

CHAPTER 7

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

Significant demographic changes took place in the Lower Merrimack Valley between 1980 and 1990. These included, above all, the in-migration and natural increase of 22,800 Hispanic persons, representing 83% of the region's total population increase of 27,400 persons. Furthermore, the largest demographic shifts in the region took place in the city of Lawrence - where the city's Hispanic population grew by 18,900 persons and its non-Hispanic white population declined by 13,000 persons. This chapter explores these changes in detail, including the relationship between the growing numbers of Hispanics concentrated in Lawrence and high and growing rates of poverty in the city.

7.1 Population Growth in the Lower Merrimack Valley

Total Population

The total population of the Lower Merrimack Valley grew from 260,900 persons in 1980 to 288,300 persons in 1990, representing a net increase of 27,400 persons or 11%. The city of Lawrence experienced the largest net growth of all municipalities in the region, growing by 7,000 persons and representing 26% of the region's total population increase. Groveland, on the other hand, experienced the smallest net increase, growing by only 170 persons or 4%. *Table 7.1* provides details for each of the cities and towns in the region.

Table 7.1
Total Population and Population Share by City and Town
Lower Merrimack Valley Service Delivery Area: 1980 - 1990

	Population 1990	Population Share 1990*	Population 1980	Population Share 1980*	Population Change 1980 - 1990	Population % Change 1980 - 1990	Change in Population Share 1980 - 1990
Lawrence	70,207	24.4%	63,175	24.2%	7,032	11.1%	0.1
Haverhill	51,418	17.8%	46,865	18.0%	4,553	9.7%	-0.1
Methuen	39,990	13.9%	36,701	14.1%	3,289	9.0%	-0.2
Andover	29,151	10.1%	26,370	10.1%	2,781	10.5%	0.0
North Andover	22,792	7.9%	20,129	7.7%	2,663	13.2%	0.2
Newburyport	16,317	5.7%	15,900	6.1%	417	2.6%	-0.4
Amesbury	14,997	5.2%	13,971	5.4%	1,026	7.3%	-0.2
Salisbury	6,882	2.4%	5,973	2.3%	909	15.2%	0.1
Georgetown	6,384	2.2%	5,687	2.2%	697	12.3%	0.0
Borford	6,266	2.2%	5,374	2.1%	892	16.6%	0.1
Newbury	5,623	2.0%	4,529	1.7%	1,094	24.2%	0.2
Groveland	5,214	1.8%	5,040	1.9%	174	3.5%	-0.1
Merrimac	5,166	1.8%	4,451	1.7%	715	16.1%	0.1
Rowley	4,452	1.5%	3,867	1.5%	585	15.1%	0.1
West Newbury	3,421	1.2%	2,861	1.1%	560	19.6%	0.1
LMVSDA	288,280	100.0%	260,893		27,387		10.5%

Source: 1980 and 1990 Census of Population and Housing

* Population Share is defined as (municipal population/ LMVSDA population)

Hispanic Population

The Hispanic population showed the largest and most dramatic increase of all groups in the Lower Merrimack Valley growing from 12,400 persons in 1980 to 35,200 persons in 1990, an increase of 22,800 persons or 185%. Hispanic population growth in Lawrence accounted for almost half the total increase of Hispanic persons in the region. The Hispanic population in Lawrence grew from a total of 10,300 persons in 1980 to 29,200 persons in 1990.¹ In contrast to Lawrence, the towns of Georgetown, Groveland, and West Newbury experienced no increase or a net decline in their already negligibly small Hispanic populations. *Table 7.2* shows these changes. *Figure 7.1* also illustrates the percentage of Hispanic persons living in each of the cities and towns in the Lower Merrimack Valley in 1980 and 1990. Note that significant increases took place only in Haverhill and Methuen.

Although the Lower Merrimack Valley's Hispanic population increased significantly between 1980 and 1990, its regional distribution did not. In 1980, 83% of all Hispanic persons lived in Lawrence; 13% lived in Haverhill and Methuen; the final 4% were scattered throughout the remaining municipalities. Similarly, in 1990, 83% of all Hispanic persons continued to live in Lawrence, 14% in Haverhill and Methuen, and 3% in the remaining municipalities. The region's growing Hispanic population remains highly concentrated in Lawrence. These statistics are also shown in *Table 7.2*

¹ This population includes mainly Dominicans and Puerto Ricans.

