



# 1. \_\_\_\_\_ POPULATION

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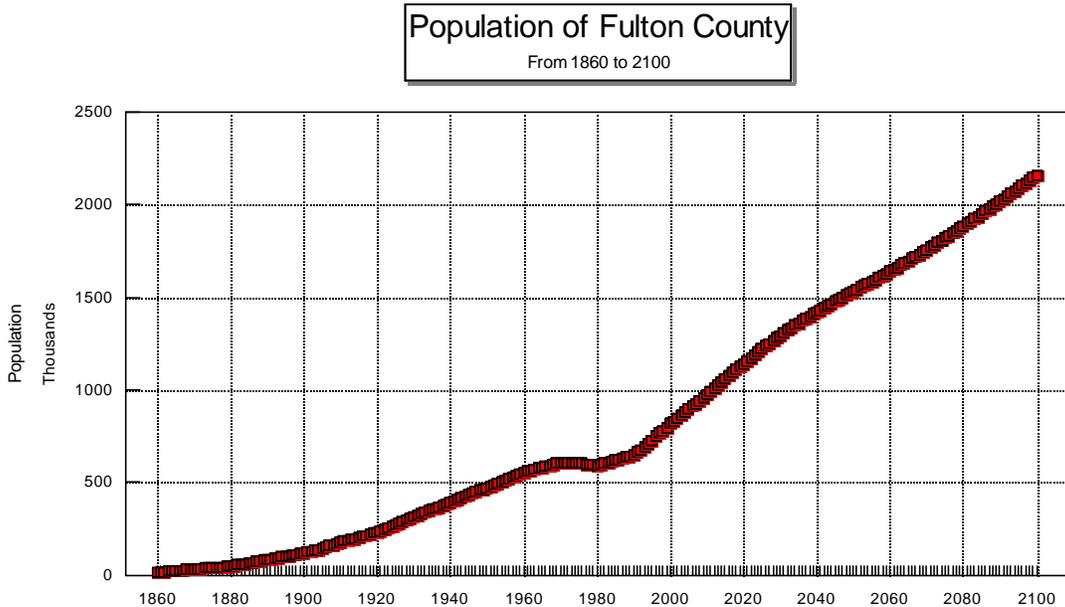
# 1.0.0.0. POPULATION

## Introduction

The Population Element provides the framework for the development of the Comprehensive Plan. The information in the Population Element paints a picture of where the county has been, the way it is now and forecasts how it will be in the future. This information is critical in determining future service needs, infrastructure requirements, and housing demand among others.

Fulton County is located at the center of the 28 county Atlanta Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and the 10 county Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) Region (see map in Appendix A). Fulton County originally was comprised of the cities of Atlanta, College Park, East Point and Hapeville. It acquired its odd and elongated shape in 1932. At that time, Milton County and its county-seat Alpharetta and the Cobb County city of Roswell merged into Fulton County. To the south, Campbell County and its county seat Fairburn and the cities of Palmetto, and Union City also merged with Fulton County. Fulton County has a total area of 534.5 square miles or 342,094 acres (Map 1-1).

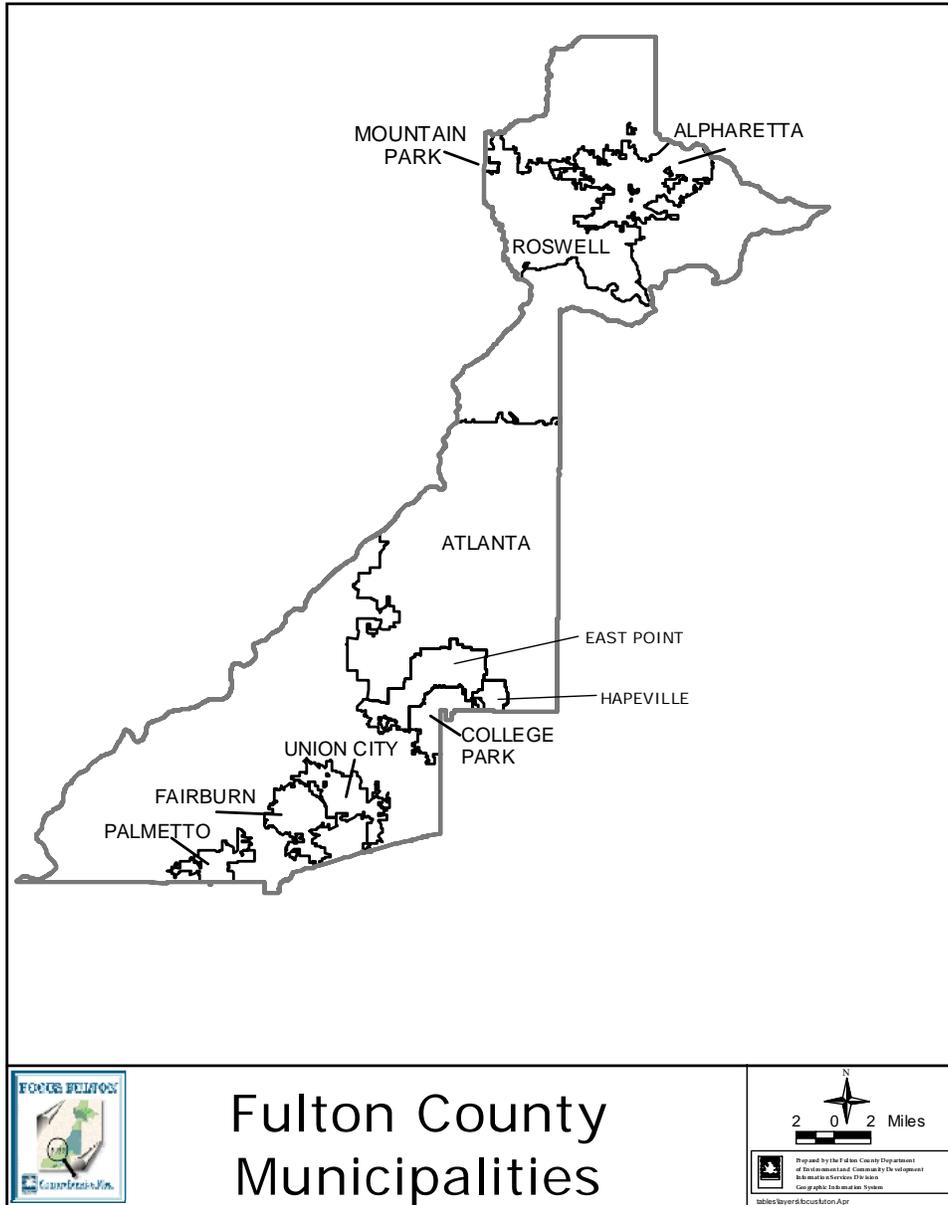
Fulton County’s population has grown steadily since its creation more than 150 years ago in 1853 and it is projected to continue to grow (Graph 1-1). Transportation has been the main engine of that growth since construction of the railroads in the 1830s. At that time, railroads were remaking the settlement patterns of America.



