

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

This section provides an overview and assessment of existing conditions in the Town of Cambria. It builds and expands upon the existing 1997 Plan. The discussion addresses environmental resources, demographics, transportation, utilities, community/governmental facilities, land use and zoning.

Existing Land Use Patterns – Data

The Town of Cambria is a rural community located near the center of the County. The Niagara County Communities Comprehensive Plan identifies Cambria as one of “Central Communities” with the Town of Pendleton and the Town and City of Lockport. The Town’s land uses are primarily agricultural and rural residential, along with areas of woodlots and undeveloped lands, as is shown on Map 1: Land Use and Agriculture Districts.

Land Use – Agriculture

Cambria is known for its excellent agricultural lands, and a significant proportion of the Town is dedicated to agricultural use. The Town has a varied agricultural base, with crop fields, vineyards, nurseries, dairy, cattle and horse farms, as well as vacant agricultural lands, including wooded lots and fallow fields. In 1965, over 90 percent of the land in the Town supported agriculture or open space. While the percentage has decreased, agriculture uses remain the most common land use type in the Town.

The Town of Cambria is within District #6, an Agricultural District established under the New York State Agriculture and Markets Law (see Map 1). There are parcels that are exempted from the Agricultural District. These areas include Niagara County Community College, Sanborn, Pekin, and a few areas of more concentrated residential development. Some of the area south of Upper Mountain Road along the eastern border of the Town designated as an area for business development is also exempted from the Agricultural District, as is Town Hall and the Town Park. Several parcels that are exempted from District #6 remain in agricultural use.

Land Use – Residential

The second most common land use in the Town of Cambria is residential. Most houses are located on large lots, although there has been some subdivision of parcels into smaller home lots. Higher density residential concentrations are located in traditional hamlet areas such as Sanborn, Pekin, North Ridge and Cambria Center, as well as in new subdivisions, such as Willow Creek. Frequently, larger residential parcels include land that is farmed. The typical development pattern is road frontage lots along the major roadways, although there are a few subdivisions.

Land Use – Commercial & Industrial & Utilities

There are limited amounts of commercial and industrial property in the Town of Cambria. Commercial uses (retail and offices) tend to be scattered across Town. There is a small plaza across from Niagara County Community College on Saunders Settlement Road, and other small businesses primarily on major roadways. The Town's industrial area straddles the CSX Railroad between Lockport Junction Road and Comstock Road. A site on Lockport Road has been designated as "Shovel Ready" under the New York State Shovel Ready program, for eventual development with light industrial uses, although the parcel is currently agricultural in use. Several uses categorized as "Public Services" consist of utilities uses, such as an electrical substation and the Tennessee Gas pipeline.

Land Use – Community Service, Recreational & Entertainment

The largest land use categorized as "Community Service" is Niagara County Community College on Saunders Settlement Road. Other community services in Cambria include the BOCES facilities, Town Hall, the Fire Departments and a number of churches. The major recreational facility in the Town is the Town Park on Upper Mountain Road. There is also a private campground in the Town.

Existing Land Use Patterns – Observations

The Town of Cambria retains its rural character, and the predominant land use in the Town is agricultural. Most farms in the Town are cultivating field crops, fruit and vegetables, although there is a mix of other types of agriculture, including dairy, horse and cattle farms. North of the escarpment, land use is primarily agricultural and large lot residential. There are some areas of slightly denser development patterns including a few commercial uses along major roadways. Generally, commercial uses north of the escarpment are rural in character, such as home occupations, small snack bars and wineries.

Agriculture remains the most common land use south of the escarpment, but there are also areas of other types of development, including denser residential development, particularly south of Saunders Settlement Road (Route 31), where there are sewers to support smaller lots. The area of Sanborn has the greatest diversity, with a mix of residential types, commercial development and institutional uses, such as Niagara County Community College (NCCC) and BOCES. Fairview Village

(the former Air Force Base) is also an area of denser development, and the Town has invested in brownfield cleanup operations at this location. There is a greater variety of commercial uses, including a small plaza across from NCCC, and a new medical office building west of Fairview Village, both on Saunders Settlement Road. Economic development (commercial and industrial development) is projected to be primarily located in the eastern portion of Town, adjacent to the Town of Lockport, and along Lockport Road at the southern corner of the Town.