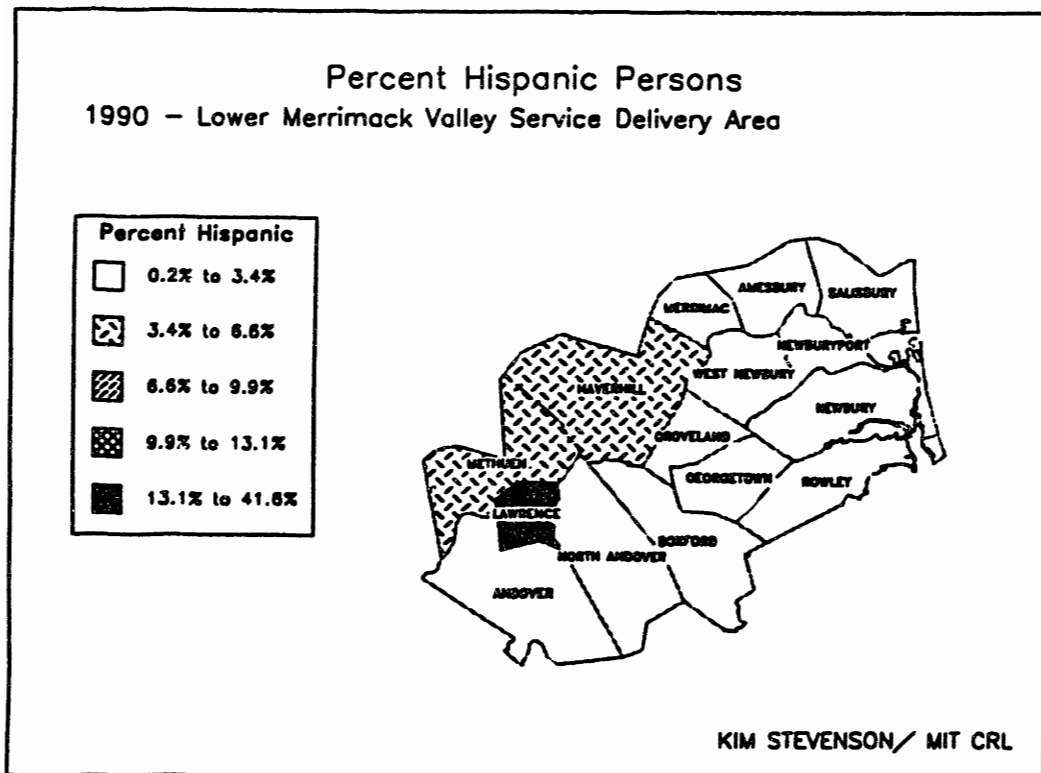
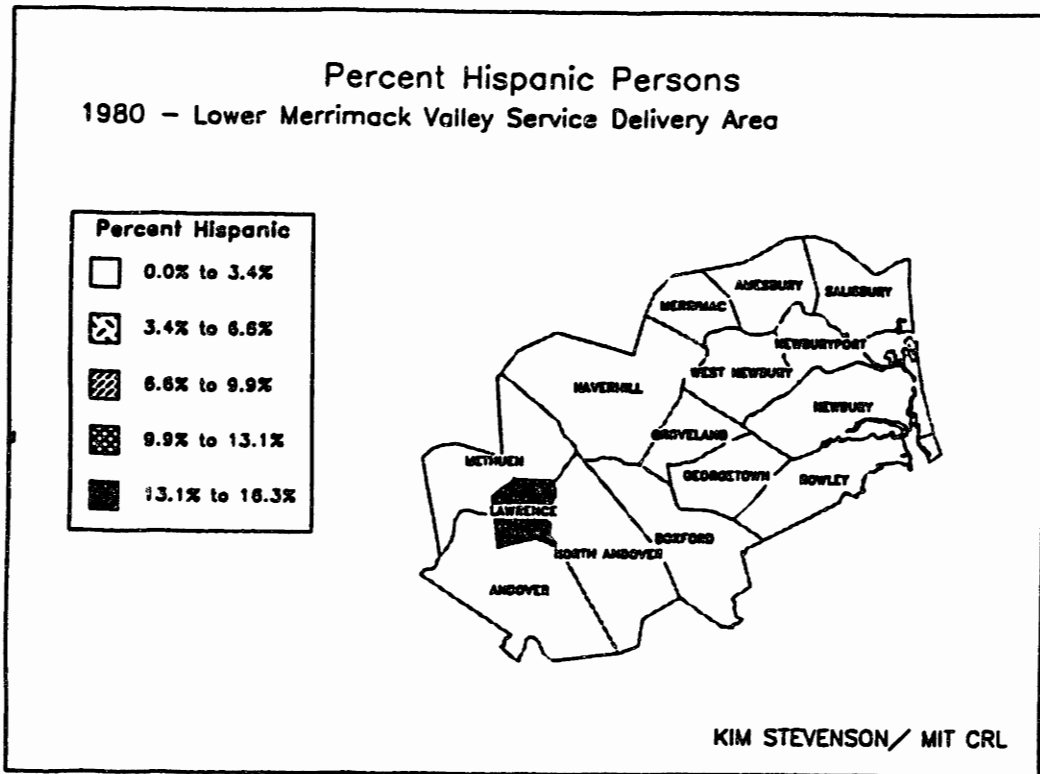
Table 7.2

Total Hispanic Population and Percent Hispanic by City and Town
Lower Merrimack Valley Service Delivery Area: 1980 - 1990

