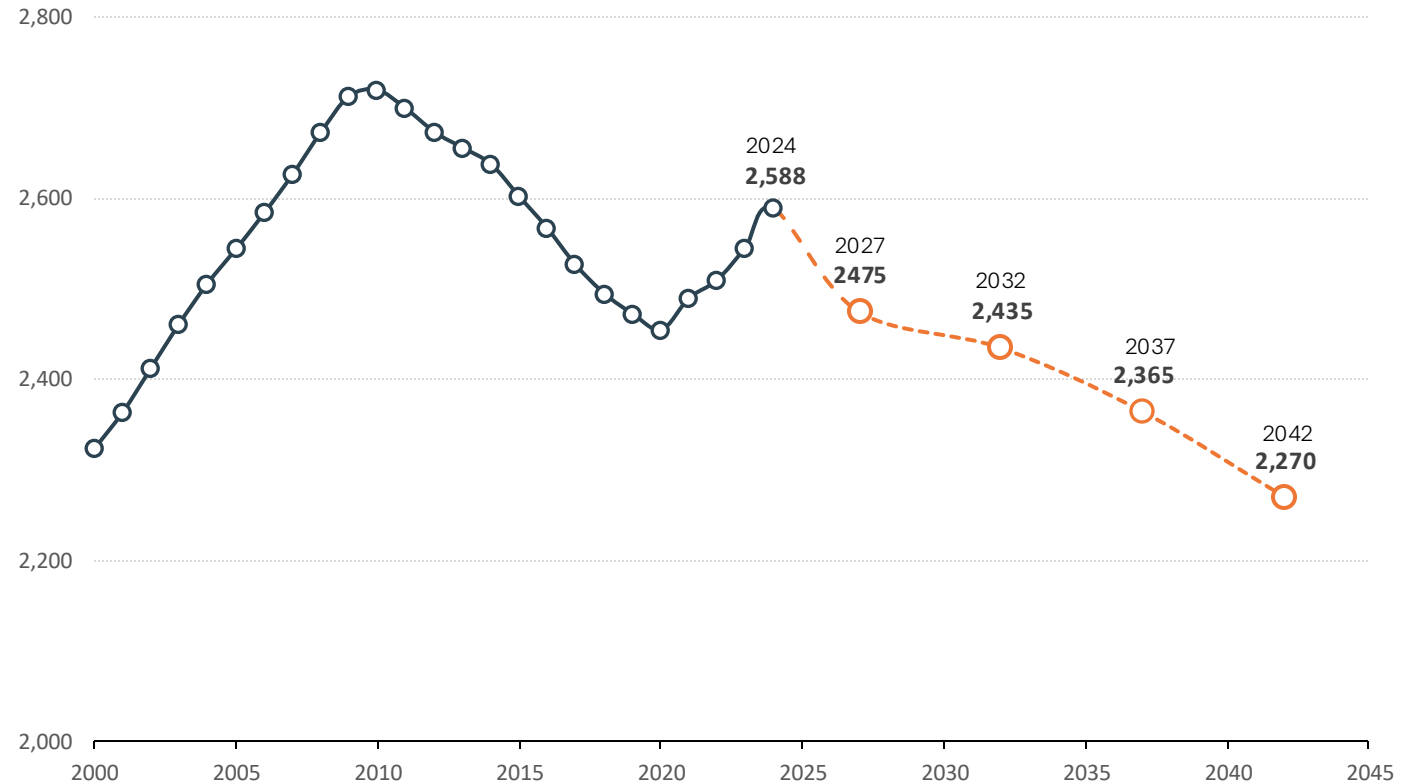
Source: Population Estimates Program

# Population Projection

## Key Takeaways

- Population change = Births – Deaths + Net Migration
- **State projection** shows decline
  - 2,270 residents by 2042
  - -318 residents over 18 years
- May wish to develop a local projection

**Harrison Population Projection** (State of Maine)



Source: Population Estimates Program, State of Maine Economist  
\*y-axis does not start at zero to better highlight trends

