

Chapter 2: Population

POPULATION

2.1 Introduction

The population element of the Oconee County Comprehensive Plan will provide local governments in the county with the opportunity to inventory and assess various population trends and characteristics. The information provided in the population element will form the basis for several planning decisions in many elements of the comprehensive plan. A community's future goals are significantly influenced by population growth rates and demographic patterns. The past and present population trends are analyzed to determine the future population trends. Characteristics that are analyzed in this element include: population, households, age distribution, racial composition, education attainment and personal/household income levels.

Section 2.2 identifies past and present population trends for Oconee County, Bishop, Bogart, North High Shoals and Watkinsville.

2.2 Past and Present Population Trends

Table 2-1 shows past and present population totals for Oconee County and its cities from 1970 to 1997. Between 1970 and 1990, Oconee's population increased 123 percent. The county's largest increase occurred during the 1980s when it increased 5,191 (41.8 percent). The population growth is accelerating. Census estimates for 1997 indicate that the county population has increased by 5,447 persons, a rate that if continued would produce an increase of 7,781 (44%) in the decade of the 1990's.

Table 2-1

Population Oconee County, Bishop, Bogart, North High Shoals, and Watkinsville 1970-1995					
Year	Oconee County*	Bishop	Bogart	North High Shoals	Watkinsville
1970	7,915	235	521	165	986
1975	10,171	204	618	211	1,118
1980	12,427	172	714	256	1,240
1985	15,023	165	866	262	1,420
1990	17,618	158	1,018	268	1,600
1997**	23,065	150	1,117	301	2,051

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990.
 * This column includes both unincorporated Oconee and all municipalities.
 ** County data U.S. Census estimates, 1997; city data interpolated from Census estimates by NEGRDC.

Table 2-2

Current and Historic Rates of Population Change Oconee County, NEGRDC and the State 1970-1990				
	Population Change 1970-1980		Population Change 1980-1990	
	Numerical	Percentage	Numerical	Percentage
Oconee County	4,512	57.0	5,191	41.8
Bishop	-63	-26.8	-14	-8.1
Bogart	193	37.0	304	42.5
North High Shoals	91	55.2	12	4.7
Watkinsville	254	25.8	360	29.0
NEGRDC	40,289	20.9	44,732	19.2
Georgia	873,414	19.0	1,015,227	18.6

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990.

Since 1970, Bishop is the only Oconee city that has lost population. The city's largest population decline occurred during the 1970s when it declined 26.8 percent. During the 1980s, the population decreased by 8.1 percent. The population decrease is continuing in the 1990's, with Census estimates showing a further decrease of 8 persons in 1997.

Bogart's population increases were the largest among Oconee's four cities. Between 1970 and 1990, the city's population increased 95.4 percent. The population increased 37.0 percent during the 1970s and 42.5 percent during the 1980s. The increase is continuing, as Bogart added almost 100 people from 1990 to 1997.

From 1970 to 1980, North High Shoals' population increased 55.2 percent. However, a decade later, the population only increased 4.7 percent or twelve people. It appears the city has continued moderate growth, adding 33 people by 1997 according to Census estimates.

Watkinsville's population increased consistently during the 1970s and 1980s. The population increased 25.8 percent during the 1970s and 29.0 percent during the 1980s. The population is continuing to grow, increasing by an estimated 451 people from 1990 to 1997.

During the 1970s and 1980s, Oconee's population increased at a greater percentage rate than either the Northeast Georgia region's or state's. Most of the region's population increase occurred in its western half, consisting of Barrow, Walton, Jackson, Clarke and Oconee counties. These counties experienced the effects of suburban growth that spilled over from neighboring urban counties. The other five counties in the region accounted for only 25.5 percent of the region's population.

Table 2-3 shows the components responsible for Oconee's population change between 1980 and 1990. During the 1980s, net migration accounted for 30.9 percent of Oconee's population increase. This percentage was significantly higher than the region's or the state's net migration rate. Natural increase (births minus deaths) accounted for a 10.9 percent increase.

During the 1980s, the census reported 26,987 people migrated to the Northeast Georgia region. Oconee County represented 14.2 percent of the region's total, or 3,837 people. The five western counties of Barrow, Clarke, Jackson, Oconee and Walton accounted for 93.8 percent of the region's migration total.

In 1990, Oconee's population size ranked sixth in the ten-county Northeast Georgia region. The average county population size in 1990 for the region was 27,796. Oconee's population was 36.6 percent below the Northeast Georgia county average. However, Oconee County has the third smallest land area in the region after Clarke and Barrow counties.

Table 2-3

Components for Population Rate of Change Oconee County, Northeast Georgia Region and Georgia: 1980 to 1990					
Area	% Change of Births	% Change of Deaths	% Change Natural Increase	% Change Net Migration	% Change Total Pop.
Oconee Co.	17.7	-6.8	10.9	30.9	41.8
N.E. Georgia Region	16.3	-8.7	7.6	11.6	19.2
Georgia	17.7	-8.8	8.9	9.7	18.6

Source: Georgia Regional Economic Development Data Book, January 1992.

Table 2-4 distinguishes whether residents live in an urban or rural area. The U.S. Census Bureau classifies an urban area as an area with more than 2,500 people or an area with a density that is greater than 1,000 people per square mile. In 1980, Oconee's urban population was 3.1 percent. By 1990, the urban population increased to 4.8 percent. Watkinsville's population increase was responsible for the county's urban population growth.

Between 1970 and 1990, Northeast Georgia's urban population varied significantly. The region's urban population increased from 38.5 percent in 1970 to 41.5 percent in 1980. However, by 1990, the urban population accounted for only 26.5 percent of the region's population.