	Hispanic Population 1990	Percent Hispanic 1990	Hisp Pop Share 1990*	Hispanic Population 1980	Percent Hispanic 1980	Hisp Pop Share 1980*	Hisp Pop Change 1980 - 1990	Percent Chng In Hisp Pop 1980 - 1990	Change In Hisp Share 1980 - 1990
Lawrence	29,237	41.6%	83.1%	10,296	16.3%	83.3%	18,941	184.0%	-0.2
Haverhill	2,714	5.3%	7.7%	931	2.0%	7.5%	1,783	191.5%	0.2
Methuen	2,070	5.2%	5.9%	637	1.7%	5.2%	1,433	225.0%	0.7
Andover	433	1.5%	1.2%	154	0.6%	1.2%	279	181.2%	-0.0
North Andover	307	1.3%	0.9%	124	0.6%	1.0%	183	147.6%	-0.1
Newbury	43	0.8%	0.1%	9	0.2%	0.1%	34	377.8%	0.0
Salisbury	50	0.7%	0.1%	21	0.4%	0.2%	29	138.1%	-0.0
Amesbury	96	0.6%	0.3%	37	0.3%	0.3%	59	159.5%	-0.0
Newburyport	91	0.6%	0.3%	35	0.3%	0.4%	36	65.5%	-0.2
Borford	34	0.5%	0.1%	19	0.4%	0.2%	15	78.9%	-0.1
Merrimac	28	0.5%	0.1%	12	0.3%	0.1%	16	133.3%	-0.0
Groveland	27	0.5%	0.1%	19	0.4%	0.2%	8	42.1%	-0.1
West Newbury	17	0.3%	0.0%	17	0.6%	0.1%	0	0.0%	-0.1
Rowley	12	0.3%	0.0%	15	0.4%	0.1%	(3)	-20.0%	-0.1
Georgetown	13	0.2%	0.0%	13	0.2%	0.1%	0	0.0%	-0.1
LMVSDA	35,172	12.2%	100.0%	12,359	4.7%	100.0%	22,813	184.6%	

SOURCE: 1980 and 1990 Censuses of Population and Housing
* Hisp Pop Share is defined as (municipal Hispanic population/LMVSDA Hispanic population)

Figure 7.1



Non-Hispanic White Population

In contrast to the region's Hispanic population, the non-Hispanic white population remained stable between 1980 and 1990. The region experienced a net increase of only 849 non-Hispanic white persons. However, this figure disguises important intra-regional changes which took place. A dramatic decline of 13,000 non-Hispanic white persons in Lawrence almost offset increases in the surrounding cities and towns. Haverhill experienced the largest absolute increase of 2,300 non-Hispanic white persons. These changes are shown in *Table 7.3*.

The region's non-Hispanic white population is also much less concentrated than its Hispanic population. In 1990, 61% percent of all non-Hispanic whites lived in the four largest cities. Haverhill had the largest share of 19%, followed by Lawrence and Methuen with 16% and 15% respectively. It is also significant that changes in the regional share of non-Hispanic white persons was positive but less than 1% in all cities and towns except Lawrence. The regional share of non-Hispanic whites living in Lawrence dropped by 5 percentage points from 1980 to 1990. This reflects the large decline in the number of non-Hispanic whites living in the city. These changes are also shown *Table 7.3*.

Table 7.3
 Non-Hispanic White Population by City and Town
 Lower Merrimack Valley Service Delivery Area: 1980 - 1990

	Non-Hisp White Population 1990	Percent Non-Hisp White 1990	Non-Hisp White Share 1990*	Non-Hisp White Population 1980	Percent Non-Hisp White 1980	Non-Hisp White Share 1980*	Non-Hisp W Pop Change 1980 - 1990	Change in NHV Share 1980 - 1990
Haverhill	47,405	92.2%	19.3%	43,135	96.4%	18.4%	2,250	0.9
Lawrence	38,401	54.7%	15.6%	51,371	81.3%	21.0%	(12,970)	-5.4
Methuen	37,070	92.7%	15.1%	35,813	97.6%	14.6%	1,257	0.5
Andover	27,348	93.8%	11.1%	25,758	97.7%	10.5%	1,590	0.6
North Andover	21,830	95.9%	8.9%	19,776	98.2%	8.1%	2,074	0.8
Newburyport	16,083	98.6%	6.5%	15,691	98.7%	6.4%	392	0.1
Amesbury	14,700	98.0%	6.0%	13,832	99.0%	5.7%	868	0.3
Salisbury	6,789	98.6%	2.8%	5,923	99.2%	2.4%	866	0.3
Georgetown	6,333	99.2%	2.6%	5,637	99.1%	2.3%	696	0.3
Boxford	6,115	97.6%	2.5%	5,312	98.8%	2.2%	803	0.3
Newbury	5,549	98.7%	2.3%	4,497	99.3%	1.8%	1,052	0.4
Groveland	5,136	98.9%	2.1%	5,004	99.3%	2.0%	132	0.1
Merrimac	5,097	98.7%	2.1%	4,402	98.9%	1.8%	695	0.3
Rowley	4,395	98.7%	1.8%	3,825	98.9%	1.6%	570	0.2
West Newbury	3,370	98.5%	1.4%	2,816	98.4%	1.2%	554	0.2
LMVSDA	245,661	85.2%		244,812	93.8%		849	

SOURCE: 1980 and 1990 Census of Population and Housing
 * Non-Hisp White Share is defined as (municipal NHV population/LMVSDA NHV population)

Other Groups

Other groups represented a small but positive increase in the region between 1980 and 1990. These groups included non-Hispanic Blacks; non-Hispanic American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts; and non-Hispanic Asians and Pacific Islanders. Persons who identified themselves as being of "other" races declined slightly. Because these groups represent a very small portion of the region's total population, I do not focus on them in my analysis.