# Age, Diversity, Education

## Median Age

(years)

**56.0** ±3.6

- **Up from 52.6 in 2014**
- Cumberland County = 42.5
- Maine = 44.9

## Diversity

(% white)

**94%** ±3.9

- **Down from 96.7% in 2014**
- Cumberland County = 86.2%
- Maine = 90.5%

## Education

(% Bachelor's or higher)

**30.9%** ±7.3

- **Up from 26.3% in 2013**
- Cumberland County 53.0%
- Maine 36.2%

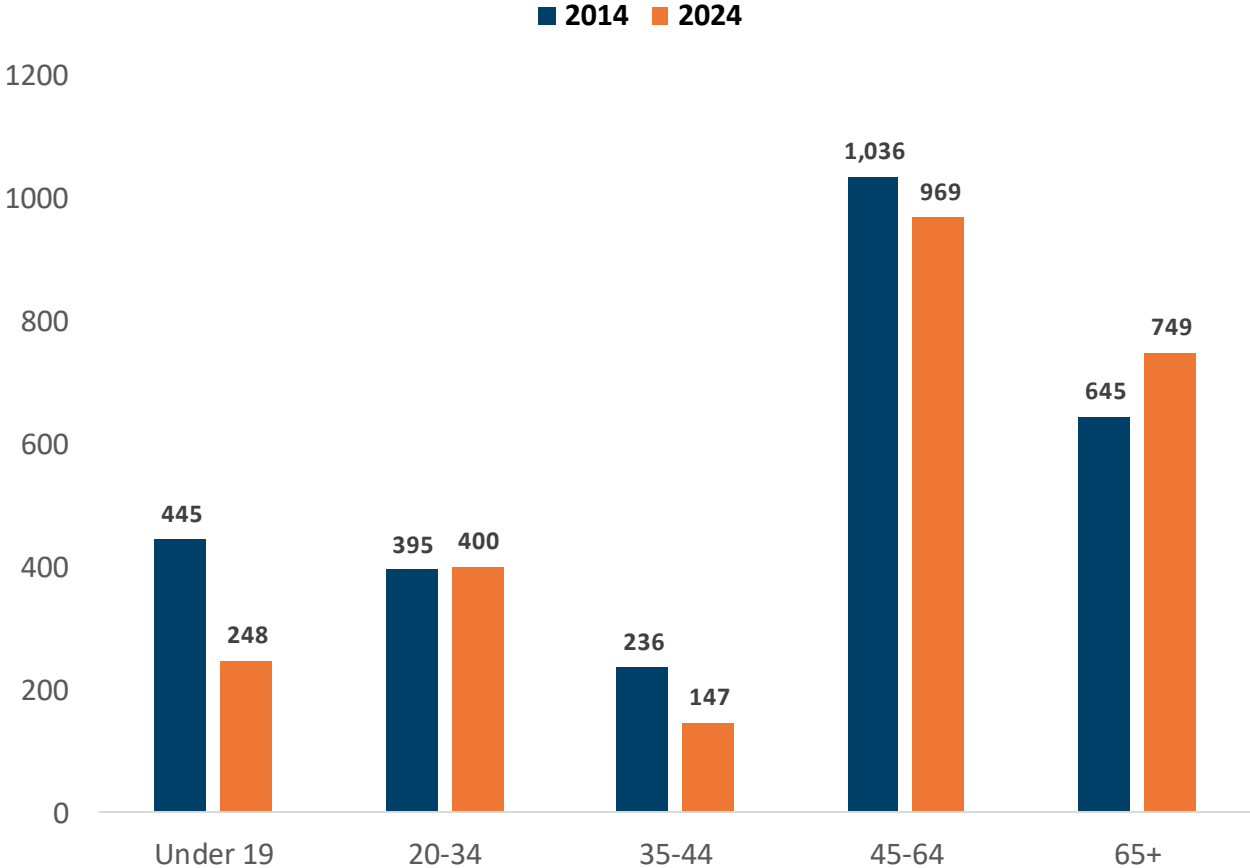
Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates (2014, 2024)