Land Use Regulations (Zoning) - Data

The primary means of regulating land use in Cambria is zoning. Under State Town Law, municipalities are granted the power of zoning “for the purpose of promoting the health, safety, morals or general welfare of the community.” The Town’s zoning regulates the type of uses that are allowed and establishes standards, such as building heights, yard sizes and density. They are intended to prevent land use conflicts and to guide how development occurs in the Town. The Town of Cambria Zoning Code establishes ten zoning districts (See Map 2: Existing Zoning).

Zoning Districts, Town of Cambria		Purpose
Agriculture and Residence District	AR	Agricultural and non-farm or suburban residential uses
Residence District	R-1	Residential neighborhoods, served by public utilities
Light Retail Business District	B-1	Businesses involving light retail trade
General Business District	B-2	General retail trade and business uses, including automotive uses
Industrial District	I-1	Heavy commercial and light industrial
Escarpment District	ED	To provide stronger controls for escarpment properties
Medium Density Residential District	MD	Single-family and multi-family dwellings, where public sewers are available
Planned Development District	P-D	Diverse uses guided by a specific development plan
Recreational-Campground	R-C	Recreational and campground purposes
Stormwater Management (overlay)		Adds controls for stormwater management, erosion and sediment control townwide

The majority of the land area in the Town is zoned A-R. Allowed uses include agriculture, one- and two-family homes, parks, and various accessory uses, such as garages, swimming pools and barns. A relatively large number of uses are allowed in the A-R district with a special use permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals, subject to additional criteria set forth in the zoning. These special permit uses include agricultural, residential and commercial uses, such as animal hospitals, bed and

breakfasts, day care facilities, motels, medical clinics and stables. A separate section of the code sets forth more guidance on the development of these special exception uses. The code also lists prohibited uses. In the A-R zone, prohibited uses are any use not listed, mining, and signs, with some exceptions (real estate and political signs; signs for the sale of farm products).

The area surrounding Niagara County Community College is zoned R-1. This district allows one- and two-family dwellings and typical accessory uses, such as garages and pools, as well as up to two temporary boarders. Some, but not all, agricultural uses are allowed. Prohibited uses include certain agricultural uses (e.g. animal husbandry, commercial greenhouses, barns), storage of commercial vehicles, and major excavations, and, as in the case of the A-R district, signs. One small area off Sherk Road is zoned Medium Density residential (MD). This area is where the Cedar Knoll apartments are located. In addition to the uses allowed in the R-1 district, the MD district also allows multi-family buildings, which is defined as detached buildings accommodating three to four families.

The Town of Cambria business districts include B-1, which has a more restrictive list of allowed businesses; B-2 and the Recreational-Campground District (R-C). B-1 allowed uses tend to be retail in nature, and include antique stores; beauty and barber shops; hardware and food stores, among others. The district also permits offices, motels, movie theaters and medical buildings. Animal hospitals, veterinarians, kennels, and light assembly are permitted as special use permit, subject to additional criteria. There is a long list of prohibited uses, which tend to be more intensive commercial uses, such as welding, junk yards, motor vehicle repair and mining. The B-2 district is less restrictive, particular in regard to automotive uses. Light industrial and motor vehicle repairs are allowed with a special use permit. Most of the lands zoned for business uses in Cambria are considered B-2 district. The Recreation-Campground District only allows recreational and campground uses. No specific zoning regulations apply, because the Town has a separate ordinance to regulate Recreation Vehicle Parks and Camping Grounds.

The town's industrial district is located west of Lockport Junction Road, and extends along the rail corridor. Most of the lands within the area zoned for industrial use are vacant or currently being farmed. The Industrial Zoning district is the most permissive, allowing non-residential uses not permitted in other districts, such as mining, topsoil stripping, light assembly and outdoor storage of commercial vehicles. Potentially dangerous manufacturing is prohibited (e.g. explosives, fireworks, poisonous gases), as are dumps, sludge and storage of scrap metal.