Graph 1-1: Fulton Population 1860-2100

Source: Fulton County Department of Environment and Community Development annual counts, estimates and forecasts based on decennial United States Bureau of the Census, counts for 1860-2000, a building permit model for current estimates and forecasts through 2040, and share of the state and nation thereafter.





Map 1-1: Fulton County Municipalities





Many of the cities in Fulton County, particularly those in South Fulton and the City of Atlanta, owe their existence to the railroads. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, transportation continued to fuel the growth of the City of Atlanta and Fulton County as well as the surrounding cities and counties with the construction of Hartsfield-Jackson Airport, the interstate highway system and continued investment in the rail network.

Today Fulton County and the City of Atlanta sit at the center of railroads, MARTA, the airport, and highway transportation networks. Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport is the busiest in the world (with 83.6 million passengers taking off or landing in 2004). The cargo rail network transports large tonnage of goods through the region. The MARTA rail transit system handles 500,000 riders boarding each day, and the interstate highway network carries average daily traffic volumes close to the highest in the nation (over 300,000 in some stretches of I-285 and I-85).

The transportation infrastructure is also the engine of job growth and creation. Thirteen of the US's largest corporations (of the Fortune 500) are headquartered in the Atlanta Region. Due in part to the transportation network, the economy of Fulton County and the Atlanta Region have prospered. This has created numerous jobs which bring population into the County and the region.

### **Forecasting Sources, Methods**

Fulton County's Department of Environment and Community Development (E&CD) uses a building permit model to estimate population. The forecasts are based on a gradual reduction in permits as the remaining vacant buildable land diminishes. This model was calibrated to the 1990 to 2000 US Census, but is different than the Census Bureau's Estimates ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov), click on estimates) and Atlanta Regional Commission's (ARC) County Forecasts to 2030 found on their website ([www.atlantaregional.com](http://www.atlantaregional.com)).

Building permits issued for new housing units are a leading indicator of population growth. Permits suggest that most counties in the region have exceeded the Atlanta Regional Commission's (ARC) forecasts and those prepared by Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) (This forecast can be found at DCA's "Plan Builder" located at their website [www.GeorgiaPlanning.com](http://www.GeorgiaPlanning.com)). For instance, the 2005 Fulton County population estimate of 904,801 persons already is very close to the Woods & Poole forecast of 905,240 for 2020. The building permit model estimates can be contrasted with the ARC census tract forecasts which E&CD prorates up to the higher E&CD countywide totals and uses for small area forecasts.

Fulton County uses a permit driven method which starts with total housing units from the previous year which are incremented with 95% of housing units authorized by building permits issued (5% are never completed for whatever reason) and decremented with 0.46% to account for losses due to demolitions and net conversions. This results in the current year total housing units. From the total housing units are subtracted the number of vacant units to obtain households. Households times average household size yields total household population to which is added group quarters population to get total population.





The vacant housing units are estimated by assuming a vacancy rate and multiplying it times the total housing units calculated above. The assumption is that the vacancy rates will remain at the 2000 level unless hard data indicates a change. Average household size will be discussed in Section 1.2.2.0 which follows, but generally average household size has been declining over time, and the nation's household size measured in each decennial census from 1790 to 2000 has declined. Annual census surveys have noted some brief increases, but these are generally during severe recessions. The current 2004 estimate of household size is 2.39 persons per household.

The model assumes that there will be a gradual reduction in the number of permits issued reflecting the increasing difficulty in obtaining permits and the decreasing availability of suitable vacant land. Table 1-1 which follows is the current output of the model. As time permits, this model will be updated and refined to establish the holding capacity of the land under the land use policies to be determined by this plan. This is then a system with feedback loops. It is also a system which involves ten independent cities which also have their own policies, plans and permit issuing capability. Six of those cities: Alpharetta, East Point, Fairburn, Hapeville, Roswell and Union City fall entirely within Fulton County, but four extend beyond the County boundaries: Atlanta into DeKalb County, College Park into Clayton County, Mountain Park into Cherokee County and Palmetto into Coweta County. The 2004 permitted units show 16,919 units yielding a 2005 population estimate of 904,796 persons in Fulton County. This table will be recalculated to reflect the jump in permitting activity. Each table in this element indicates the sources. The specific source of data is given instead of just indicating: "Census Bureau", a specific web site, or published table number and publication title is indicated.

**Table 1-1: Fulton County, Georgia, Annual Demographic Counts, Estimates and Forecasts, 1990 to 2030**

Year	Total Units Permitted	Total Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units	Total Households	Average Household Size	Population in Households	Group Quarters Population	Total Population
1990	6,192	297,503	40,363	257,140	2.44	626,974	21,977	648,951
1991	3,836	302,008	39,249	262,758	2.45	643,968	22,891	666,859
1992	3,914	304,253	37,804	266,449	2.44	651,415	23,478	674,893
1993	5,107	306,562	36,340	270,222	2.49	671,610	24,538	696,149
1994	7,805	309,994	34,976	275,018	2.50	686,994	25,440	712,434
1995	8,916	315,973	33,847	282,126	2.48	700,407	26,283	726,690
1996	8,124	322,980	32,753	290,227	2.49	721,476	27,431	748,906
1997	8,103	329,202	31,504	297,698	2.48	738,232	28,433	766,665
1998	8,098	335,375	30,179	305,196	2.46	752,094	29,339	781,433
1999	9,157	341,515	28,781	312,733	2.45	767,260	30,310	797,570
2000	9,621	348,632	27,390	321,242	2.44	784,622	31,384	816,006
2001	10,855	356,157	27,981	328,176	2.43	797,039	31,950	828,988
2002	10,824	364,820	28,662	336,158	2.41	811,795	32,583	844,378
2003	12,297	373,413	29,337	344,076	2.40	826,178	33,206	859,384
2004	12,197	383,366	30,119	353,247	2.39	843,333	33,939	877,272
2005	12,097	393,177	30,890	362,288	2.37	859,928	34,662	894,589
2006	11,997	402,849	31,649	371,199	2.36	875,967	35,367	911,334
2007	11,897	412,380	32,398	379,982	2.35	891,460	36,044	927,504