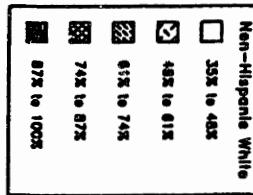
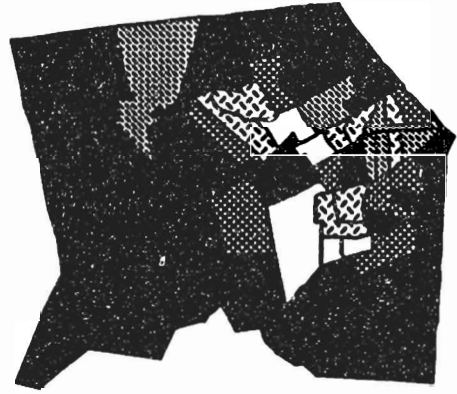
7.2 Demographic Changes Within Lawrence

The demographic statistics I have just presented show that the city of Lawrence is a rapidly growing ethnic enclave within the Lower Merrimack Valley. If we examine these changes at the block group level in Lawrence, we can see exactly how they have taken place. The thematic maps illustrated in *Figure 7.2* show that areas, predominantly occupied by non-Hispanic whites in 1980, are now home to high concentrations of Hispanic persons.

This figure shows that in 1980 the Hispanic population was clustered in north Lawrence with five block groups having a concentration of Hispanics greater than 48.8%. By 1990, the Hispanic population had grown southward and outward from its original clusters in North Lawrence. Twenty eight block groups had a concentration of Hispanics greater than 48.8% by 1990. However, the Hispanic population still remained largely concentrated in North Lawrence.

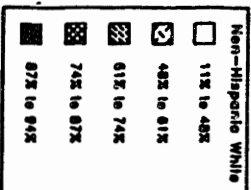
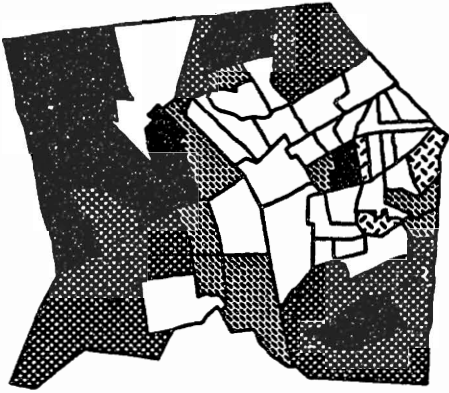
Figure 7.2

Percent Non-Hispanic White Persons
1980 - by Block Group - Lawrence, MA



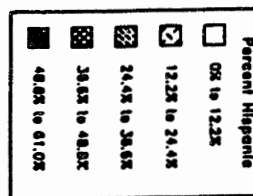
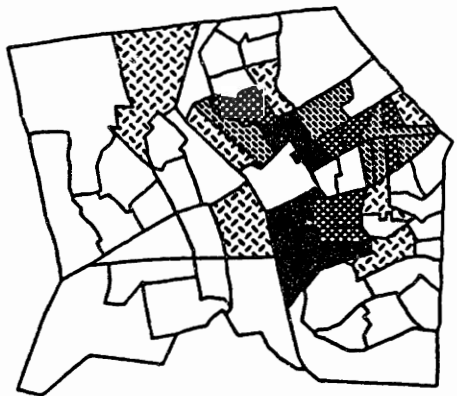
KIM STEVENSON / MIT CRL

Percent Non-Hispanic White Persons
1990 - by Block Group - Lawrence, MA



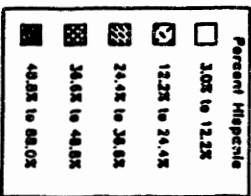
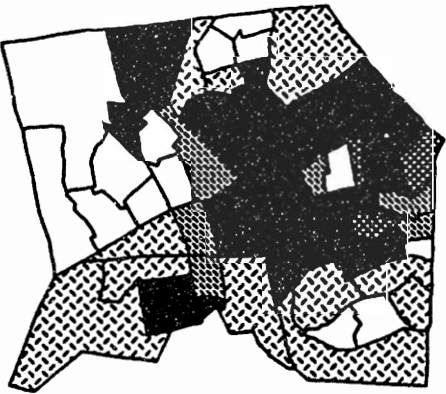
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Percent Hispanic Persons
1980 - by Block Group - Lawrence, MA



KIM STEVENSON / MIT CRL

Percent Hispanic Persons
1990 - by Block Group - Lawrence, MA



KIM STEVENSON / MIT CRL

The non-Hispanic white population, on the other hand, showed almost opposite spatial patterns between 1980 and 1990. Note that the top two 1980 maps in *Figure.7.2* are practically mirror images of each other as are the two bottom 1990 maps. This observation illustrates patterns of clear spatial segregation between Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites living in Lawrence in both 1980 and 1990. As the Hispanic population moved in and concentrated itself in the northern and central parts of the city, the remaining non-Hispanic white population moved out of the city or remained in a few clusters located in the extreme northern and southern sections of Lawrence.