Table 2-4

Rural and Urban Population Oconee County, Northeast Georgia Region and Georgia: 1970 to 1990						
Area	% Popul. Rural 1970	% Popul. Urban 1970	% Popul. Rural 1980	% Popul. Urban 1980	% Popul. Rural 1990	% Popul. Urban 1990
Oconee County	100.0	0.0	96.9	3.1	95.2	4.8
N.E. Georgia Region	61.5	38.5	58.5	41.5	73.5	26.5
Georgia	39.7	60.3	37.6	62.4	36.8	63.2

Source: Georgia Regional Economic Development Data Book, January 1992.

2.3 Population Projections

Internal as well as external forces may influence the future population of an area. The development which takes place in another city or county can have a profound impact on an area's future population. Examples of internal forces are an area's transportation accessibility, housing opportunities, economic development trends, and infrastructure capabilities. These factors may have an influential role in determining an area's future population totals.

Attempting to predict demographic changes with accuracy is often difficult. Utilizing previous and current demographic trends is beneficial in projecting future population totals. Typically, a range of projections is available to choose from which reflect different population scenarios. The integration of internal and external factors (listed above) is a component for choosing a population alternative.

2.3.1 Oconee County

Table 2-5 lists three different population projections for Oconee starting with 1995 and continuing to 2015.

Alternative A assumes that the numerical population change from 1980 to 1990 will continue for the next 20 years. This projection reflects an average increase of 2,595.5 people every five years. Therefore, in 2015, the county's population would total 30,595.

Alternative B projects an average five-year increase of 20.9 percent. This growth reflects the average percent increase between 1980 and 1990. Utilizing this alternative, the population would total 45,508 in 2015.

Alternative C reflects the average five-year percent change between 1970 and 1990. The percent change over this 20-year period was 122.6 percent or a five-year average increase of 30.65 percent. Based on this scenario, Oconee's population will total 67,065 in 2015.

Alternative C was chosen for this plan. This alternative is a high population projection relative to the other two alternatives. Oconee County should experience higher than normal population growth. The basis for this expectation is Oconee's proximity to Athens-Clarke County, University of Georgia and Georgia Highway 316 which connects Oconee to the Atlanta area. Oconee will continue to receive population growth as Athens-Clarke County becomes more congested. Other factors influencing this rate of growth include excellent schools, lower tax rate, low crime rate, quality of life and continued road and infrastructure improvements. Highway 316 will serve as an important transportation link between Oconee County and metro Atlanta. Oconee County should continue to experience moderate to high residential, commercial and light-industrial development.

Table 2-5

Projected Total Population Oconee County 1995 - 2015			
Year	Alternative - A	Alternative - B	Alternative - C
1995	20,214	21,300	23,018
1996	20,733	22,190	24,429
1997	21,252	23,080	25,840
1998	21,771	23,970	27,251
1999	22,290	24,861	28,662
2000	22,809	25,752	30,073
2005	25,405	31,134	39,290
2010	28,000	37,641	51,332
2015	30,595	45,508	67,065

Source: Based on U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990; NEGRDC, 1997.

2.3.2 Bishop

Table 2-6 shows four different population projections for Bishop.

Alternative A assumes Bishop's population will decrease at a rate of 8.2 percent every five years. This percentage rate reflects the population trend between 1970 and 1990. If this trend were to continue over the next 20 years, Bishop's population will total 103 in 2015.

Alternative B shows a population decline of seven residents every five years. This projection reflects the numerical population change during the 1980s. Utilizing this scenario, Bishop's population will total 123 in 2015.

Alternative C represents the five-year percentage change between 1980 and 1990. This projection assumes the population will decline 4.1 percent every five years. In 2015, the population will total 129.

Alternative D deviates from the other three projections. This projection reflects an increase in population over the next twenty years. Alternative D incorporates Bishop's 1990 percentage share of Oconee's population (.009 percent). The city's rate of increase is partially based on the county's projected increase. However, Bishop's projection is adjusted to reflect the city's five-year average percentage change between 1970 and 1990. This alternative would result in a population of 376 in 2015.

Alternative D was chosen to represent Bishop's population projection. Despite the city's past population losses, Bishop will probably increase in population over the next twenty years. As Oconee County increases in population, it is likely that Bishop will receive a portion of the county's growth. Bishop has a public water system and undeveloped tracts of land suitable for development.

Table 2-6

Projected Total Population Bishop 1995 - 2015				
Year	Alternative - A	Alternative - B	Alternative - C	Alternative - D
1995	145	151	152	176
1996	143	149	151	184
1997	141	148	149	191
1998	139	146	148	199
1999	137	145	147	206
2000	134	144	146	213
2005	122	137	140	257
2010	112	130	134	311
2015	103	123	129	376

Source: Based on U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990; NEGRDC, 1997.

2.3.3 Bogart

Table 2-7 lists three different population alternatives for Bogart.

Alternative A reflects the five-year, numerical population increase of 152 people which occurred between 1980 and 1990. This projection assumes that the population will increase to 1,778 by 2015.

Alternative B reflects the 1980 to 1990 percentage increase. This five-year average percentage increase of 21.3 percent will result in a population of 2,673 in 2015.

Alternative C assumes the average five-year percentage increase between 1970 and 1990 will continue over the next twenty years. This projection will result in an average 23.8 percent increase every five years. In 2015, Bogart's population would total 2,960.

Alternative B was chosen to represent Bogart's population projection. This projection reflects moderate to high growth. Bogart is in a high growth area of the county. The city borders Clarke County to the east and is close to Barrow to the north and west. Bogart has an extensive water system that has potential for expansion. There is plenty of undeveloped land remaining for future development. In addition, since 1970, Bogart's population has grown faster than the other three Oconee cities.

Table 2-7

Projected Total Population Bogart 1995 - 2015			
Year	Alternative - A	Alternative - B	Alternative - C
1995	1,170	1,235	1,260
1996	1,200	1,288	1,320
1997	1,230	1,341	1,380
1998	1,260	1,394	1,440
1999	1,291	1,447	1,500
2000	1,322	1,498	1,560
2005	1,474	1,817	1,931
2010	1,626	2,204	2,391
2015	1,778	2,673	2,960

Source: Based on U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990; NEGRDC, 1997.