**Table 1-1: Fulton County, Georgia, Annual Demographic Counts, Estimates and Forecasts, 1990 to 2030**

Year	Total Units Permitted	Total Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units	Total Households	Average Household Size	Population in Households	Group Quarters Population	Total Population
2008	11,797	421,772	33,136	388,636	2.33	906,411	36,705	943,116
2009	11,697	431,026	33,863	397,163	2.32	920,828	37,341	958,169
2010	11,597	440,142	34,579	405,562	2.30	934,717	37,961	972,678
2011	11,497	449,120	35,285	413,835	2.30	952,347	38,720	991,067
2012	11,397	457,962	35,979	421,983	2.30	969,630	39,466	1,009,096
2013	11,297	466,668	36,663	430,005	2.29	986,569	40,200	1,026,769
2014	11,197	475,239	37,337	437,902	2.29	1,003,167	40,921	1,044,089
2015	11,097	483,675	38,000	445,676	2.29	1,019,426	41,631	1,061,057
2016	10,997	491,977	38,652	453,325	2.28	1,035,349	42,300	1,077,649
2017	10,897	500,146	39,294	460,852	2.28	1,050,938	42,956	1,093,894
2018	10,797	508,182	39,925	468,257	2.28	1,066,196	43,599	1,109,795
2019	10,697	516,085	40,546	475,539	2.27	1,081,126	44,229	1,125,355
2020	10,597	523,857	41,156	482,701	2.27	1,095,730	44,846	1,140,576
2021	10,497	531,498	41,757	489,741	2.27	1,111,712	45,523	1,157,236
2022	10,397	539,008	42,347	496,662	2.27	1,127,422	46,190	1,173,612
2023	10,297	546,389	42,927	503,462	2.27	1,142,860	46,846	1,189,706
2024	10,197	553,641	43,496	510,144	2.27	1,158,028	47,492	1,205,520
2025	10,097	560,764	44,056	516,708	2.27	1,172,926	48,128	1,221,054
2026	9,997	567,759	44,606	523,153	2.27	1,187,557	48,759	1,236,316
2027	9,897	574,626	45,145	529,481	2.27	1,201,922	49,380	1,251,302
2028	9,797	581,367	45,675	535,692	2.27	1,216,021	49,991	1,266,012
2029	9,697	587,981	46,194	541,787	2.27	1,229,857	50,592	1,280,449
2030	9,597	594,470	46,704	547,766	2.27	1,243,429	51,183	1,294,612

Assumptions: 95.00%: of permitted units are actually built. Recent comparisons of permits to Certificates of Occupancy show 97%. 0.46%: times the previous year's housing units accounts for net demolition and conversion loss. These rates when used iteratively from the 1990 census counts and annual permitted units produce the 2000 census count numbers. 100: Annual reduction in number of permits as the supply of easily developed land diminishes.

Source: Building permits for all of Fulton County through 2002 are from the Census Bureau at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov), click on "C" go to "Construction" and go to "Building Permits". Year 1990 and 2000 data except for permitted units are from the 1990 and 2000 Census and are available on the web site: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov), select "Your gateway to Census 2000" and scroll down to "Summary File 1" column on right. 1990 data is further down next to the bottom in the middle column.

**Bold numbers are Census Counts or actual Permitted Units**

### 1.1.1.0 Total Population

#### 1.1.1.1 Inventory

Fulton County has an estimated 2005 population of 904,796 and the 10 county Atlanta Region has a population of 3,923,462. The 28 county Atlanta Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) contains 4.9 million people, which is more than half of Georgia's population of 9.1 million people (Table 1-2). Almost all of the population growth in the MSA from 1980 to 2005 has been in the Atlanta suburbs. The population of the Atlanta Region has been increasing as a percentage of the State of Georgia; from approximately 12% in 1900 to almost 42% in 2000. The suburban portion of the Atlanta Region grew by nearly 2 million people between 1980 and 2000. The population in





counties to the north and east seemed to be generally higher than those in the south and west. This suggests a new center of population for the region some twelve miles to the north east of downtown Atlanta (approximately in the vicinity of Peachtree-DeKalb airport). The growth edge appears to be in a wide band about fifteen miles from this center.

Fulton County is the 52<sup>nd</sup> largest county in the nation based on the 2000 Census Bureau population estimates and the most populous county in Georgia. It contained 14% of the state's population in 1960. Since 1980, Fulton County has had 10% of the state's population. It will continue to be close to 10% over the next 20 years. Fulton County had 60% of the Atlanta Region's population in 1950. However, as a result of growth in surrounding counties as well as an increase in the number of Counties making up the Atlanta Region, Fulton County's share of the Atlanta Region's population dropped from 25% to 23% between 1990 and 2000 (Table 1-3).

After losing population between 1970 and 1980, Fulton County added 59,047 residents between 1980 and 1990. The annual rate of growth accelerated from 0.81% to 2.31% between 1990 and 2000 when the population grew by 167,055. The fast rate of growth continued between 2000 and 2004 and is projected to continue over the next 20 years, albeit at a slower rate. Fulton County is currently growing at a rate of 2.08% with the region growing at a current annual rate of 2.14% per year. Both are growing at a faster rate than the state's current growth rate of 1.68% and the United States growth rate of 0.92%.

One leading indicator of growth is the number of building permits issued for new housing units. The Atlanta Metropolitan Area (28 County) had the highest number of permitted privately-owned housing units in the nation in 2003 and again in 2004. Its 2004 tally of 74,457 units permitted was highest of all 360 regions including Phoenix (64,229), New York (57,222), Houston (53,229) and Dallas (53,010). In 2003, Fulton County issued 12,297 permits (including the City of Atlanta and the nine other incorporated Cities), but for 2004, 16,919 permits were issued making it the highest in the region and setting a 25 year record. This is a level never experienced before and contrasts with the 6,192 permits issued in 1990. Building permit activity has shown an average of over 10,000 new units constructed each year in Fulton County for the last four years. Fulton County is forecast to have a million residents in 2012 and 1,221,054 by 2025. This is an increase of 316,353 or 35%.

Between 2000 and 2005 Fulton County's total population grew by 88,795 people from 816,006 in 2000 to an estimated 904,796 in 2005. In this period there were 66,881 births, 30,391 deaths and 52,305 net in-migrants. Thus the net natural increase (births minus deaths) was 36,490 or 41.1% of the total growth while net migration was 58.9%. Note that births (66,881) were much higher than in-migrants (52,305); thus the County is to a large extent, accommodating its own children.

On April 15, 2005, the U.S. Census Bureau released population estimates indicating that the 2004 population of Fulton County was 814,438, a loss of 1,568 people from the 2000 Census count of 816,006. This estimate is obviously flawed given that 43,597 units of housing were permitted in the four years, 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003, and the number of licensed drivers in Fulton County increased from 564,124 in 2000 to 664,701 in 2003. This increase of 100,577 licensed drivers coupled with increases in school enrollments suggests that the Census Bureau has





underestimated Fulton County's population. It is the intent of E&CD to submit a formal challenge over the next several months<sup>1</sup>. For more census statistics and forecasts on Fulton County, please see Table 1 in Appendix A. On September 30, 2005, the Census Bureau accepted Fulton County's challenge and changed the 2004 population estimate from 814,438 to 905,082.