# Age-Distribution

## Key Takeaways

- Decrease in all categories except the 20-34 and 65+ age groups
- Strong growth in 65+ group suggests more residents are aging in place
- Decline in children (-44%) and parent aged residents suggests fewer families

### Harrison Age Distribution



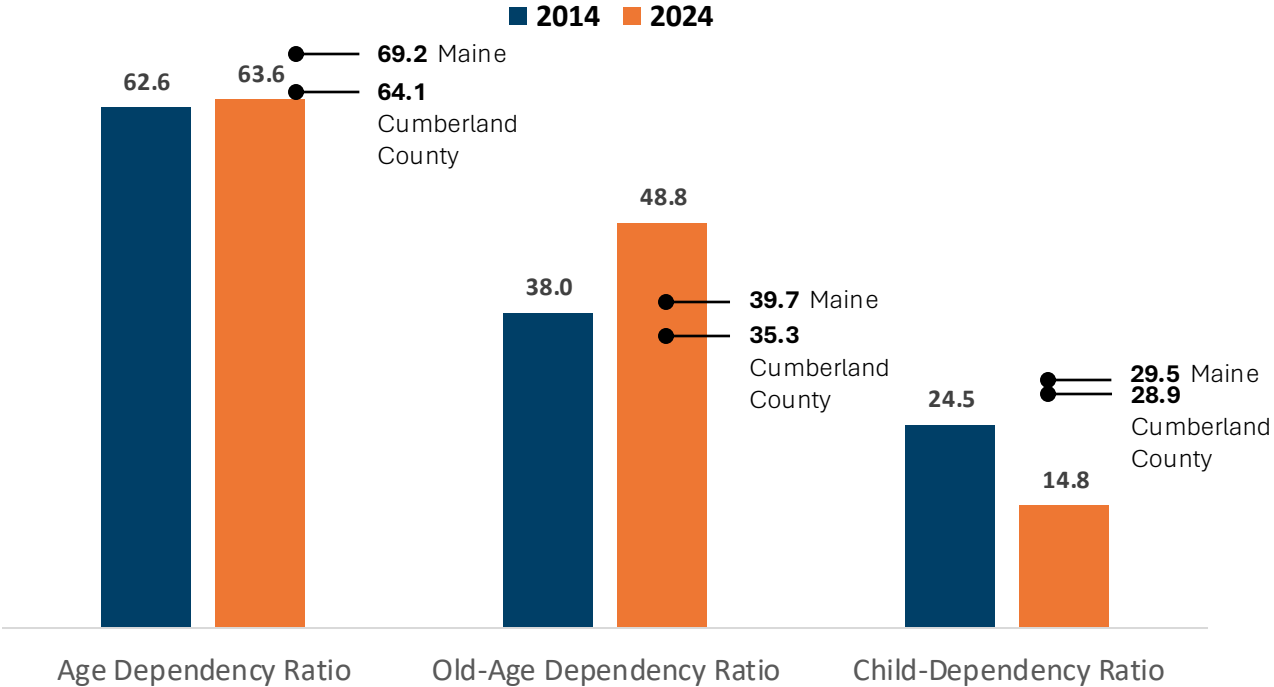
Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimate (2014, 2024)

# Age-Dependency Ratios

## Key Takeaways

- Age dependency ratios show the number of children and older adults per 100 working-age residents
- Harrison's overall ratio of 63.6 is lower than the state (69.2) and slightly lower than the county (64.1)
- Old-age dependency is notably higher in Harrison
- Child-dependency is notably lower in Harrison

### Harrison Age Dependency Ratios



Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimate (2013, 2023)

