BOSTON BY THE NUMBERS

▶ELDERLY

BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

POPULATION

- Since 2000, the elderly population has remained at a fairly constant size, only growing 1.5% to reach 62,237 individuals in 2010.

- The elderly as a percent of the total population of Boston shrunk slightly over the last decade from 10.4% to 10.1%.

AGE

- Just over half of the elderly population is between the ages of 65 and 75.

- There was very little change in the age distribution within the last decade.

RACE

RACIAL/ETHNIC BREAKDOWN OF BOSTON'S ELDERLY POPULATION[1]

Race Distribution (100% data)	# of Elderly Individuals	% of Elderly Population	% Change since 2000
White	35,255	56.6%	-15.6%
Black or African American	14,400	23.1%	29.9%
Asian	5,549	8.9%	49.5%
Hispanic or Latino	5,395	8.7%	82.9%

Source: US Census Bureau, BRA Research Division Analysis

- While the elderly population of Boston has become increasingly more diverse in the last decade, the elderly still remain predominantly white. This differs from the total population of Boston, in which white individuals now make up only 47%.

[1] The US Census Bureau does not classify Hispanic as a race. In the table above, we treated Hispanic as a unique category and removed people of Hispanic ancestry from each racial group.

Whenever possible, this document uses 2000 and 2010 Census data. When Census data cannot answer the question, we use 2006-2010 ACS data for all neighborhood level information and 2010 ACS data for non-neighborhood information.

HOUSING

- 94.7% of the elderly live in some form of household while 5.3% reside in group quarters.

- The number of elderly living in group quarters decreased by approximately 33.6%, while those living in a household increased by about 4.5%

NEIGHBORHOOD

- In 2010, Bay Village had the highest percentage of elderly residents with 21.3%; Longwood Medical Area had the lowest percentage of elderly residents with .5%.

- In 2010, Dorchester had the largest number of elderly residents, with close to 11,000.

- Among the more populous neighborhoods,[2] Beacon Hill and Mattapan experienced the most significant increases in elderly population, with 34.3% and 34.2%, respectively. Among these same neighborhoods, East Boston experienced the largest decline in its population of elderly residents over the last decade with a change of -24.8%.
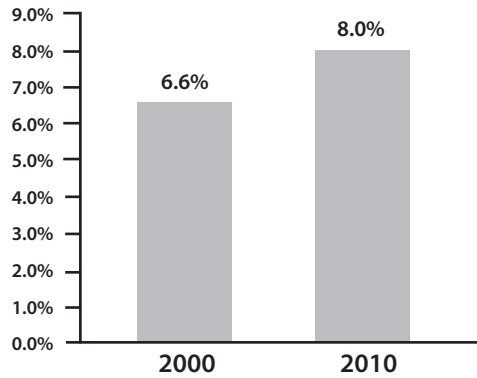 * see attached chart for more detail on the elderly population by neighborhood.
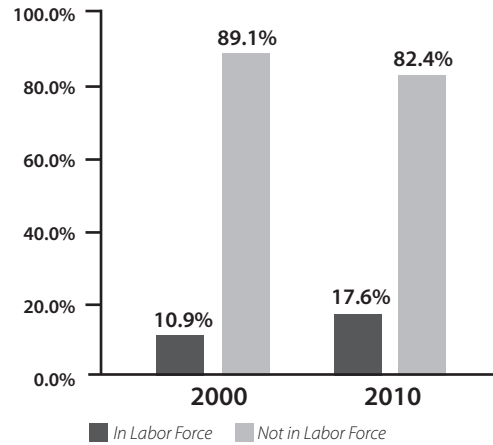
LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

- In 2010, approximately 17.6% of the elderly population was in the labor force.

- Older workers in Boston tend to participate in the labor market at a greater rate than the national average of 16.1% participation.

- Since 2000, the number of employed elderly has increased by 67.3%, while the number of unemployed has increased by 37.5%.

- Since 2000, there has been a 5.5% decrease in the number of individuals outside of the labor force.

- The most recent recession could be influencing these trends. The recent economic downturn adversely impacted the retirement saving of many Americans. This has lead to many workers choosing to postpone retirement.