2.3.4 North High Shoals

Table 2-8 shows four population projections for North High Shoals.

Alternative A shows the average five-year numerical increase between 1980 and 1990. This alternative shows a five-year increase of six residents. Utilizing this scenario, North High Shoals' population will increase to 298 in 2015.

Alternative B reflects the five-year percentage increase between 1980 and 1990. According to this alternative, the population will increase an average of 2.3 percent every five years. This will result in a population of 300 in 2015.

Alternative C is a moderate to high population projection based on the median difference between Alternative B and D. According to this alternative, the city's population will total 427 in 2015.

Alternative D is based on the percentage change between 1970 and 1990. This projection assumes that an average five-year increase of 15.6 percent will continue to 2015. The city's population will total 554 in 2015.

Alternative C was chosen for this plan. North High Shoals should receive a portion of the county's population growth. Currently, the city does not have a public water system. However, there is plenty of undeveloped land in the city for future development.

Table 2-8

Projected Total Population North High Shoals 1995 - 2015				
Year	Alternative - A	Alternative - B	Alternative - C	Alternative - D
1995	274	274	292	310
1996	275	275	298	320
1997	276	276	303	329
1998	277	277	309	339
1999	278	278	314	348
2000	280	280	319	358
2005	286	286	350	414
2010	292	293	386	479
2015	298	300	427	554

Source: Based on U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990; NEGRDC, 1997.

2.3.5 Watkinsville

Table 2-9 shows three different population projections for Watkinsville.

Alternative A shows an average increase of 180 people every five years. This projection reflects the average numerical change between 1980 and 1990. Alternative A will result in a population of 2,500 in 2015.

Alternative B shows an average five-year increase of 14.5 percent. This projection represents the percentage increase between 1980 and 1990. Utilizing this alternative, the city's population will total 3,149 in 2015.

Alternative C projects an average increase of 15.6 percent every five years. This projection reflects the percentage change between 1970 and 1990. Alternative C will result in a population of 3,305 in 2015.

Alternative B was chosen to represent Watkinsville's population projection. Watkinsville should experience moderate to high population growth over the next twenty years. The city is the political and geographic center of the county. Many of the county's community facilities are located in Watkinsville. The city also has an adequate infrastructure network to accommodate additional growth.

Table 2-9

Projected Total Population Watkinsville 1995 - 2015			
Year	Alternative - A	Alternative - B	Alternative - C
1995	1,780	1,832	1,850
1996	1,816	1,885	1,908
1997	1,852	1,938	1,966
1998	1,888	1,991	2,024
1999	1,924	2,044	2,082
2000	1,960	2,098	2,139
2005	2,140	2,402	2,473
2010	2,320	2,750	2,859
2015	2,500	3,149	3,305

Source: Based on U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990; NEGRDC, 1997.

Table 2-10 summarizes the projected net numerical population growth for Oconee County, Bishop, Bogart, North High Shoals, Watkinsville, and Georgia.

Table 2-10

Projected Rate of Population Growth Oconee County, Bishop, Bogart, North High Shoals, Watkinsville and Georgia Numerical Net Change					
Area	1995 - 2000	2000 - 2005	2005 - 2010	2010 - 2015	1995 - 2015
Oconee Co.	7,055	9,217	12,042	15,733	44,047
Bishop	37	44	54	65	200
Bogart	263	319	387	469	1,438
North High Shoals	27	31	36	41	135
Watkinsville	266	304	348	399	1,317
Georgia	570,003	501,575	264,853	437,516	1,846,162

Source: NEGRDC, 1997.

2.4 Household Population

Past, current and future number of households are listed in Table 2-11 for Oconee County and its four cities. In addition, each jurisdiction's household size is listed in Table 2-12. The number of households and size are important to assess housing needs, household trends, and characteristics.

The number of households in Oconee increased at a rate faster than the population. This is not just a local trend but also a state and national trend. As a result, the number of households is increasing at an unprecedented rate yet the household size is becoming smaller. In the past, the household growth rate was much slower than the population rate, and the household size was larger. People, typically, reared more children and multi-generational households were more common than today. However, presently the birth rate is declining and there are more single household dwellers. A larger percentage of people are choosing not to marry than in the past. In recent decades, the divorce rate has increased significantly. Married couples are waiting longer to have children and rearing smaller families. Women are working in greater numbers thus making it more difficult to have larger families. In addition, it is typical for the elderly to be moved into a care facility when they are unable to care for themselves rather than receiving permanent care from a family member. These factors are responsible for the increasing number of households in our society.

Table 2-11 traces past and future number of households for all jurisdictions in Oconee County.

Table 2-11

Number of Households Oconee County, Bishop, Bogart, North High Shoals and Watkinsville 1970 - 2015					
Year	Oconee County	Bishop	Bogart	North High Shoals	Watkinsville
1970	2,491	81	233	56	315
1975	3,245	82	272	73	385
1980	4,262	83	311	90	454
1985	5,045	75	356	97	526
1990	6,195	67	401	103	598
1995	8,500	78	475	115	710
2000	11,662	100	563	129	843
2005	16,000	127	666	146	1,005
2010	21,952	162	790	166	1,196
2015	30,118	207	938	189	1,425
Sources: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990; NEGRDC/Oconee Co., 1997.					

In the 1970s and 1980s, the number of households in Oconee County increased by 71.1 and 45.3 percent respectively. During this period, the number of households increased at a greater rate than the population. The percentage of households in Oconee should continue to increase faster than the population rate.