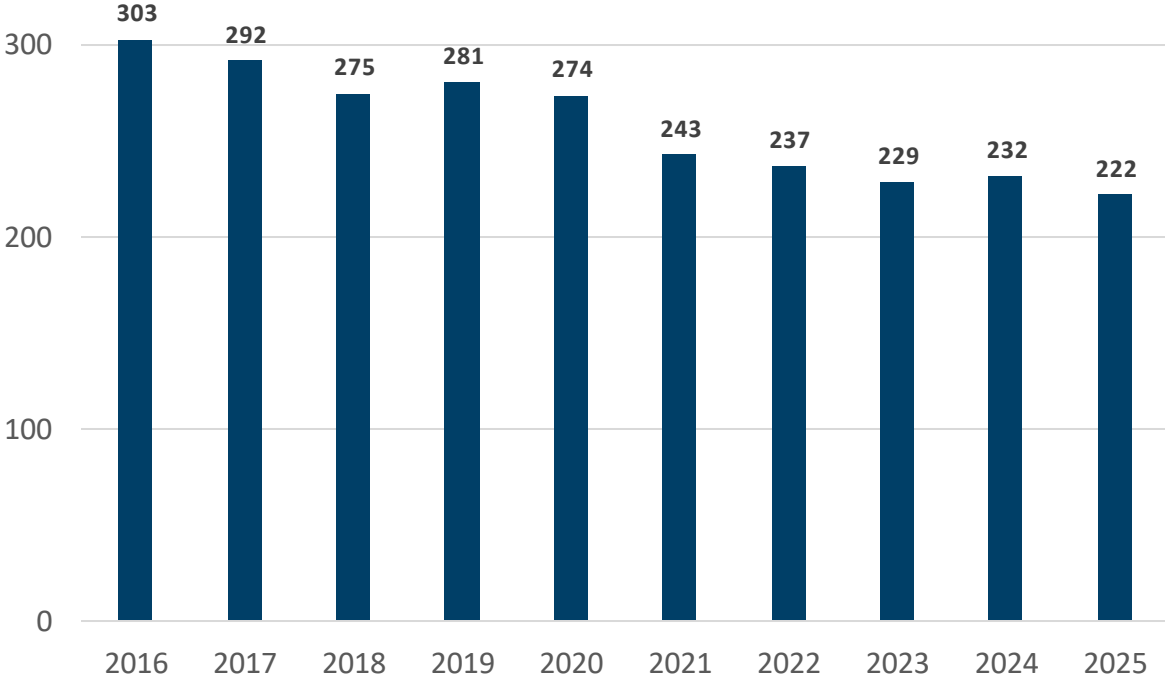
Age Dependency Ratio =  $(\text{pop. age 0-17} + \text{pop. age 65+}) / \text{pop age 18-64} * 100$   
Old-Age Dependency Ratio =  $\text{pop. age 65+} / \text{pop age 18-64} * 100$   
Child Dependency Ratio =  $\text{pop. age 0-17} / \text{pop age 18-64} * 100$

# School Enrollment

## Key Takeaways

- -81 Harrison students in the last 10 years (-249 in the rest of MSAD 17)
- 27% decrease in student population (8% decrease in the rest of MSAD 17)
- Avg. about -9 students per year