**Table 1-2: US, Georgia, Atlanta MSA, ARC and Fulton County Population 1970-2030**

Year	United States Population	United States Growth Rate	Georgia Population	Annual Georgia Growth Rate	28 County Metro. Statistical Area (MSA)	MSA Growth Rate	ARC-10 County Population	Annual ARC Growth Rate	Fulton County Population	Annual Fulton County Growth Rate	Fulton County Share of Georgia
1970	203,211,926	1.15%	4,587,930	1.43%	1,842,331	2.69%	1,503,122	3.01%	607,592	0.77%	13.24%
1980	226,545,805	1.20%	5,462,982	1.63%	2,326,639	2.21%	1,896,277	2.20%	589,904	-0.62%	10.80%
1990	248,709,873	1.12%	6,478,216	1.59%	3,069,425	2.63%	2,514,066	2.68%	648,951	0.81%	10.02%
1995	265,304,468	1.21%	7,314,038	2.34%	3,630,363	3.28%	2,951,174	3.13%	726,690	2.00%	9.94%
2000	281,421,906	1.15%	8,186,453	2.22%	4,247,981	3.12%	3,429,379	2.98%	816,006	1.59%	9.97%
2004	292,849,400	0.92%	8,829,383	1.68%	4,708,297	2.14%	3,549,149	0.95%	877,273	2.08%	9.94%
2005	295,507,134	0.92%	8,925,796	1.49%	4,931,336	1.70%	3,579,092	0.84%	904,796	3.14%	10.14%
2006	298,211,600	0.91%	9,058,453	1.44%	4,954,383	1.67%	3,609,035	0.90%	911,334	0.72%	10.06%
2007	300,892,700	0.90%	9,191,110	1.43%	4,977,430	1.66%	3,638,977	0.88%	927,504	1.77%	10.09%
2008	303,573,800	0.89%	9,323,766	1.42%	5,000,000	1.65%	3,668,920	0.87%	943,116	1.68%	10.12%
2009	306,254,900	0.88%	9,456,423	1.41%	5,023,524	1.64%	3,698,862	0.86%	958,169	1.60%	10.13%
2010	308,936,000	0.88%	9,589,080	1.16%	5,046,571	1.39%	3,728,805	0.61%	972,678	1.51%	10.14%
2015	322,366,000	0.84%	10,230,578	1.28%	5,445,900	1.53%	4,007,320	1.44%	1,061,057	1.63%	10.37%
2020	335,805,000	0.81%	10,843,753	1.13%	5,855,860	1.45%	4,285,836	1.34%	1,140,576	1.35%	10.52%
2025	349,439,000	0.80%	11,438,622	1.08%	6,279,373	1.40%	4,564,351	1.26%	1,221,054	1.29%	10.67%
2030	363,584,000	0.77%	12,017,838	0.85%	6,551,872	0.85%	4,762,425	0.85	1,294,612	1.11%	10.77%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov census counts and estimates released through 04/26/2005. Regional forecasts were based on Woods and Poole Economics, Inc. provided by Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and updated with Census Estimates. Fulton County's estimates and forecasts are determined using a building permit method. Revised 04/26/2005  
Note: The 2004 population estimate will be revised to 905,082 as a result of the challenge submitted to the Census Bureau and accepted by them. The 2005-2030 figures will be revised.

**Table 1-3: Population Growth and Forecasts**

Year	United States	Georgia		Atlanta Region (ARC) 10 County		Fulton County		Atlanta (Total Including DeKalb Portion)	
		#	% of US	#	% of GA	#	% of Region	#	% Fulton
1900	75,994,575	2,216,331	2.92	258,541	11.85	117,363	45.39	89,872	76.58
1950	150,679,361	3,444,578	2.29	792,211	23.00	473,572	59.78	331,314	69.96
1990	248,709,873	6,478,216	2.60	2,514,066	38.81	648,951	25.81	394,017	60.72
2000	281,421,906	8,186,453	2.91	3,429,379	41.89	816,006	23.79	416,474	51.04
2005	295,507,134	8,925,796	3.02	3,579,092	40.10	904,796	25.28	455,624	50.36
2010	308,935,581	9,589,080	3.09	3,728,805	38.88	972,678	26.08	494,632	50.85
2015	322,365,787	10,230,578	3.10	4,007,320	39.17	1,061,057	26.48	537,354	50.64
2020	335,804,546	10,843,753	3.23	4,285,836	39.52	1,140,576	26.61	575,862	50.49
2025	349,439,199	11,438,622	3.27	4,564,351	39.90	1,221,054	26.75	616,216	50.47
2030	363,584,435	12,017,838	3.31	4,762,425	39.62	1,294,612	27.18	635,263	49.07

Source: U.S. Census Bureau counts, estimates and 04/21/2005 forecasts and Fulton County Department of Environment and Community Development estimates, forecasts and calculations revised through 04/26/2005.

<sup>1</sup> Fulton County submitted a challenge to the Census' Fulton County population estimates. That challenge was accepted in October 2005. Their new 2004 population estimate is 905,802.





Population in Cities: According to the 2000 Census, approximately 73% of Fulton County's population is in its 10 cities. The City of Atlanta grew in the 1990s and 2000s, after a declining population in the 1970s and 1980s. The City of Atlanta, the state's largest city, has a 2005 population of 455,624 of which 424,873 is in Fulton County. Mountain Park, the smallest city in Fulton County, has a population of 562 of which 551 is in Fulton County (Table 1-4). Except for the City of Atlanta, some of the growth in the cities has resulted from annexation of unincorporated areas. In 2004, two-thirds of the building permits were issued in the cities. Due to this level of permitting activity, the cities are forecasted to continue to grow.

Population in unincorporated Fulton County: Fulton County Environment and Community Development Department has created four planning areas to recognize parts of the County which have very different characteristics (see Map 1-2). The planning areas are: North Fulton, an area of 79.5 square miles and located north of the Chattahoochee River, Sandy Springs, an area of 38.7 square miles north of the City of Atlanta and south of the Chattahoochee River, Southwest Fulton, the area west of the City of Atlanta and east of the Chattahoochee River with 25.6 square miles, and South Fulton, an area of 158 square miles south of the City of Atlanta.