7.3 Demographic Changes and Poverty

This chapter has illustrated several important demographic changes that have taken place in the Lower Merrimack Valley between 1980 and 1990. They include a dramatic increase in the number of Hispanic persons, particularly in the city of Lawrence. This large increase has taken place simultaneously with a massive outmigration of non-Hispanic whites from the city. Furthermore, Hispanics living in the Lower Merrimack Valley remain highly concentrated in Lawrence. A detailed spatial analysis of block groups within this city also illustrated clear patterns of spatial segregation between Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites in both 1980 and 1990.

Given the dramatic demographic shifts and the socioeconomic changes described in the previous two chapters, including the loss of 7,000 jobs in Lawrence and high and rapidly growing poverty rates, an important question remains unsatisfactorily explained either by Wilson's Model or the urban poverty literature:

In the case of Lawrence, why did immigrants continue to move into a city where economic conditions were bad and continue to decline? Why didn't they move, instead, to the surrounding municipalities where socioeconomic conditions were significantly better and improved between 1980 and 1990?

As I alluded to in the introductory chapter of this thesis, I believe we must begin to pay more attention to the importance of politically defined places and socially defined spaces.² *Politically defined places* are cities and towns that have their own local governments, tax codes, public spending policies, zoning regulations, etc and will be discussed in the next chapter. *Socially defined spaces* include geographic areas that are characterized by high concentrations of certain racial, ethnic, or religious groups, or areas where custom and tradition binds people together in significant ways. One such space would include the growing Dominican and Puerto Rican communities in Lawrence.

Because many of the Dominican and Puerto Rican immigrants who come to Lawrence have very little money and do not speak English, kin-and-friend networks and many other important support structures help these new arrivals settle in the city. As bad as conditions may be in Lawrence, friends, family, and social services with Spanish speaking staff are able to provide survival support that does not exist in the other municipalities. Furthermore, friends, family, and a familiar culture can help ease the difficult transition of moving to a foreign place. Discrimination between Hispanics and non-Hispanic whites probably also plays a role in keeping the two groups apart. As a result, Dominican and Puerto Rican immigrants, many of whom are poor and lack the

²In this thesis I do not address the reasons why large numbers of Dominicans and Puerto Ricans come to the United States or the region in the first place. These could include many factors including severe economic conditions in the sending countries; hope of a better life in the United States; and the lure of friends and family in the United States, among other factors. Who comes; from what parts of their respective countries do they come from; and why are all important question that would help to answer the question I have posed. However, they are beyond the scope of this thesis and provide important questions for further research.

language and skills to survive or to find employment outside of Lawrence when they first arrive, add to the growing number of poor living in city.

However, because socioeconomic conditions are so bad in Lawrence, it may also be the case that many Dominicans and Puerto Ricans who immigrate to the area prefer not to move to Lawrence in the first place. Others may want to leave eventually or they may, instead, want to try and rebuild and invest within the city themselves. Why is it that residents of Lawrence have so much difficulty achieving these goals? The next chapter will address these questions from the perspective of the regional housing market and local municipal policies.

CHAPTER 8

DYNAMICS IN THE REGIONAL HOUSING MARKET

This chapter will suggest how dynamics in the regional housing market have steered the poor, many of whom are immigrants, into the city of Lawrence. It will also explain how these same dynamics have made it difficult for the poor to eventually move out or to build up equity themselves and invest within the city. However, before moving on to examine the data that explains these statements, it is necessary to understand the important assumptions I am making about the regional housing market.

8.1 The Influence of Zoning and Other Local Policies

First, local zoning regulations and growth policies play an important role in allowing or discouraging housing development; the type of housing that gets built (e.g. low density, high density, mixed-income, low-income, etc.); and price. These regulations have a direct impact on who can live in a certain city or town. A community like Boxford, for example, with low density zoning, 1990 median housing values of \$320,700, and very little rental housing excludes most potential residents simply because housing prices in the town are prohibitive. Lawrence, on the other hand, has mainly high density, rental housing that is accessible to many more people. Local taxes can also have an impact on the cost of housing in a city or town, again serving to include or exclude on the basis of cost. Because of these regulatory tools and others, cities and towns (or politically defined places) can have a powerful influence on who lives within their borders. The poor will tend to live in cities like Lawrence while the higher-income individuals will tend to live

in the wealthier suburban communities.

It was beyond the scope of this thesis to examine zoning regulations, growth policies, and tax structures in each of the municipalities within the Lower Merrimack Valley and to correlate these with the cost and availability of both renter and owner occupied housing. However, the clear patterns of residential segregation that exist in the region, specifically the high concentration of Hispanics in Lawrence, and the analysis that follows, suggest that there are important intra-regional differences between the cities and towns that serve to exclude the poor and keep poverty concentrated in Lawrence.