Harrison Publicly Funded Students

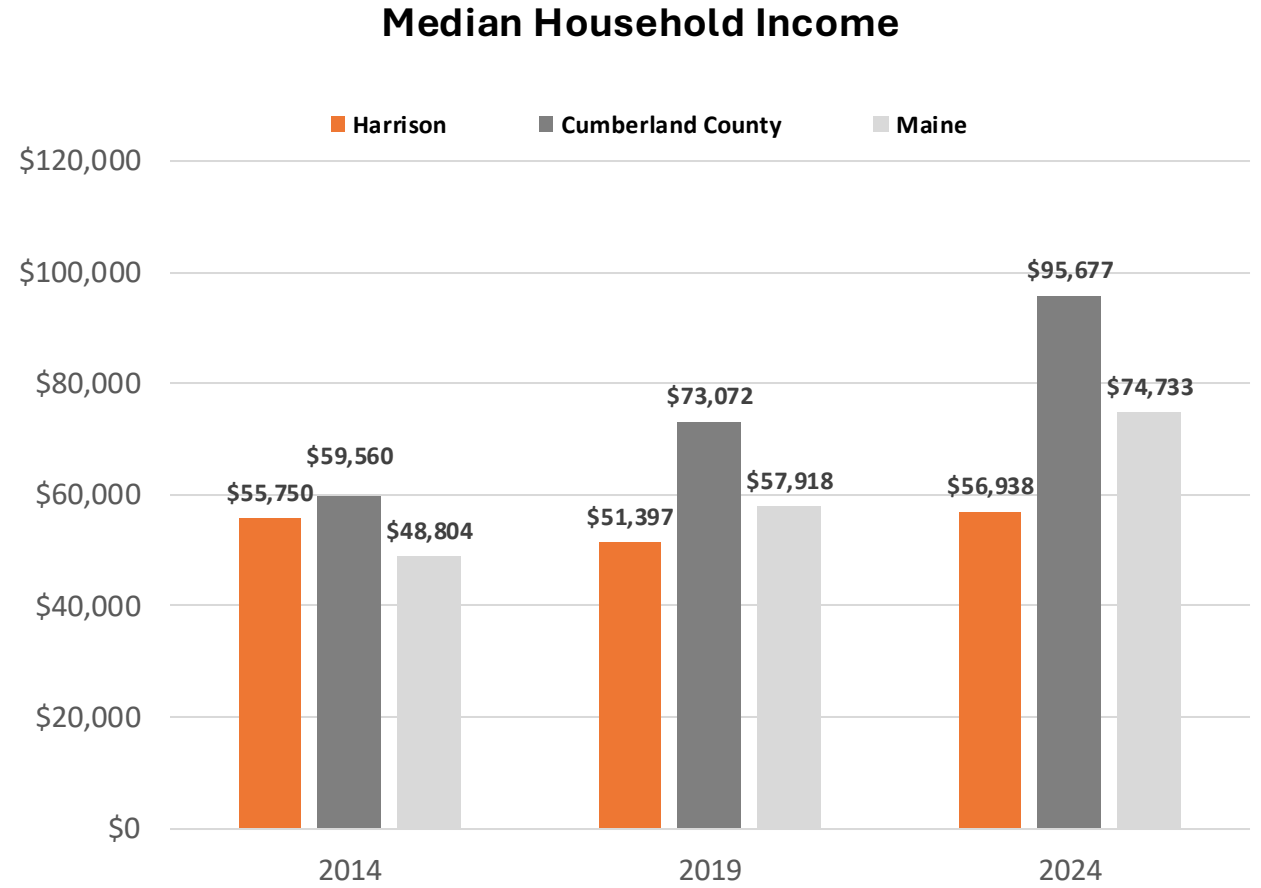


Source: Maine Department of Education

# Income

## Key Takeaways

- Median income increased by only 2% in the last decade
- Adjusting for inflation, median income has decreased by approx. 23%
- While similar to the state and county median incomes in 2014, Harrison's median income has failed to keep up with the broader growth in median income since
- Harrison's 2024 median income is 60% the county median income and 76% of the state median income