The Escarpment District is a protective district intended to protect environmentally sensitive areas along the Niagara Escarpment. Homes are allowed, with the requirement that they be set back a minimum of 80 feet from the edges of the escarpment (areas with steep slopes).

The Town of Cambria has a Planned Development (P-D) district that permits the establishment of mixed use areas, developed according to an approved development plan. Sites must be a minimum of five acres in size. The district is applied as a rezoning, subject to a Public Hearing and approval of the site plan.

The Town's zoning ordinance also includes sections enforcing erosion and sediment control, signage, parking, swimming pools and other activities.

Land Use Regulations (Zoning) - Observations

The zoning patterns of the Town generally follow the existing land uses, with the Agriculture and Residence zoning district covering the majority of the Town. North of the Niagara Escarpment, there are some scattered parcels zoned for Business 2 and parcels zoned to allow Recreational Vehicle Parks and Camp Grounds. Generally, zoning north of the escarpment appropriately supports rural uses.

The area surrounding NCCC is zoned Residential R-1 to allow denser residential development in an area of Town with sewers. This designation will accommodate future growth in the NCCC/Sanborn area. The college itself is zoned Agriculture and Residence.

Segments of Saunders Settlement Road are zoned in support of business development: at the southeast corner of Townline Road (the plaza); the four corners at Baer Road (a landscaping business, but otherwise not commercial); between Shawnee and Cambria Roads (commercial uses include the medical office building and BOCES); and the eastern stretch of the road within Cambria, which is currently all agricultural and residential, with the exception of a parcel at the southwest corner of Campbell Boulevard. The southeastern corner of the Town, along Lockport Road, is designated for economic development, zoned for Business (B-2) and Planned Development (PD) in support of future business development at the Shovel-Ready Cambria Technology Park site, which is anticipated to be developed with light industrial and business uses. The Town also includes a large area zoned Industrial along the former rail corridor north of Saunders Settlement Road between Lockport-Junction Road and Comstock Road.

The zoning allows a wide range of uses with special use permits. For example, within the Agriculture-Residential zoning district, there is a list of 42 uses allowed with a special use permit. Examples include animal hospitals, rooming houses and medical clinics. In the process of obtaining a special use permit, applicants must demonstrate the use will meet a list of eight conditions. For example, the use must not change the character of the neighborhood, not create excessive noise, and must have appropriate landscaping. The code also contains sections establishing specific criteria for certain uses, such as motels, manufactured homes and motor vehicle repair stations.



TOWN OF CAMBRIA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Map 2 Existing Zoning