8.2 Rental Housing

First, because many Lawrence residents are poor, they do not have the income or savings to purchase housing, therefore they must rent. As *Figure 8.1* illustrates, close to 70% of all households in Lawrence lived in rented units in both 1980 and 1990. This number stands in sharp comparison to Boxford and West Newbury, for example, which had 1990 rental rates of 4.5% and 8.3% respectively. Rental statistics for the region are also presented in *Table 8.1*. Because a high proportion of the region's rental units exist in Lawrence, in addition to important networks for helping welfare dependent households and immigrants find housing (Grollman, 1987), most poor immigrants have no choice but to rent housing and live in Lawrence.¹

¹ It is important to note here that when I refer to immigrants, I am specifically referring to Hispanic or Spanish speaking immigrants. Lawrence also has a small community of Asian immigrants, however, most Asian immigrants who come to the area move to Lowell where they have their own support structures and kin-and-friend networks.

Figure 8.1

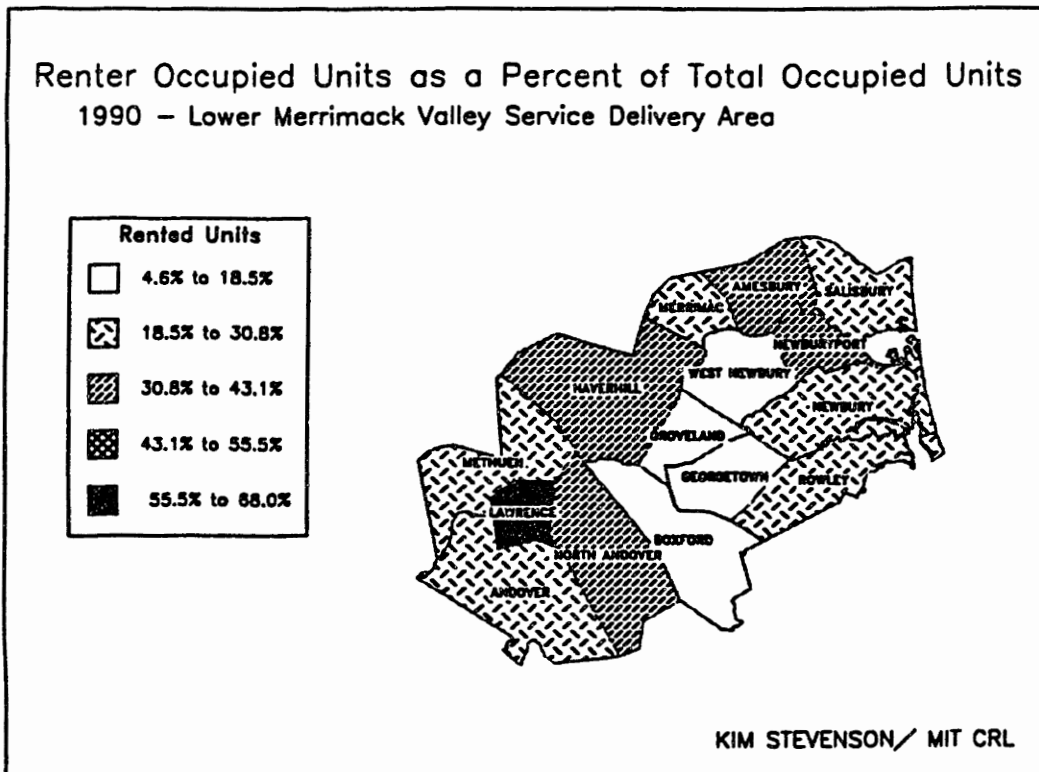
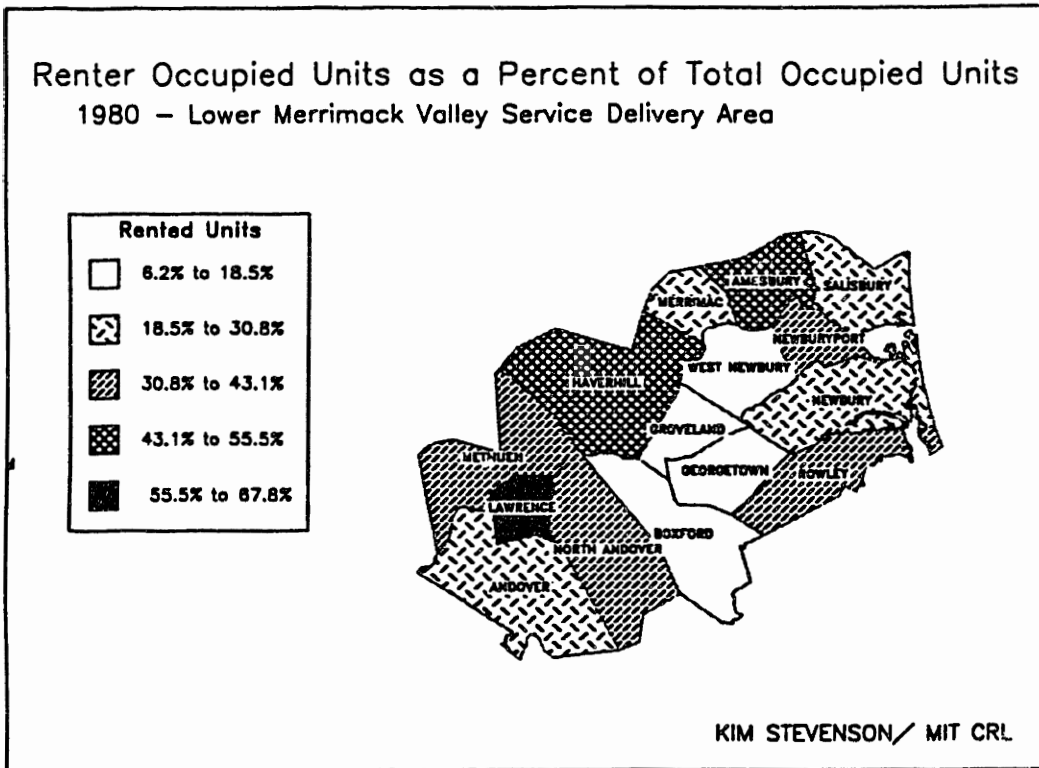