Between 1970 and 1990, the number of households in Bishop decreased at a rate slower than the population. During the 1970s, the number of households increased by two. During the 1980s, the number of households decreased by sixteen or 19.2 percent. Based on the city's population projection and future housing trends, the number of households should increase by up to 209 percent over the next twenty years.

Bogart deviated from the normal trend in that the population growth rate exceeded the household growth rate. During the 1970s, the number of households in Bogart increased by 33.5 percent. In the 1980s, the households increased by 29.0 percent. Over the next twenty years, the number of households in Bogart should increase by 134 percent.

During the 1970s and 1980s, North High Shoals experienced a 60.7 and 14.4 percent household increase respectively. The household increases were greater than the population growth rates. This trend will continue as the number of households will increase by 86 or an 83.5 percent increase.

Table 2-12

Historic, Current and Projected Average Household Size Georgia, Oconee County and NEGRDC 1970 - 2015							
Year	Georgia	Oconee Co.	Bishop	Bogart	North High Shoals	Watkinsville	NEGRDC
1970	3.27	3.17	2.90	2.23	2.95	3.13	3.30
1975	3.04	3.13	2.48	2.27	2.89	2.90	3.10
1980	2.84	2.91	2.07	2.30	2.84	2.73	2.80
1985	2.74	2.98	2.20	2.43	2.70	2.70	2.70
1990	2.66	2.84	2.36	2.54	2.60	2.67	2.60
1995	2.59	2.71	2.25	2.60	2.53	2.58	2.60
2000	2.52	2.57	2.14	2.66	2.47	2.49	2.40
2005	2.43	2.46	2.03	2.73	2.40	2.39	2.20
2010	2.35	2.39	1.92	2.79	2.33	2.30	2.40
2015	2.27	2.23	1.82	2.85	2.26	2.21	2.00

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990; NEGRDC, 1997.

In Watkinsville, during the 1970s, the number of households increased by 44.1 percent while the population increased by 25.8 percent. During the 1980s, the number of households increased by 31.7 percent and the population increased by 29.0 percent. Over the next twenty years, the number of households should increase by 138.3 percent.

It is apparent that despite the population fluctuations of each jurisdiction, the number of households increased faster or decreased slower than the population. This trend has important implications for the future housing supply in each jurisdiction. Over the next twenty years, as the number of households continues to increase, the household size should become even smaller as shown in Table 2-12.

2.5 Age Distribution of the Population

The inventory and assessment of a community's age distribution is very important for the identification of present and future needs in many planning areas. Planning for capital facilities and services such as schools, recreation facilities/programs, youth centers and programs for the elderly all depend upon the age distribution of a community.

To project the age distribution of the population, first the 1970 to 1990 population age totals were converted into percentages to calculate the five-year incremental rate of change. Once the percentage rate was determined for 1970 to 1990 that percentage was utilized to calculate the future age group populations. Between 1970 and 1990, all of the age groups had a continuous and distinct trend. As a result, this plan assumes that these age group trends will continue. The population projections discussed in Section 2.2 were the basis for the future age group populations.

2.5.1 Oconee County

Table 2-13

Oconee County Population by Age 1970 - 1990					
Age Group	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
0 - 4	738	781	955	1,171	1,432
5 - 14	1,507	1,817	2,198	2,362	2,895
15 - 24	1,524	1,875	2,209	2,240	2,377
25 - 34	1,138	1,726	2,407	2,675	2,950
35 - 44	826	1,136	1,692	2,403	3,259
45 - 54	749	939	1,137	1,412	1,975
55 - 64	678	737	862	1,039	1,204
65 & up	805	892	1,066	1,309	1,632

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990.

In 1970, the 15-24 age group was the most populous group in Oconee. Twenty years later, the 35-44 year old residents represented the largest age group. Between 1970 and 1990, the 35-44 age group increased by 295 percent thus making it the fastest growing age group. During this period, the two age groups which comprised the 0-14 year old residents accounted for the fewest number of citizens.

Table 2-14

Oconee County Projected Population by Age 1995 - 2015					
Age Group	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015
0 - 4	1,938	2,368	2,764	3,566	5,495
5 - 14	3,646	4,362	5,086	6,268	8,645
15 - 24	2,897	3,295	3,604	4,243	5,910
25 - 34	3,919	4,934	6,095	7,857	11,002
35 - 44	4,550	6,004	7,739	10,281	14,460
45 - 54	2,722	3,469	4,271	5,606	8,226
55 - 64	2,018	2,435	2,807	3,573	5,400
65 & up	2,208	2,708	3,193	4,108	6,178

Source: NEGRDC, 1995; Based on U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990.

Between 1995 and 2015, the 35-44 year old residents will represent the most populous age group in the county. The 0-4 and 55-64 year old groups will comprise the fewest number of people among the age groups. In 2015, over 50 percent of all county residents will be 35 years old or older.

2.5.2 Bishop

Between 1970 and 1990, residents 65 years old and older represented Bishop's largest age group. During this period, the only two age groups to increase in population were the 25-34 and the 35-44 age groups which increased by 11.0 and 25.0 percent respectively. The least populous age groups were the 0-4 and 45-54 year old residents.

Table 2-15

Bishop Population by Age 1970 - 1990					
Age Group	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
0 - 4	21	15	9	10	11
5 - 14	30	29	28	23	18
15 - 24	39	34	29	22	16
25 - 34	26	25	23	26	29
35 - 44	20	18	15	20	25
45 - 54	18	17	16	14	11
55 - 64	45	37	29	23	18
65 & up	40	38	35	33	30

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990.

Bishop's age population projections show a continuation of previous trends. In 2015, the 25-34 age group will comprise the largest age group in the city. The 35-44 year old residents will represent the second largest age group. None of the age groups should decline significantly over the next 20 years. In 2015, over half of Bishop's population will be older than 37 years old.