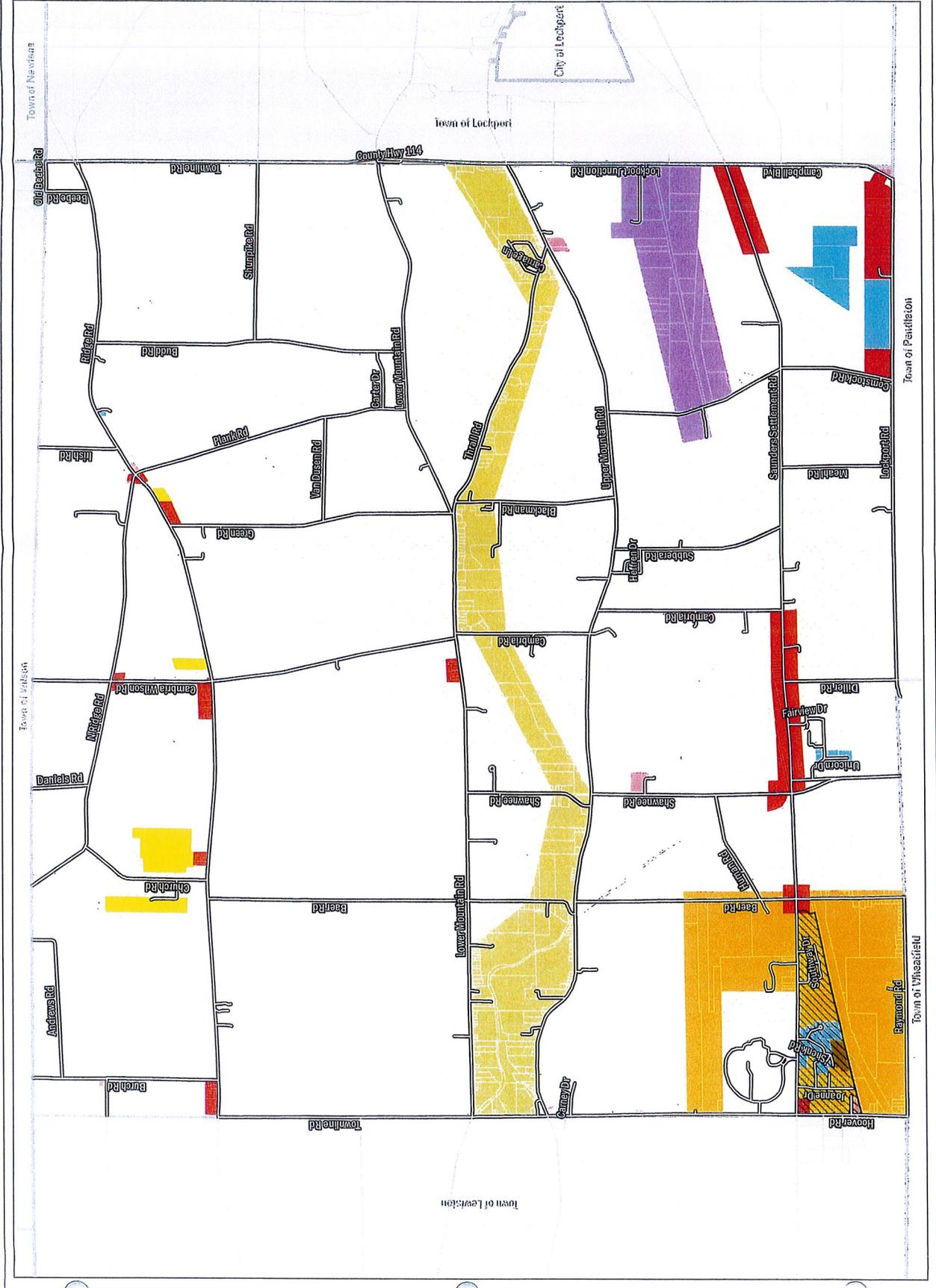
LEGEND

- Municipal Boundaries
- Parcel Boundary (2012)
- MS4 DISTRICT
- Zoning
- Residential (R-1)
- Agri-Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- RV Parks & Camps
- Planned Development
- Business (B-1)
- Business (B-2)
- Industrial
- Escapment District