Table 8.1

Renter Occupied Units
Lower Merrimack Valley Service Delivery Area: 1980 - 1990

	Occupied	Renter	% Renter	Occupied	Renter	% Renter	Pctg Pt Chng % Renter Occ Units 1980-1990
	Units 1990	Occ Units 1990	Occ Units 1990	Units 1980	Occ Units 1980	Occ Units 1980	
Haverhill	19,575	8,097	41.4%	17,261	8,522	49.4%	-8.0
North Andover	7,891	2,499	31.7%	6,756	2,667	39.5%	-7.8
Rowley	1,507	378	25.1%	1,318	411	31.2%	-6.1
Newburyport	6,754	2,555	37.8%	5,892	2,464	41.8%	-4.0
Amesbury	5,522	2,342	42.4%	5,026	2,322	46.2%	-3.8
Merrimac	1,903	425	22.3%	1,525	369	24.2%	-1.9
Boxford	2,016	90	4.5%	1,539	95	6.2%	-1.7
Methuen	14,647	4,511	30.8%	12,776	4,094	32.0%	-1.2
Georgetown	2,178	377	17.3%	1,859	340	18.3%	-1.0
Salisbury	2,522	673	26.7%	2,097	563	26.8%	-0.2
Newbury	2,060	399	19.4%	1,588	310	19.5%	-0.2
Groveland	1,770	253	14.3%	1,537	222	14.4%	-0.1
Lawrence	24,270	16,494	68.0%	23,798	16,130	67.8%	0.2
Andover	10,415	2,648	25.4%	8,688	2,169	25.0%	0.5
West Newbury	1,126	94	8.3%	864	67	7.8%	0.6
LMVSDA	104,156	41,835	40.2%	92,524	40,745	44.0%	-3.9

Source: 1980 and 1990 Census of Population and Housing

8.3 Home Ownership

Furthermore, increases in the cost of purchasing housing (adjusted for inflation) throughout the region increased substantially between 1980 and 1990. In fact, the values of homes increased by more than 80% in all of the region's fifteen municipalities. These increases are shown in *Table 8.2* and are illustrated in *Figure 8.2*. Because per-capita incomes in Lawrence increased by only 5% between 1980 and 1990, most Lawrence residents were limited in their ability to purchase housing either within or outside the city. Limited housing options outside of Lawrence also made it difficult to move out of the city during this time period. Note from the last column in *Table 8.1* that the share of rental units declined in all cities and towns in the region except Lawrence, Andover, and West Newbury. Finally, because rents in Lawrence increased at a significantly higher rate than did rents in the surrounding municipalities, any gains in income that might have been saved to purchase a home within or outside the city, were lost to housing cost increases. These statistics are shown in *Table 8.3*.

Table 8.2

Value of Owner Occupied Units
Lower Merrimack Valley Service Delivery Area: 1980 - 1990

	Median Value	Median Value	Median Value	Change	% Change
	1990	1990 (Adj)*	1980	1980-1990*	1980-1990*
Newburyport	\$170,600	\$101,451	\$47,900	\$53,551	111.8%
Newbury	\$197,500	\$117,448	\$55,530	\$61,948	111.6%
Amesbury	\$150,900	\$89,736	\$42,500	\$47,236	111.1%
Merrimac	\$153,900	\$91,520	\$43,700	\$47,820	109.4%
West Newbury	\$288,500	\$135,883	\$65,700	\$70,183	106.8%
Georgetown	\$187,400	\$111,442	\$55,100	\$56,342	102.3%
Haverhill	\$140,100	\$83,314	\$41,200	\$42,114	102.2%
Salisbury	\$151,300	\$89,974	\$45,100	\$44,874	99.5%
Rowley	\$184,500	\$109,717	\$55,200	\$54,517	98.8%
Groveland	\$166,100	\$98,775	\$49,900	\$48,875	97.9%
North Andover	\$231,300	\$137,548	\$71,900	\$65,648	91.3%
Andover	\$254,800	\$151,523	\$80,600	\$70,923	88.0%
Lawrence	\$129,600	\$77,070	\$41,800	\$35,270	84.4%
Boxford	\$320,700	\$190,711	\$105,100	\$85,611	81.5%
Methuen	\$151,300	\$89,974	\$50,000	\$39,974	79.9%