Table 2-16

Bishop Projected Population by Age 1995 - 2015					
Age Group	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015
0 - 4	11	13	15	15	19
5 - 14	20	23	27	29	38
15 - 24	15	16	16	15	14
25 - 34	35	45	55	75	94
35 - 44	30	38	52	67	84
45 - 54	12	14	17	20	24
55 - 64	17	18	17	16	14
65 & up	34	42	52	64	79

Source: NEGRDC, 1995; Based on U.S. Census 1970, 1980, 1990.

2.5.3 Bogart

In 1970, Bogart's 5-14 and the 15-24 year old residents represented the largest age groups. Twenty years later, the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups comprised the largest and fastest-growing age groups. Between 1970 and 1990, the 55-64 year old residents were the only age group to decline in population. This group also had the smallest population in the city.

Table 2-17

Bogart Population by Age 1970 - 1990					
Age Group	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
0 - 4	59	59	59	74	88
5 - 14	116	125	134	141	147
15 - 24	116	116	116	126	135
25 - 34	78	115	152	184	216
35 - 44	63	87	111	130	149
45 - 54	83	71	59	86	112
55 - 64	86	93	99	82	64
65 & up	63	87	111	109	107

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990.

Bogart's population projection reflects a significant population increase over the next two decades. Most age groups will witness an increase in number of residents. The 25-34 and 35-44 age groups will experience significant population increases. The number of residents between 15-24 years old will decline significantly.

Table 2-18

Bogart Projected Population by Age 1995 - 2015					
Age Group	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015
0 - 4	95	91	102	102	98
5 - 14	153	146	152	138	114
15 - 24	138	123	119	96	55
25 - 34	272	333	428	537	672
35 - 44	181	212	269	326	397
45 - 54	119	113	122	116	103
55 - 64	72	69	85	90	95
65 & up	121	126	149	163	178

Source: NEGRDC, 1995; Based on U.S. Census 1970, 1980, 1990.

2.5.4 North High Shoals

In 1970, the 5-14 and 15-24 age groups represented the largest age groups in North High Shoals . Twenty years later, the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups were the most populous. The 35-44 year old residents increased by 194 percent which was the largest increase in the city. The 0-4 year old residents experienced only a 11.0 percent growth, the smallest increase in the city.

Table 2-19

North High Shoals Population by Age 1970 - 1990					
Age Group	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
0 - 4	17	16	15	15	15
5 - 14	32	45	57	50	42
15 - 24	26	35	43	39	35
25 - 34	19	32	44	43	43
35 - 44	18	28	37	45	53
45 - 54	13	27	40	36	31
55 - 64	26	17	8	16	23
65 & up	22	16	11	19	26

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990.

Over the next twenty years, most population age groups will increase. Only the 55-64 age group should decline in population. North High Shoals median age will increase from 35.8 in 1995 to 36.6 in 2015.

Table 2-20

North High Shoals Projected Population by Age 1995 - 2015					
Age Group	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015
0 - 4	14	13	12	12	11
5 - 14	42	45	45	49	51
15 - 24	36	37	37	42	44
25 - 34	49	55	65	76	88
35 - 44	63	75	88	100	121
45 - 54	36	42	48	56	65
55 - 64	22	20	17	17	17
65 & up	26	26	26	26	26

Source: NEGRDC, 1995; Based on U.S. Census 1970, 1980, 1990.

2.5.5 Watkinsville

In 1970, the 5-14 and 15-24 age groups represented the largest groups in the city. By 1990, the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups increased by 147 percent and 133 percent respectively and comprised the largest population in the city. The 55-64 age group declined by 11.0 percent, the most of any group in the city.

Table 2-21

Watkinsville Population by Age 1970 - 1990					
Age Group	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
0 - 4	84	87	90	108	126
5 - 14	202	184	165	197	229
15 - 24	147	187	226	209	192
25 - 34	134	190	246	289	332
35 - 44	125	139	151	221	291
45 - 54	97	98	98	123	147
55 - 64	117	114	111	106	100
65 & up	100	123	145	164	183

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990.

Watkinsville will experience a moderate to high population increase over the next twenty years. As a result, the population of most age groups will increase. The 35-44 year old residents should remain the largest age group. The median age in Watkinsville will increase to 34.5 by 2015.

Table 2-22

Watkinsville Projected Population by Age 1995 - 2015					
Age Group	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015
0 - 4	140	158	176	196	218
5 - 14	239	248	253	254	249
15 - 24	209	227	245	263	281
25 - 34	401	490	600	725	873
35 - 44	353	428	515	616	740
45 - 54	164	185	206	231	259
55 - 64	104	112	118	127	136
65 & up	213	250	291	338	392

Source: NEGRDC, 1995; Based on U.S. Census 1970, 1980, 1990.

Overall, the median age in the county and cities will increase by 2015. The population age shifts will result in important planning implications. It will be important for the county to plan for the economic, housing and human services needs of its citizens. Specifically these needs could include: job training, educational services and facilities, housing for the elderly, health centers and cultural facilities. While national and state figures project a sharply lower percentage of the young population (0 - 14) and a significant increase in the percentage of elderly persons (65 +), Oconee County's age demographics do not. Although both of these age groups are projected to increase by 2015, their proportion of the population will change very little, from 23.0 to 23.4 percent and from 9.2 to 10.2 percent respectively. This is due to the fact that so much of Oconee County's growth is from in-migration of working-age adults. This group, aged 25 to 54, will grow from 47% of the population to 56% of the population by 2015. Schools, training programs, health services, and services for the elderly will remain satisfactory if they increase their capacity along with the overall increase in population. Services related to the middle-aged population such as those supporting transportation, retail trade, public safety, and household services will show an increasing share of public resources.

In Oconee County, public services are provided almost entirely by the county. The age distribution of the population in the cities should have little effect on the provision of public services.

2.6 Population by Race

Tables 2-23 and 2-24 report the racial composition for Oconee County and its cities.