According to the 2000 US Census, the unincorporated portion of Fulton County had a population of 229,916 persons. Population in the unincorporated areas has grown from 17% in 1980 to a forecasted 27% in 2005 as a percentage of the Fulton County population. Between 1980 and 2005, unincorporated Fulton County experienced dramatic growth, growing by 144% (Table 1-5). North Fulton, the fastest growing planning area, grew by 638% between 1980 and 2005. Unincorporated Fulton County is forecasted to grow by almost 44% between 2005 and 2025. South Fulton, projected to be the fastest growing planning area between 2005 and 2025, is expected to grow by 101% and is expected to be more populous than North Fulton by 2035.

**Table 1-4: 1980-2025 Population and Forecasts in Fulton County Cities and Unincorporated Areas**

Area	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
<b>Cities:</b> (Only the Fulton County portions are shown here, the remainders are at the bottom)								
Alpharetta	3,128	13,002	34,854	37,132	42,120	44,027	45,509	47,194
Atlanta (1.)	387,739	357,704	386,699	447,245	462,908	505,054	542,985	582,678
College Park (2.)	21,143	17,337	18,810	18,968	20,797	21,937	22,871	23,622
East Point	37,486	34,697	39,595	38,653	44,704	47,579	50,021	52,763
Fairburn	3,466	4,878	5,464	8,561	9,075	11,038	12,926	14,831
Hapeville	6,166	5,483	6,180	6,175	6,849	7,441	7,970	8,490
Mountain Park (3.)	376	242	496	500	606	642	672	687
Palmetto (4.)	1,941	2,652	3,073	4,225	4,492	5,661	6,529	7,396
Roswell	23,337	53,743	79,334	82,912	90,587	94,911	98,325	101,274
Union City	4,780	10,210	11,621	15,250	15,264	17,008	18,620	20,003
City Total	489,585	499,808	586,126	659,621	696,643	755,367	807,366	859,997
<b>Unincorporated Planning Areas:</b>								
North Fulton	12,859	34,152	91,400	93,192	100,300	106,553	111,850	117,211
Sandy Springs	46,877	68,243	85,835	86,698	92,529	97,546	101,678	105,861
SW Fulton	8,863	10,210	11,300	12,851	15,152	17,368	19,446	21,541
South Fulton	31,720	36,538	41,345	52,439	66,639	80,611	94,000	107,489
Unincorporated Fulton Total	100,319	149,143	229,880	245,180	274,620	302,078	326,975	352,103



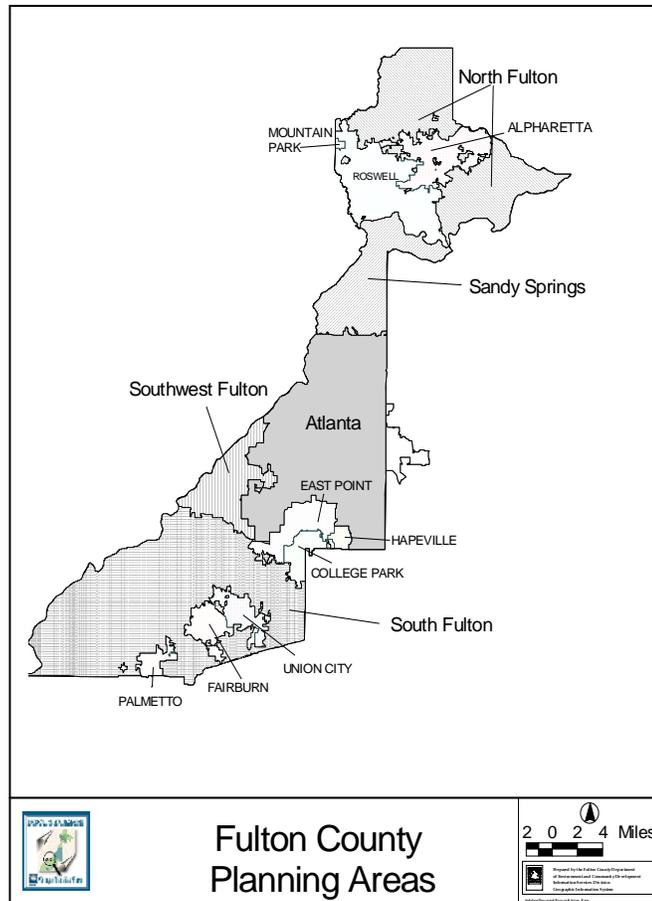


**Table 1-4: 1980-2025 Population and Forecasts in Fulton County Cities and Unincorporated Areas**

Area	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Fulton County	589,904	648,951	816,006	904,796	972,678	1,061,057	1,140,576	1,221,054
<b>City Remainders in Other Counties:</b>								
(1.) in DeKalb	37,283	33,539	29,779	32,370	31,724	32,301	32,877	33,538
(2.) in Clayton	3,489	3,395	1,544	1,433	1,400	1,300	1,200	1,100
(3.) in Cherokee	2	12	10	10	15	19	23	27
(4.) in Coweta	46,877	321	327	449	843	1,286	1,729	2,171

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census Counts for 1980, 1990, and 2000. Permitted Unit Population Estimating Model for 2005 by E&CD. Forecasts are based on ARC modified to Fulton County control totals. Revised 04/26/2005.

Note: Sandy Springs was incorporated as of December 1, 2005, after the adoption of this plan.



Map 1-2: Fulton County Planning Areas





**Table 1-5: Population Increase by Planning Area**

Planning Area	1980-2005		2005-2025	
	Population Increase	Percent Growth	Population Increase	Percent Growth
North Fulton	80,333	624.72%	24,019	25.77%
Sandy Springs	39,821	84.95%	19,163	22.10%
Southwest Fulton	3,988	45.00%	8,690	67.62%
South Fulton	20,719	65.32%	55,050	104.98%
Unincorporated Fulton	144,861	144.40%	106,923	43.61%

Source: Table 1-4 calculations by E&CD. Revised: 04/26/2005

**1.1.1.2. Assessment**

Fulton County was formed in 1853 and its population as a County was first counted at 14,427 in the United States Census of 1860. Graph 1-1 shows the population counted in each census from 1860 through 2000, population estimates through 2005 and forecasts through 2100. The reason for the dip from 1970 to 1980 has been speculated as “white flight”, but also probably related to the buildout of the city of Atlanta and a decline in average household size and maybe due to undercounting by the Census Bureau. Almost all of the population decline was in the City of Atlanta, which lost 71,951 people between 1970 and 1980 (East Point lost 4,084 people and Hapeville lost 4,084, likely due to interstate highway construction and the expansion of Hartsfield-Jackson Airport). The entire county lost just 17,688, meaning that the unincorporated part was growing quite rapidly in this period.