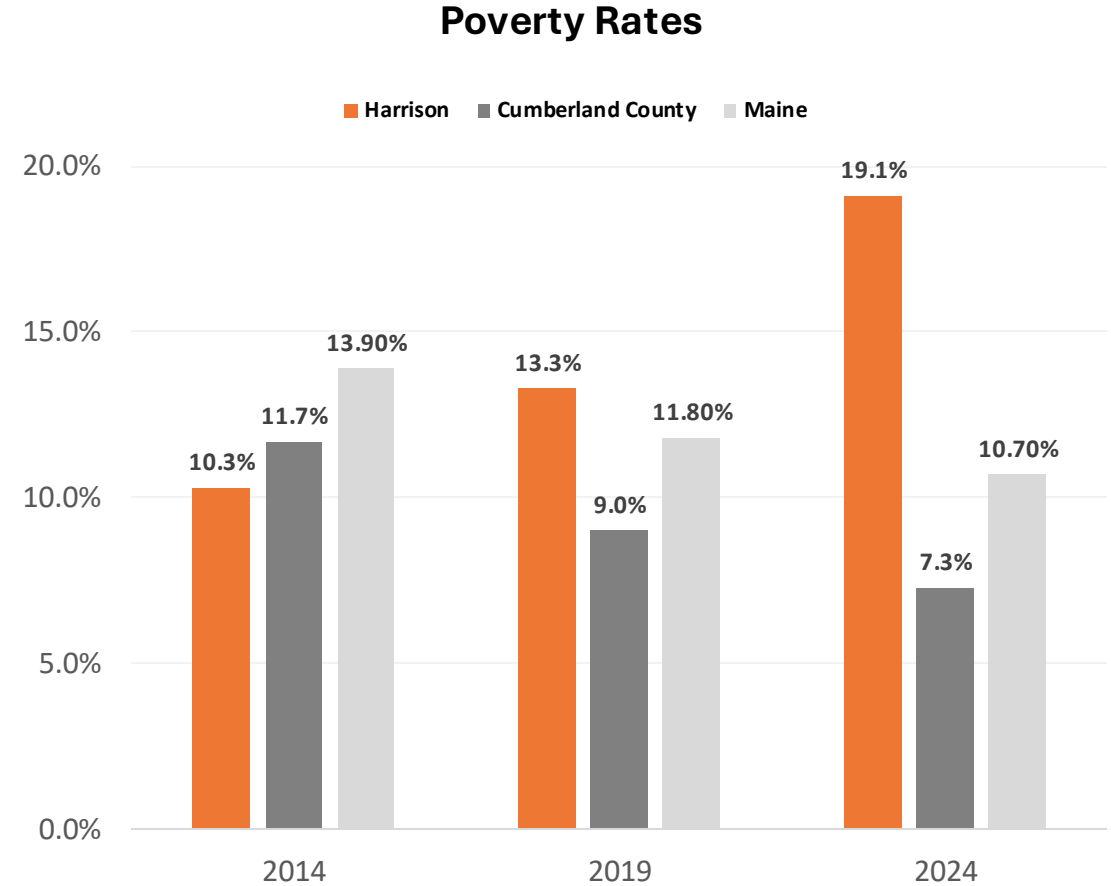


Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimate (2013, 2018, 2023)

# Poverty

## Key Takeaways

- Nearly 1 in 5 Harrison residents is living below the poverty level
- The share of Harrison residents living in poverty nearly doubled in the last decade, while state and county levels have continuously decreased
- Residents under 65 years old have significantly higher poverty rates (23.4%) than those over 65 (8.9%)



Source: American Community Survey 5-year Estimate (2014, 2019, 2024)

# Population & Demographics Summary Trends

Category	Description
Population	<b>Overall Decrease with Recent Growth</b> -55 residents. Population peaked in 2010 before steadily decreasing for a decade and then increasing at a similar rate since 2020.
Age	<b>Older</b> Median age has increased from 52.6 to 56. The number of older adults is increasing while the number of children is decreasing.
Diversity	<b>Little Change</b> Still a predominantly white population. Less racial/ethnic diversity than Cumberland County and Maine overall.
Education	<b>Slight Increase</b> The share of residents with at least a bachelor's degree has increased from 26% to 29%, but is still lower than the county and state.
Income	<b>Little Change</b> Median household income remained around \$55k over the past decade. Harrison has become the town with the lowest median income and highest poverty rate in Cumberland County.

# Other Resources

- [GPCOG Community Profiles](#)
- [GPCOG Housing Data Dashboard](#)
- [State of Maine Housing Data Portal](#)
- [Census Profiles](#)
- [Census Housing Unit Change Viewer](#)
- [Maine Housing Affordability Index](#)

**Questions?**