Table 2-23

Racial Composition of the Population Oconee County, Bishop, Bogart, North High Shoals and Watkinsville, Number of Residents 1970 - 1980									
	1970			1975			1980		
	White	Black	Other	White	Black	Other	White	Black	Other
Oconee County	6,696	1,267	16	8,666	1,218	55	11,239	1,264	81
Bishop	205	30	0	187	22	1	168	14	2
Bogart	625	41	1	717	37	0	808	33	0
North High Shoals	143	22	0	173	37	0	202	53	0
Watkinsville	831	155	0	945	162	13	1,059	169	26

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980. NEGRDC, 1975 estimates.

Table 2-24

Racial Composition of the Population Oconee County, Bishop, Bogart, North High Shoals and Watkinsville Number of Residents 1985 - 1990						
	1985			1990		
	White	Black	Other	White	Black	Other
Oconee County	13,271	1,238	175	16,273	1,325	305
Bishop	155	9	6	143	5	10
Bogart	897	29	10	986	24	19
North High Shoals	228	21	5	255	11	9
Watkinsville	1,245	165	24	1,430	160	21

Source: U.S. Census, 1980, 1990. NEGRDC, 1985 estimates.

In 1970, white residents comprised 84.0 percent of the county's population. Twenty years later in 1990, white citizens represented 90.9 percent of the population. White residents accounted for 96.5 percent of Oconee's population increase between 1970 and 1990. The percentage of Oconee's black residents declined from 15.8 percent in 1970 to 7.4 percent in 1990.

In 1970, Bishop's white residents comprised 87.2 percent of the city's population. Black residents accounted for 12.8 percent. In 1990, the percentage of white residents increased to 90.5 percent. Asians or Pacific Islanders

represented 6.4 percent of the city's population, and the number of black residents declined to 5 people or 3.1 percent of the population.

During the 1970s and 1980s, white residents accounted for the majority of Bogart's population gains. Since 1970, the percentage of minority residents has remained steady. In 1970, Bogart's white residents accounted for 93.7 percent of the population. Twenty years later, the percentage of white residents increased to 95.8 percent. During this time, the minority population increased by one resident. The percentage of black residents declined to 2.3 percent, and the other races (American Indian, Asian and Hispanic) increased to 1.9 percent.

Between 1970 and 1990, the number of North High Shoals white residents increased by 78.3 percent. White residents accounted for all of the city's population increase. The city's minority population declined from 13.3 percent in 1970 to 7.7 percent in 1990. The white population increased from 86.7 percent in 1970 to 92.7 percent in 1990.

Between 1970 and 1990, the number of white residents in Watkinsville increased by 72.1 percent. During the same time, the minority population increased by 16.8 percent. The black population only increased by 5 people, but the Hispanic and Asian population increased to account for 1.3 percent of the 1990 population. Collectively, the minority races represented 11.2 percent of Watkinsville's 1990 population.

Future Trends

The minority population in Oconee County and its cities should remain at their 1990 percentage levels over the next twenty years. Since 1970, the white population accounted for the overwhelming majority of population increases in the county and cities. However, the percentage of white residents in these jurisdictions has probably reached their optimum levels. As Georgia, the Northeast Georgia region and Oconee County continue to attract additional residents, Oconee should expect an increase in the number of minority residents. However, Oconee County and its cities' population should remain predominantly white with the lowest minority population in the region.

2.7 Education

The educational attainment levels for residents of Oconee County, some of the surrounding counties, and the state are listed in the following three tables.

Since 1970, a greater percentage of Oconee's residents achieved higher educational levels. The percentage of the county's residents who completed only elementary school or a portion of high school declined over the last 20 years. Also, the percentage of residents graduating from high school and attending college increased.

In 1970, 41.1 percent of all Oconee's residents did not advance past elementary school (grades 0-8). In 1990, that percentage declined to 9.8 percent which was among the lowest in the region and lower than the state average.

The percentage of Oconee residents whose highest educational level was some high school declined over the last 20 years. During the same time, Oconee's percentage of students advancing past high school was greater than most neighboring counties.

The percentage of Oconee's residents who attended college tripled over the past 20 years. In 1970, only 16.1 percent of Oconee's residents attended at least one year of college. In 1990, this figure rose to 49.8 percent. The percentage of Oconee residents with four or more years of college increased from 9.1 percent in 1970 to 28.4 percent in 1990. In the region, only Clarke County had a higher percentage of residents attending at least one year or four or more years of college.

Note: Comparable educational data is only available at the county level.

Table 2-25

Educational Attainment Comparison for 1970 Highest Educational Level Completed Percentage of Persons Age 25 and Older Oconee County, Surrounding Counties and Georgia							
Years Completed	Oconee County	Greene County	Madison County	Clarke County	Oglethorpe County	Elbert County	State of Georgia
Elementary School (0-8)	41.1	50.2	47.4	25.3	53.7	41.7	36.0
High School (1-3 yrs.)	19.4	19.5	29.5	13.4	26.4	36.0	23.0
High School (4 + yrs.)	23.4	20.3	15.5	21.6	12.7	11.5	22.0
College (1-3 yrs.)	7.0	4.3	5.0	11.9	3.9	5.3	9.0
College (4 + yrs.)	9.1	5.8	2.7	27.8	3.3	5.5	9.0

Source: DCA Data Book, 1994.

Table 2-26

Educational Attainment Comparison for 1980 Highest Educational Level Completed Percentage of Persons Age 25 and Older Oconee County, Surrounding Counties and Georgia							
Years Completed	Oconee County	Greene County	Madison County	Clarke County	Oglethorpe County	Elbert County	State of Georgia
Elementary School (0-8)	20.7	38.6	31.8	17.3	32.8	30.6	23.7
High School (1-3 yrs.)	19.2	26.5	25.6	15.3	24.6	28.0	19.9
High School (4 + yrs.)	26.3	21.8	26.7	20.0	26.1	26.4	28.5
College (1-3 yrs.)	12.6	6.8	7.5	12.4	7.0	7.2	13.3
College (4 + yrs.)	21.2	6.3	8.4	35.0	9.5	7.9	14.6

Source: DCA Data Book, 1994.