Between 1980 and 2004, two million people were added to the Atlanta Region. This rapid growth of population separated from their work places has created heavy traffic volumes ranking among the highest in the nation. As a strategy to address burdened infrastructure, some residents at community meetings for this plan suggested that growth be stopped. This is unrealistic since the County’s births far exceed its deaths and growth continues in the world, the nation, the state, and particularly the region. The 2003 to 2004 growth rate for Fulton County was 2.08% and 2.16% for the City of Atlanta, compared to 1.19% for the world, 0.92% for the nation, 1.68% for the state and 2.14% for the Atlanta MSA (28 county). These growth rates are not believed to be sustainable at these levels, particularly considering the lackluster economic growth in 2004 and anticipated in 2005. Despite slow economic growth after the 2000 recession, building permits for new housing units are being issued in unprecedented numbers (12,297 units permitted in 2003 and 16,919 in 2004).

**1.1.2.0 Seasonal Population**

**1.1.2.1 Inventory**

Seasonal population is not a significant factor in Fulton County. There were just 2,416 vacant seasonal housing units counted in the 2000 Census, but this was up from 545 in 1990. These are units held for occasional or seasonal use, but there is no fixed “season” in Fulton County as there might be in a beach or mountain resort. There are seasonal events and major attractions in Atlanta which draw significant crowds. The Dogwood Festival, which has been a well organized





event and has been running each year since 1936, draws about 300,000 people (100,000 per day). The Renaissance Festival, numerous music festivals, community festivals, sporting events, such as the Tour de Georgia, also draw large crowds into Fulton County throughout the year.

### 1.1.2.2 Assessment

Many other places in the United States have created festivals and events which add significantly to their quality of life. Annapolis, Maryland, for instance has huge tourism loads for a city of 35,000. It has a Sailboat show which draws as many as 100,000 people over a four day period. New Orleans is perhaps the most extreme with its Mardi Gras and Jazz Festival. The 1895 Cotton States and International Exposition, at the site of the current day Piedmont Park, drew nearly a million people in its 100 day time length. This event enriched the lives of Atlanta's residents and many of the improvements remain to this day. One hundred and one years later the 1996 Olympic Games had 10,318 athletes from 197 nations, was covered by 15,108 media persons and was watched by well over a billion people throughout the world.

The new 200 million dollar Atlanta Aquarium is scheduled to open in the fall of 2005 and construction is well underway. Based on Baltimore City's much smaller National Aquarium which drew 1.6 million people in 2004 and the Monterey Bay Aquarium which drew 1.7 million in 2003 , it is likely that Atlanta's will draw nearly 2 million in 2006. Its collection of 55,000 animals from 500 species will be five times as large as Baltimore's. This together with a new World of Coca-Cola building is anticipated to increase the number of visitors to the County. But the 5,500 people per day average are not in the same league as the 750,000 daily in-commuters to jobs and universities located in Fulton County.

### 1.1.3.0 Daytime Population

Daytime population is an estimate of the number of people who would be counted in Fulton County at working hours (at noon for example) on a typical day. It is the resident population less the out commuters plus the in commuters plus the occupants of hotels plus non-hotel visitors to major attractions in the County. There are others who may also be in Fulton, but are not counted because of lack of information (such as day students at local colleges and universities or persons visiting professional offices).

### 1.1.3.1 Inventory

The daytime population is significant in Fulton County (Table 1-6). The number of in-commutes is very large due to the location of job centers in the Airport, Downtown, Midtown, Buckhead, Perimeter, Fulton Industrial Boulevard and along GA 400. The large number of hotel rooms and convention facilities, such as Georgia World Congress Center and the International Congress Center, make convention attendants an important component of the day time population.

The number of important attractions located in Fulton County such as The King Center, The World of Coca-Cola Center, CNN Center, The Atlanta History Center, The Woodruff Arts Center, the Atlanta Zoo, the Margaret Mitchell House, Centennial Olympic Park as well as Major League sporting events and numerous art events attract 34 million day visitors per year to Fulton County.





In addition, major university day students are unmeasured but significant. The Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta International Airport, although mostly located in Clayton County generates very large hotel occupancy in Fulton County.

<b>Table 1-6: Fulton County Daytime Population in 2000 and 2004</b>		
<b>Population</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2004</b>
Resident Population	816,006	873,002
- Out-commuters	119,572	127,924
+ In-Commuters	717,702	754,678
+ Hotel Occupants	6,903	7,385
+ Day Trip Population	60,486	64,711
= Daytime Population	1,481,525	1,571,852
Source: 2000 Census, 2004 estimates Fulton County E&CD		

**1.1.3.1. Assessment**

The daytime population estimate gives a sense of how many people are present in Fulton County during the working hours of a typical day. The components measure the commuting of County residents out to jobs elsewhere, the number of outside residents commuting to jobs located in Fulton County, and people visiting Fulton County either staying in hotels or spending part of the day to visit major attractions or to attend an event. There are many others who could be added or subtracted to this total (examples are day students, people visiting professional offices, people visiting friends and relatives, etc.), but estimating these would amount to guesses since no source of data could be provided.

The land use and planning aspects are numerous. The daily workers and visitors here generate demand for parking, office space, transit services, meals, and sundry goods and services. The movement of people to and from work, to and from restaurants, to and from secondary business locations generate pedestrian, transit and vehicular trips. These impact the sidewalks, transit and streets of the County as well as water, sewer and emergency services.

**1.2.0.0. Households**

**1.2.1.0 Number of Households**

**1.2.1.1 Inventory**

Total population includes household population and group quarters population (Tables 1-7 and 1-8). The household population lives in occupied housing units also called households. Group quarter's population resides in nursing homes, college dormitories, military barracks, and prison, jail or detention facilities. Fulton County census tracts with colleges such as Georgia Institute of Technology and Atlanta University Center; with military installation, such as Fort McPherson; and with jails such as the Federal Penitentiary and the Fulton County jail have large group quarters population. Of all of Fulton County's 2000 population, just 3.85% were in group quarters. The bulk of the group quarter's population falls in the City of Atlanta (28,857 in Atlanta City's Fulton





County portion or 7.46% of its population of 386,699). Group quarter's population is projected to remain at a constant share of total population, although increases in nursing homes will be related to growth in the 85 and over population.

The number of households in Fulton County has increased by 62.63% from 1980 to 2005, a higher rate than the 53.38% increase in total population. This is largely due to the decline in average household size (Table 1-9). The number of households is projected to increase by 42% by 2025, while the population is projected to increase by 36%.

The North Fulton planning area has the highest number of households, corresponding to its highest population of the Planning Areas. The unincorporated part of Fulton County had just 847 persons in group quarters or 0.37% of its population. Most of this (486) was in Sandy Springs nursing homes.