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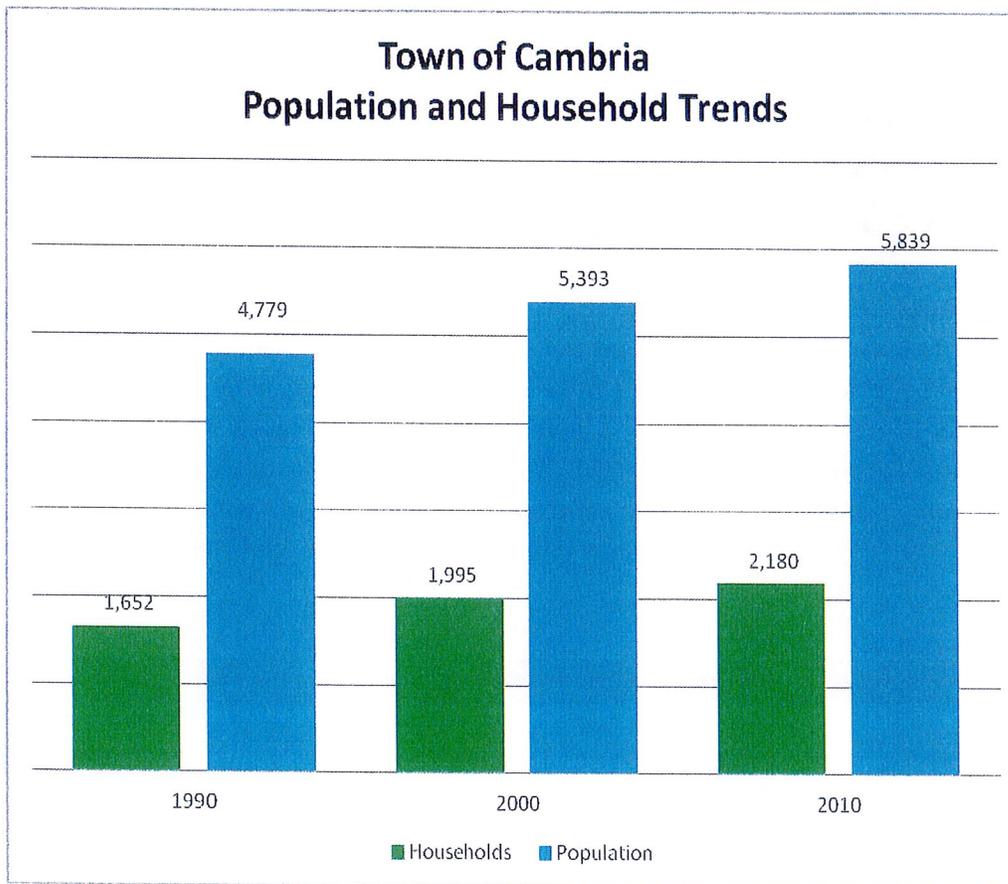
Wendel
WB Project #283132P
Map Created: January 27, 2015



The zoning also explicitly prohibits certain uses. Generally, these are uses that are more likely to result in negative impacts. For example, uses such as junk yards and slaughtering are prohibited in the Light Retail Business District (B-1). It should be noted that residential dwellings are also prohibited in that district.