Table 2-27

Educational Attainment Comparison for 1990 Highest Educational Level Completed Percentage of Persons Age 25 and Older Oconee County, Surrounding Counties and Georgia							
Years Completed	Oconee County	Greene County	Madison County	Clarke County	Oglethorpe County	Elbert County	State of Georgia
Elementary School (0-8)	9.8	22.5	18.2	9.8	17.1	17.9	12.0
High School (1-3 yrs.)	13.1	26.3	22.0	13.1	21.1	27.9	17.0
High School (4 + yrs.)	27.2	30.2	37.1	22.6	36.7	33.9	29.7
College (1-3 yrs.)	21.4	12.2	12.9	16.9	12.3	12.4	22.0
College (4 + yrs.)	28.4	8.8	9.7	37.5	12.8	8.0	19.3

Source: DCA Data Book, 1994.

Overall, Oconee's educational attainment levels improved significantly over the past 20 years. The county ranks very favorably when compared to surrounding counties and the state average.

2.7.1 Educational Attainment Indicators: Dropout Rate, Standard Test Scores, and Percentage Continuing to Post Secondary Education.

Table 2-28

Educational Attainment Indicators Oconee: 1995 - 1997			
Indicators	1995	1996	1997
9-12 Dropout Rate	5.1	4.7	4.1
Percent 11 th Graders Passing, All Tests	NA	88	83
SAT Scores, Math + Verbal	NA	993	1015
ITBS Testing Composite Score, Grade 8	NA	NA	69
Percentage of Post-Secondary Students*	NA	32.9	53.8

Source: Georgia County Guide, 1998.
 NA - Data not available at this time
 * Students entering a vocational school or a college after high school graduation.

Table 2-29

Educational Attainment Indicators State of Georgia: 1995 - 1997			
Indicators	1995	1996	1997
9-12 Dropout Rate	9.2	8.6	7.3
Percent 11 th Graders Passing, All Tests	82	76	67
SAT Scores, Math + Verbal	960	961	967
ITBS Testing Composite Score, Grade 8	53†	51†	54
Percentage of Post- Secondary Students*	33.9	45.9	46.9

Source: Georgia Department of Education www.doe.k12.ga.us/
 NA - Data not available at this time
 † Before 1997 the ITBS included only Math and Science Scores.
 * Students entering a vocational school or a college after high school graduation.

Dropout Rate

The dropout rate percentage listed for Oconee County and Georgia show the percentage of students who dropped out from ninth through twelfth grade. Between 1995 and 1997, Oconee's dropout rate moderately declined and averaged 4.6 percent. Georgia's 1997 dropout rate was 7.3 percent.

Standard Test Scores

Table 2-28 shows recent scores on three standardized tests for Oconee County. Oconee County students consistently scored higher on all three tests.

Percentage Continuing to Post Secondary Education

In 1997, 54 % of Oconee County students enrolled in post secondary education. Of these, 47 percent enrolled in 4-year institutions and 7 percent enrolled in junior college or technical schools.

2.8 Per Capita Income

Table 2-30 shows per capita income for Oconee County, its four cities, and Georgia. All dollar amounts were adjusted to 1987 dollar figures to neutralize the effects of inflation.

During the early 1970s, Oconee's per capita income was lower than the state's. However, by the mid and late 1970s, Oconee's per capita income increased at a rate faster than Georgia's. By 1980, the county's per capita income was \$10,837 compared to the state's \$11,730. At the same time, Oconee's municipalities' per capita incomes were significantly less than Georgia's or Oconee's. Watkinsville's 1980 per capita income (\$6,322) was the highest among Oconee's municipalities.

In 1990, some of Oconee's cities' per capita income significantly increased. In fact, Bogart's per capita income was higher than the county's or state's. Between 1980 and 1990, Oconee's per capita income remained less than Georgia's per capita income.

Table 2-30

Per Capita Income Oconee County, Bishop, Bogart, North High Shoals and Watkinsville and Georgia 1970 - 1990					
Area	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
Oconee Co.	7,127	9,009	10,837	13,124	14,141
Bishop	NA	NA	6,116	7,940	9,764
Bogart	NA	NA	6,216	11,682	17,148
North High Shoals	NA	NA	5,573	8,743	11,912
Watkinsville	NA	NA	6,322	9,948	13,573
Georgia	9,476	10,453	11,730	13,785	14,850

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990.
 NA - Not available
 NOTE: All dollar amounts have been converted to 1987 constant dollars.

2.9 Household Income

Median household income is shown for Oconee County, its four cities, and Georgia. All income amounts were converted to 1987 dollars.

In 1970, the median household income in Oconee County was \$22,697 and \$31,140 for Georgia. The state's median household income was 37.1 percent higher than Oconee's. By 1980, the county's median household was \$31,825, 5.3 percent lower than Georgia's \$33,509 median household income. Throughout the 1980s, the municipality's median household income was lower than the county's or state's.

In 1990, Oconee's median household income was \$40,194 which surpassed the state's median household income of \$39,779. Among Oconee's cities, Watkinsville reported the highest (\$35,678) 1990 median household income. Bishop reported the lowest household income (\$23,715) in the county.

Table 2-31

Median Household Income Oconee County, Bishop, Bogart, North High Shoals, Watkinsville and Georgia 1970 - 1990					
Area	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
Oconee Co.	22,697	27,452	31,825	37,852	40,194
Bishop	NA	NA	13,615	18,665	23,715
Bogart	NA	NA	16,925	23,429	29,933
North High Shoals	NA	NA	16,359	23,874	31,388
Watkinsville	NA	NA	17,158	26,418	35,678
Georgia	31,140	31,932	33,509	38,023	39,779

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990. NEGRDC, 1985 City Estimates.
 NA - Not available
 NOTE: All dollar amounts have been converted to 1987 constant dollars.