**Table 1-7: Fulton County Household Population and Household Size**

	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total Population	589,904	648,951	816,006	904,589	972,678	1,061,057	1,140,576	1,221,054
Group Quarters Population	18,046	21,977	31,384	35,057	37,961	41,631	44,846	48,128
Household Population	571,858	626,974	784,622	859,928	934,717	1,019,426	1,095,730	1,172,926
Number of Households	225,308	257,140	321,242	362,288	405,562	445,676	482,701	516,708
Number of Families	144,901	155,887	185,721	204,361	223,073	238,876	251,939	262,429
% family HH are of total Households	64.3%	60.6%	57.8%	56.4%	55.5%	53.5%	52.1%	50.7%
Average HH Size	2.538	2.438	2.442	2.374	2.305	2.287	2.270	2.290

Source: Fulton County E&CD permit driven population model and Census Bureau Census of Population and Housing Printed Report for Georgia, 1980, www.census.gov website 100% counts for 1990 (STF-1) and 2000 (SF-1). Revised: 4/26/2005

**Table 1-8: Summary of Total Population, Group Quarters Population, Household Population, Average Household Size, Households, Vacant Housing Units and Total Housing Units for Cities and Planning Areas of Fulton County, in 2000**

City or Fulton County Planning Area	Fulton Part and Part Elsewhere	Population	Group Quarters	Household Population	Average Household Size	Households	Vacant Housing Units	Total Housing Units
Incorporated Cities:								
Alpharetta	All Fulton	34,854	80	34,774	2.62	13,259	1,411	14,670
City of Atlanta	Fulton Part	386,695	28,857	357,838	2.29	156,156	13,218	169,374
	DeKalb Part	29,779	90	29,689	2.45	12,111	5,440	17,551
	Tot. Atlanta	416,474	28,947	387,527	2.30	168,267	18,658	186,925
College Park	Fulton Part	18,838	153	18,685	2.59	7,208	391	7,599
	Clayton Part	1,544	13	1,531	2.52	607	73	752





**Table 1-8: Summary of Total Population, Group Quarters Population, Household Population, Average Household Size, Households, Vacant Housing Units and Total Housing Units for Cities and Planning Areas of Fulton County, in 2000**

City or Fulton County Planning Area	Fulton Part and Part Elsewhere	Population	Group Quarters	Household Population	Average Household Size	Households	Vacant Housing Units	Total Housing Units
	Tot. Col. Pk.	20,382	166	20,216	2.56	7,887	464	8,351
East Point	All Fulton	39,595	438	39,157	2.70	14,479	1,158	15,637
Fairburn	All Fulton	5,464	117	5,347	2.77	1,931	74	2,005
Hapeville	All Fulton	6,180	6	6,174	2.60	2,373	165	2,538
Mountain Park	Fulton Part	496	0	496	3.14	158	85	243
	Cherokee Pt.	10	0	10	2.00	5	0	5
	Tot. Mtn. Pk.	506	0	506	3.10	163	85	248
Palmetto	Fulton Part	3,073	0	3,073	2.74	1,121	40	1,161
	Coweta Pt.	327	0	327	2.77	118	4	122
	Tot. Palmetto	3,400	0	3,400	2.74	1,239	44	1,283
Roswell	All Fulton	79,334	628	78,706	2.65	29,659	1,641	31,300
Union City	All Fulton	11,621	251	11,370	2.52	4,510	822	5,332
Planning Areas:								
North		91,309	140	91,169	2.86	31,898	1,106	33,004
Northeast		71,215	112	71,103	2.90	24,509	639	25,359
Northwest		20,094	28	20,066	2.72	7,389	467	7,645
Sandy Springs		85,781	486	85,295	2.17	39,346	3,448	42,794
South		39,681	120	39,561	2.76	14,330	3,342	17,672
Southwest		13,085	101	12,984	2.74	4,743	559	5,302
Total Unincorporated Fulton County		229,856	847	229,009	2.54	90,317	8,455	98,772
Total Cities in Fulton County		586,150	30,537	555,613	2.41	230,925	18,935	249,860
All of Fulton County		816,006	31,384	784,622	2.44	321,242	27,390	348,632

Source: Fulton County Department of Environment and Community Development (DECD) based on the 2000 Census website [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov), 2000 SF County and Places. Estimates of portions of cities in adjacent counties by Fulton County E&CD . 03/09/2005

**Table 1-9: 2000 Household Population and Household Size by Planning Area**

	Fulton County	Unincorporated Fulton County	North Fulton	Sandy Springs	Southwest Fulton	South Fulton
Household Population	784,622	229,067	91,295	85,349	11,199	41,224
# of Households	321,242	88,860	30,798	39,309	4,250	14,503
# of families	185,721	58,928	25,207	19,718	2,954	11,049
%family households	57.8%	66.3%	81.8%	50.2%	69.5%	76.2%
Avg. HH size	2.44	2.58	2.96	2.17	2.64	2.84

Source: U.S. Census, Census 2000 from [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov), Special E&CD GIS tabulation of SF-1 which contains the 100% counts.





**Table 1-10: Household Forecasts in Unincorporated Fulton County**

Planning Area	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	Diff 2005-2025
North Fulton	31,898	36,508	41,408	43,935	46,133	47,924	11,416
Sandy Springs	39,346	42,683	46,076	48,770	51,097	53,554	10,871
Southwest Fulton	4,743	5,539	6,393	7,868	9,302	10,794	5,255
South Fulton	14,330	16,955	19,781	24,686	29,468	34,350	17,395
Total	90,317	101,685	113,658	125,259	136,000	146,622	44,937

Source: E&CD GIS Special tabulation of 2000 Census Counts and E&CD Forecasts

### 1.2.1.2 Assessment

Table 1-7, showing total households, indicates a growth of 154,480 households, or 42%, between 2005 and 2025 in Fulton County. Table 1-10 indicates household forecasts by Planning Area. These forecasts are parallel to the population growth. Unincorporated Fulton County is to gain 44,937 households, equal to a 44% growth. This translates to the addition of 50,962 housing units in unincorporated Fulton County, the difference being vacant units. While unincorporated Fulton County adds new units, the plan sets policies to guide the location of these housing units. The policies call for Live Work land use designations on or within walking distance of major existing or proposed transportation corridors. It also calls for mixed uses and residences in close proximity to commercial and office uses to encourage the ability of residents to walk to stores and offices.

Moreover, the percentage of family households is forecasted to decrease from 56% in 2005 to 50% in 2025. In unincorporated Fulton County, the percentage of family households varies between the Planning Areas. North Fulton has the highest percentage of family households with 82% and Sandy Springs has the lowest with 50%. This may have implications in the type and location of housing units.