[2] Excluding the Harbor Islands, Leather District, Longwood Medical Area, and South Boston Waterfront.

ELDERLY UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN BOSTON

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN BOSTON

Source: 2000 US Census & American Community Survey 2010, BRA Research Division Analysis

DISABILITIES

- Approximately 41.6% of the elderly live with some type of disability.

- In the last 10 years there was a decrease of close to 5% (1,279 individuals) in the number of elderly with disabilities.

POVERTY STATUS

- Overall, 20.6% of the elderly population lives below the poverty line, compared to 21.2% of Boston's general population.

- There was an 18.6% increase in the number of elderly living below the poverty line.

ELDERLY POPULATION BY NEIGHBORHOOD

	2000			2010			% Change of Population
	#	% of Elderly	% of Neighborhood	#	% of Elderly	% of Neighborhood	
Allston	1,065	1.7%	4.2%	1,095	1.8%	3.8%	2.8%
Back Bay	1,555	2.5%	8.7%	2,056	3.3%	11.4%	32.2%
Bay Village	264	0.4%	22.1%	279	0.4%	21.3%	5.7%
Beacon Hill	696	1.1%	7.7%	935	1.5%	10.4%	34.3%
Brighton	5,484	8.9%	12.5%	4,904	7.9%	10.7%	-10.6%
Charlestown	1,643	2.7%	10.8%	1,684	2.7%	10.2%	2.5%
Chinatown	677	1.1%	19.0%	681	1.1%	15.3%	0.6%
Dorchester	9,933	16.2%	8.4%	10,742	17.3%	9.4%	8.1%
Downtown	1,060	1.7%	16.7%	1,316	2.1%	13.3%	24.2%
East Boston	4,696	7.7%	12.2%	3,532	5.7%	8.7%	-24.8%
Fenway	1,479	2.4%	5.0%	1,525	2.5%	4.5%	3.1%
Harbor Islands	22	0.0%	3.4%	15	0.0%	2.8%	-31.8%
Hyde Park	3,974	6.5%	13.2%	3,944	6.3%	12.9%	-0.8%
Jamaica Plain	3,738	6.1%	9.8%	4,007	6.4%	10.7%	7.2%
Leather District	4	0.0%	1.8%	25	0.0%	3.9%	525.0%
Longwood Medical Area	21	0.0%	0.5%	18	0.0%	0.5%	-14.3%
Mattapan	2,000	3.3%	8.1%	2,684	4.3%	11.9%	34.2%
Mission Hill	1,262	2.1%	9.1%	1,477	2.4%	9.1%	17.0%
North End	1,468	2.4%	15.2%	1,308	2.1%	12.9%	-10.9%
Roslindale	3,954	6.4%	13.0%	3,477	5.6%	12.1%	-12.1%
Roxbury	3,781	6.2%	9.1%	4,458	7.2%	9.2%	17.9%
South Boston	3,994	6.5%	12.9%	3,234	5.2%	9.7%	-19.0%
South Boston Waterfront	15	0.0%	2.9%	60	0.1%	3.2%	300.0%
South End	1,998	3.3%	9.1%	2,611	4.2%	10.6%	30.7%
West End	762	1.2%	16.5%	695	1.1%	12.8%	-8.8%
West Roxbury	5,791	9.4%	20.1%	5,476	8.8%	18.0%	-5.4%

Source: US Census Bureau, BRA Research Division Analysis

CITY OF BOSTON
Martin J. Walsh, Mayor

PRODUCED BY THE BRA RESEARCH DIVISION

Alvaro Lima – Director
Mark Melnik – Deputy Director
John Avault – Chief Economist
Greg Perkins – Senior Researcher

Interns:
Kevin Kang
Lynne Weche

The staff listed above reflect the Research Division staff at the time of this report's original release.

The BRA Research Division strives to understand the current environment of the City to produce quality research and targeted information that will inform and benefit the residents and businesses of Boston. The Division conducts research on Boston's economy, population, and commercial markets for all departments of the BRA, the City of Boston, and related organizations.

The information provided in this report is the best available at the time of its publication.

For more information about research produced by the Boston Redevelopment Authority, please contact the Research Division at research@boston.gov