2.10 Distributions of Households by Income

The distribution of households by income groups for Oconee County, its cities and Georgia are shown in Tables 2-32 and 2-33. The income distributions for Oconee County and Georgia are shown in Table 2-32.

Table 2-32

Distribution of Households by Income by Percent Oconee County and the State 1990		
Income Groups	Oconee County	Georgia
< \$5,000	4.6	7.9
\$5,000 - \$9,999	7.5	8.9
\$10,000 - \$14,999	6.1	8.6
\$15,000 - \$24,999	16.1	17.7
\$25,000 - \$34,999	16.2	16.2
\$35,000 - \$49,999	20.3	17.8
\$50,000 - \$74,999	18.9	14.4
\$75,000 - \$99,999	5.7	4.6
\$100,000 - \$149,999	2.6	2.4
\$150,000 and above	2.0	1.4

Source: U.S. Census, 1990.

In 1990, Oconee County accounted for a greater percentage of upper income (\$75,000 or greater) households than the state. The majority of Oconee's and Georgia's households earned between \$15,000 and \$74,999. Fewer Oconee households earned less than \$15,000 than Georgia's households. A greater percentage of Oconee's households earned \$75,000 or more than the state's. In 1990, 10.3 percent of the county's households earned more than \$75,000 compared to 8.1 for the state.

Table 2-33 compares the 1990 distribution of household income for Bishop, Bogart, North High Shoals and Watkinsville. The income threshold categories for the cities are different from the county and state due to the reporting of data.

Table 2-33

Distribution of Households by Income Bishop, Bogart, North High Shoals and Watkinsville 1990				
Income Groups	Bishop	Bogart	North High Shoals	Watkinsville
< \$5,000	4.9	8.7	6.0	5.7
\$5,000 - \$9,999	18.0	10.7	8.0	4.0
\$10,000 - \$14,999	14.6	8.0	9.0	6.6
\$15,000 - \$24,999	18.1	18.9	18.0	18.2
\$25,000 - \$34,999	27.9	17.5	21.0	23.6
\$35,000 - \$44,999	0.0	17.4	8.0	15.3
\$45,000 - \$54,999	9.9	4.6	12.0	13.4
\$55,000 - \$74,999	3.3	10.9	7.0	7.7
\$75,000 - \$99,999	0.0	1.7	7.0	3.7
\$100,000 and above	3.3	1.5	4.0	1.9

Source: U.S. Census, 1990; DCA Data Book, 1994.

Among Oconee's cities, the households earning between \$25,000 and \$34,999 per year were the largest group in 1990. Bishop represented the highest percentage (55.6 percent) of households that earned less than \$25,000 per year. Watkinsville reported the lowest percentage (16.3 percent) of households that earned less than \$25,000 per year. North High Shoals accounted for the highest percentage (18.0 percent) of household residents that earned more than \$55,000 per year. Only 6.6 percent of Bishop's households earned more than \$55,000 per year, the lowest percentage among the four cities.

Table 2-34 compares Oconee County measures of income with the counties surrounding it as reported in the 1990 Census. Table 2-35 offers a similar comparison from more recent estimates of income. Note that caution should be used in comparing income data from different sources.

Table 2-34

Income Data for the Oconee County Region, 1989			
County	Median HH Income	Median Family Income	Per Capita Income
Barrow	27,538	30,922	11,156
Athens-Clarke	20,806	30,919	11,604
Greene	20,264	23,963	9,390
Jackson	25,418	28,675	10,885
Madison	25,092	30,065	10,997
Morgan	26,018	30,628	10,713
Oconee	34,566	38,417	15,164
Oglethorpe	24,667	28,175	10,064
Walton	28,198	31,659	11,932
Georgia	29,021	33,529	13,841

Source: U.S. Census of the Population, 1990.

Table 2-35

Income Data for the Oconee County Region, 1991 - 1996					
County	Median HH Income, 1993	Per Capita Income, 1991	Per Capita Income, 1996	Per Capita Income 1996, % of State	Per Capita Income 1996, Rank in State
Barrow	30,510	14,707	18,558	80.6	59
Clarke	25,892	15,770	20,434	88.7	30
Greene	22,128	13,263	16,790	72.9	101
Jackson	28,152	14,376	18,731	81.3	54
Madison	27,976	13,972	17,925	77.8	75
Morgan	27,862	15,636	20,891	90.7	21
Oconee	40,667	18,204	23,315	101.2	9
Oglethorpe	27,396	13,906	18,213	79.1	65
Walton	31,459	15,508	18,594	80.7	58
Georgia	31,148	17,977	23,028		

Source: Georgia County Guide on Disk, 1998

Oconee County's income levels are the highest among its neighbors and higher than the state's. Within the county, the overall income figures are both higher and have increased more rapidly than the cities' income measurements. The county's income measures have increased much more rapidly than the state's since 1970, also. The difference was much greater in the decade of the 1970's than the decade of the 1980's.

These trends and comparisons reflect Oconee County's rapid growth in up-scale, mobile, professional families who have moved into the county in the past two decades as the county has become the residential area of choice for many in the Athens area. Most in-migrants are locating in subdivisions and single large lots in the unincorporated county and the cities have not aggressively annexed new growth areas.

Increasing income levels have an effect on the housing market in the county, making it more difficult for moderate and low income people to find affordable housing. As efforts are made to increase the commercial and industrial investment in the county to create a more balanced tax base, more such low- and moderate-income housing may be needed.

Insert Map 2-1 Percentage of Population by Census Tracts, 1990, Oconee County, Georgia