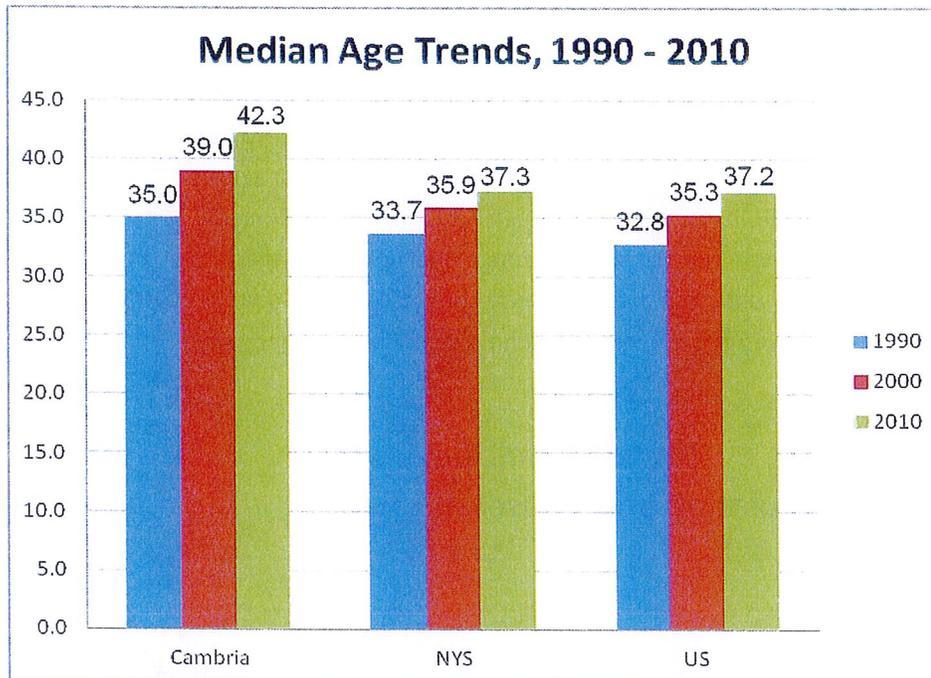
Demographic Trends - Data

The population of the Town of Cambria in 2010 was 5,839. This represented an 8.3 percent increase over the Town's population in 2000. Even stronger growth was experienced in the decade between 1990 and 2000. Since 1990, the Town has added 1,060 residents, a growth rate of 22.2 percent between 1990 and 2010. The number of households in the Town has been growing at a faster rate. The Town had 2,180 households in 2010, an increase of 9.3 percent since 2000, and a 32.0 percent increase in the number of households since 1990. On average, the Town added approximately 26 new households each year between 1990 and 2010. Household growth exceeds population growth due to a trend toward smaller household size, particularly the growth in the number of one-person households. The average household size in the Town in 2010 was 2.55, a slight decrease from 2000, when the average household size was 2.70 persons.



Source: US Bureau of the Census

The population of the Town has been aging. The median age of a resident of Cambria has increased from 35 years in 1990 to 42.3 years in 2010. Residents of Cambria tend to be older than residents of New York State or the nation, a trend that has increased. In 1990, residents of Cambria were a median of 1.3 years older than New York State overall. In 2010, the gap had widened to 5 years. In 2010, the median age of a resident of the State was 37.3 years old, compared to 42.3 years in the Town of Cambria.



Source: US Bureau of the Census

The aging of the population in the Town of Cambria is due to a decrease in the younger aged residents, rather than an increase in older residents. Currently, children under the age of 18 make up 20.4 percent of the population, compared to 25.4 percent in 2000. In comparison, the proportion of seniors in the Town has been relatively stable. In 2010, 13.9 percent of the population was aged 65 or older, which is only slightly higher than the 2000 figure of 13.6 percent.

Town of Cambria – Age Distribution						
	2000		2010		Change	
Minors (<18 years)	1,372	25.4%	1,193	20.4%	-179	-13.0%
Age 18 – 64	3,256	61.0%	3,835	65.7%	+549	16.7%
Seniors (65+)	735	13.6%	811	13.9%	+76	10.3%

Source: US Bureau of the Census

There are 2,292 housing units in the Town of Cambria, including 112 units that are vacant. This vacancy rate of approximately 5 percent is considered normal, and accommodates natural mobility in the market related to turnover (home sales and apartment transitions). Cambria's housing stock is characterized by single-family homes, and 83.2 percent of homes in the Town are owner-occupied.

Additional data on demographic trends are shown in the following table.

TOWN OF CAMBRIA - Demographics

	1990	2000	2010	Percent Change		
				1990-2000	2000-2010	1990-2010
Total Population	4,779	5,393	5,839	12.8%	8.3%	22.2%
Median Age	35.0	39.0	42.3	11.4%	8.5%	20.9%
Households	1,652	1,995	2,180	20.8%	9.3%	32.0%
Family Households	1,347	1,525	1,586	13.2%	4.0%	17.7%
Female HHH	103	124	178	20.4%	43.5%	72.8%
Married Couples	1,186	1,318	1,296	11.1%	-1.7%	9.3%
Nonfamily Households*	305	470	594	54.1%	26.4%	94.8%
Age 65+ living alone	127	183	190	44.1%	3.8%	49.6%
Avg. Family size	3.22	3.1	2.97	-3.7%	-4.2%	-7.8%
Avg. HH Size		2.7	2.55		-5.6%	