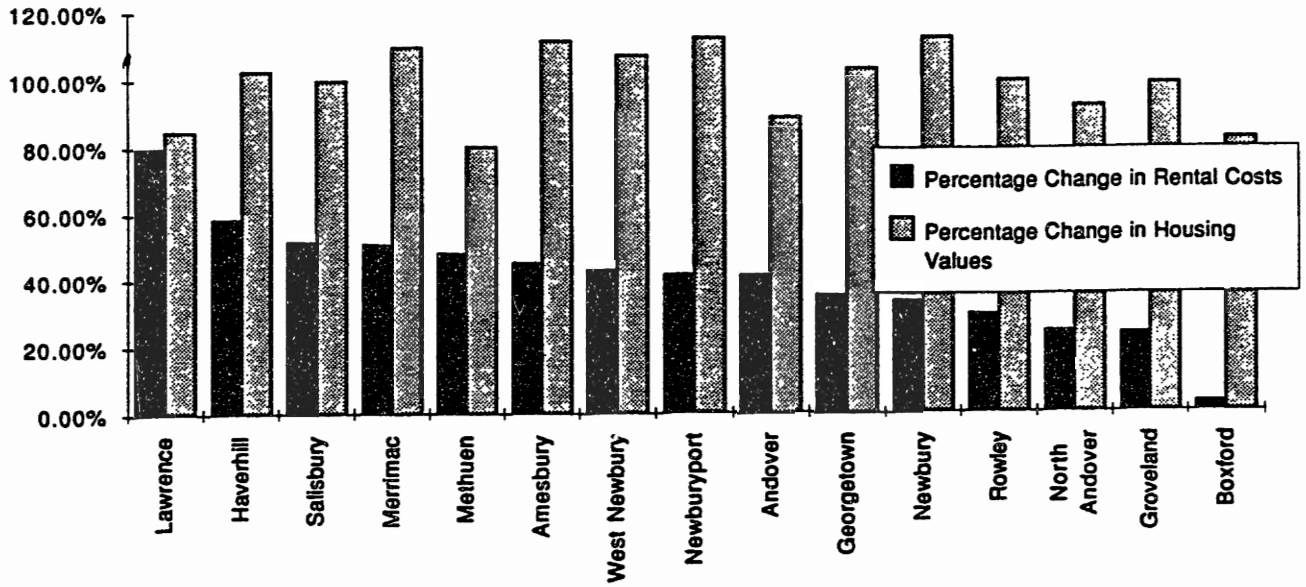
Source: 1980 and 1990 Census of Population and Housing
U.S. Department of Labor - Bureau of Labor Statistics

* 1990 values were adjusted for inflation using the Boston
Area Consumer Price Index of all Urban Consumers (CPI-U),
1982 - 1984 = 100

Figure 8.2

Percentage Changes in Rental Costs and Housing Values 1980 - 1990 Lower Merrimack Valley Service Delivery Area

(Adjusted to 1980 \$'s)



Source: 1980 and 1990 Census of Population and Housing

Table 8.3
Cost of Renter Occupied Units
Lower Merrimack Valley Service Delivery Area and Lowell, MA: 1980 - 1990

	Median Rent	Median Rent	Median Rent	Change	% Change
	1990	1990 (Adj)*	1980	1980-1990*	1980-1990*
Lawrence	\$470	\$279	\$155	\$124	80.0%
Haverhill	\$504	\$300	\$189	\$111	58.7%
Salisbury	\$518	\$308	\$203	\$105	51.7%
Merrimac	\$492	\$293	\$194	\$99	51.0%
Methuen	\$517	\$307	\$207	\$100	48.3%
Amesbury	\$543	\$323	\$222	\$101	45.5%
West Newbury	\$552	\$328	\$229	\$99	43.2%
Newburyport	\$549	\$326	\$230	\$96	41.7%
Andover	\$594	\$353	\$250	\$103	41.2%
Georgetown	\$395	\$235	\$174	\$61	35.1%
Newbury	\$498	\$296	\$222	\$74	33.3%
Rowley	\$644	\$383	\$296	\$87	29.4%
North Andover	\$647	\$385	\$310	\$75	24.2%
Groveland	\$519	\$309	\$250	\$59	23.6%
Boxford	\$696	\$414	\$402	\$12	3.0%

Source: 1980 and 1990 Census of Population and Housing
 U.S. Department of Labor - Bureau of Labor Statistics

* 1990 values were adjusted for inflation using the Boston
 Area Consumer Price Index of all Urban Consumers (CPI-U),
 1982 - 1984 = 100

For these reasons, based on housing constraints and because of the social networks described in the previous chapter, immigrants to the region, many of whom are poor, often have little choice but to live in Lawrence. Those higher income individuals who can leave, do so - - as the massive out-migration of non-Hispanic whites from the city suggests. These dynamics, and the large loss of industry in the city, significantly reduce its property tax base. For example, both residential and commercial properties are not maintained as they should be or they have been left abandoned. Consequently, education and other important public services tied to the city's tax base cannot be provided adequately. Growing disinvestment within the city continues and a cycle of poverty gets perpetuated. Wealthier communities, on the other hand, are able to exclude the poor, benefit from growing jobs, and maintain their positions of strength as the statistics presented in this thesis have suggested.