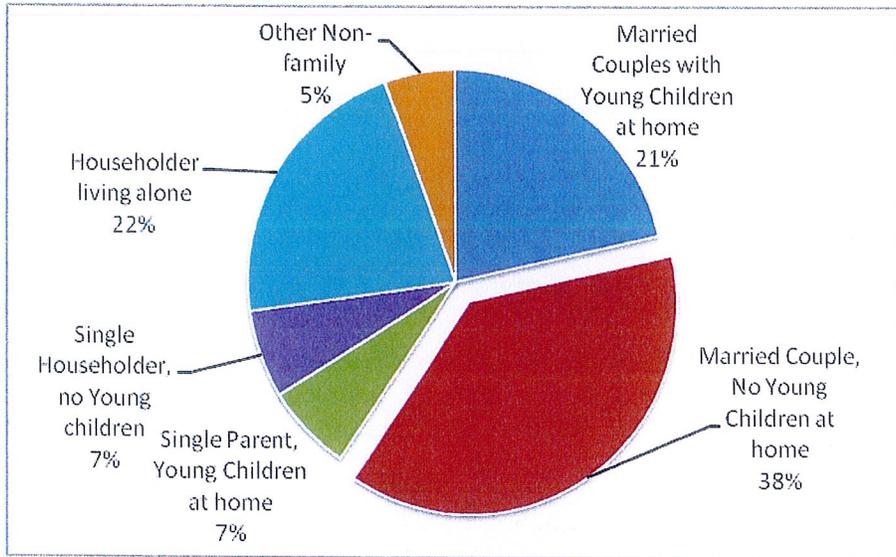
* Non-family households include households with one person living alone, as well as households made up of non-related persons

Source: US Bureau of the Census

	2000		2010		2000-2010 Percent Change
	Number	Percent Total	Number	Percent Total	
Minors (<18 years)	1,372	25.4%	1,193	20.4%	-13.0%
Seniors (65+)	735	13.6%	811	13.9%	10.3%
Total Housing Units	2,066	100.0%	2,292	100.0%	10.9%
Vacant units	71	3.4%	112	4.9%	57.7%
Owner Occupied	1,641	82.3%	1,813	83.2%	10.5%
Renter occupied	354	17.7%	367	16.8%	3.7%

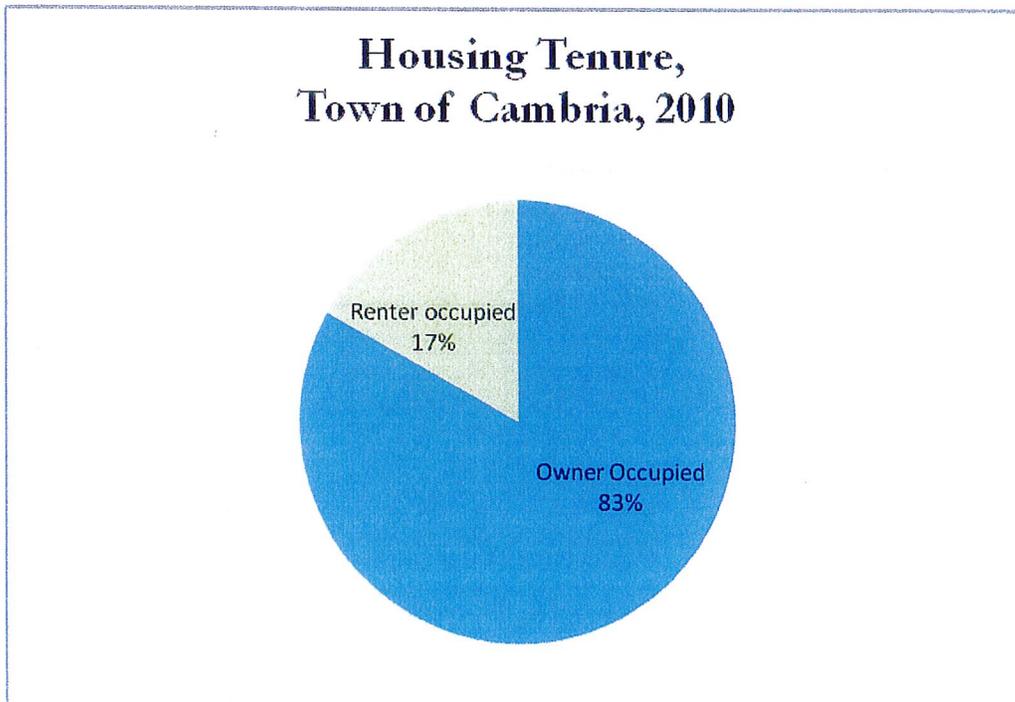
Source: US Bureau of the Census

Household Composition, Town of Cambria, 2010



Source: US Bureau of the Census

Housing Tenure, Town of Cambria, 2010



Source: US Bureau of the Census