### 1.2.2.0 Average Size of Households

#### 1.2.2.1 Inventory

Population per household has been generally decreasing in the United States since the first census in 1790 and is expected to continue to decrease but at a very slow rate. Graph 1-2 illustrates the rapid decline in average household size from 1900 to 1980, and the gradual decrease since 1980. The household size in Georgia and in Fulton County parallels the decline in the nation. Fulton County's household size has decreased from 2.54 persons per household in 1980 to 2.37 persons per households in 2005. Household size is forecasted to decrease to 2.27 by 2025.

Compared to the 10 counties in the ARC Atlanta Region, Fulton County has the smallest household size. The counties at the periphery of the Atlanta Region have the largest households (Gwinnett – 2.88 Henry and Rockdale – 2.87), while those closer to the core, have the smallest

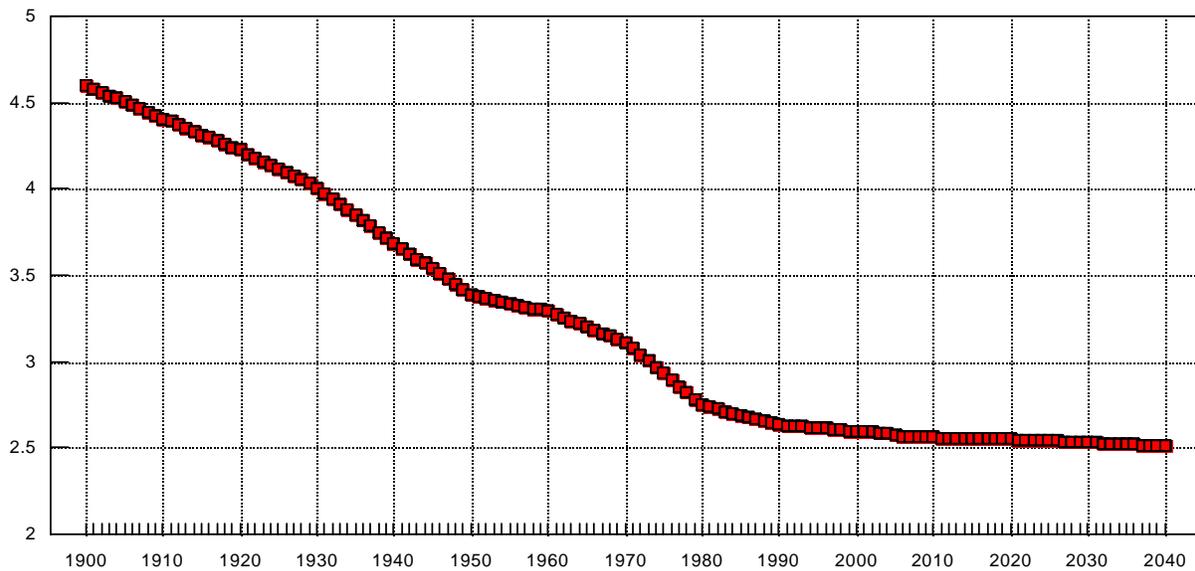




households (Cobb – 2.64 and DeKalb- 2.62). This relates to the mix of housing types with apartments and condominiums having a smaller size than single family units.

The average household size is also very variable within the County. According to the 2000 US Census, the average household size in unincorporated Fulton County was 2.58, higher than the Fulton County average household size of 2.44. In unincorporated Fulton County, household size varied from 2.17 to 2.90. According to ARC, high-growth suburban areas tend to have higher household sizes since they appeal to young families. The average household sizes in North Fulton of 2.96 and in South Fulton of 2.84 reflect this trend. On the other hand, the population per household was lowest in Sandy Springs. Sandy Springs has older neighborhoods, very affluent areas and a larger number of apartment units, all of which are factors in smaller household size.

Average Household Size, 1900-2040  
United States



Graph 1-2. Average Household Size in the United States, 1900-2040

### 1.2.2.2. Assessment

Household size is affected by the state of the economy. It tends to slow in the rate of decline or even increase slightly during recessions. This is because adult children tend to not form their own households, double up, or move back with their parents when they are unemployed. The year 2000 was a recession year and the economy is only now beginning to pick up steam.





Other factors that drive household size down include: high divorce rates, which produce family fragments living separately, and the aging of the population, resulting in the increasing numbers of widows or widowers living alone. The Census Bureau has not provided current projections of household size, but does conduct the annual American Community Survey that includes household composition and size.

Large numbers of Hispanic immigrants, many uncounted, have large household sizes and counter the 210 year downward trend in household size. The Atlanta Region has had a much lower share of the Hispanic immigrant population than the national average. This trend is changing as Fulton County catches up to the normal trend.

Population per household is expected to continue to decline countywide through the year 2025. The decline in average household size in the United States is most obvious at the extremes; the percentage of single occupant housing units has doubled from 1950 to 2003, while the percentage of households containing five or more people has dropped from 22.6% in 1960 to 9.81% in 2003.

Fulton County and Georgia should mirror the nation in this regard. But while the share of single occupant households has increased in nation, State and County, the number of households with five or more persons has increased in both the State and the County, while it declined in the nation. Moreover, Fulton County has a larger share of single person households than the US and Georgia. Table 1-11 presents 1990 and 2000 Census counts of households by size for the nation, State and County

The average household size is a key factor in the building permit driven demographic estimating and forecasting model. Households are multiplied by average household size to obtain household population. The final population is the sum of household population and group quartered population. Since the average household size has only three significant digits, small variances can result in fairly large differences in the household population. The assumption of continually declining household size may be endangered if the share of large households begins to increase.

**Table 1-11: Households by Size: 1990 and 2000 From Census Counts**

Year	All Households	One Person	Two Persons	Three Persons	Four Persons	Five or More Persons	Persons Per Household
United States							
1990	91,947,413	22,592,150	29,447,615	15,971,656	13,857,123	10,078,866	2.63
2000	105,480,101	27,227,982	34,419,634	17,452,353	14,970,059	11,410,073	2.59
Percent share:							
1990	100.00%	24.57%	32.03%	17.37%	15.07%	10.96%	
2000	100.00%	25.81%	32.63%	16.55%	14.19%	10.82%	
Georgia							
Year	All Households	One Person	Two Persons	Three Persons	Four Persons	Five or More Persons	Persons Per Household
1990	2,366,618	537,892	741,946	457,914	383,427	245,436	2.68





**Table 1-11: Households by Size: 1990 and 2000 From Census Counts**

Year	All Households	One Person	Two Persons	Three Persons	Four Persons	Five or More Persons	Persons Per Household
2000	3,006,369	710,577	963,712	551,335	460,281	320,464	2.65
Percent share:							
1990	100.00%	22.73%	31.35%	19.35%	16.20%	10.37%	
2000	100.00%	23.64%	32.06%	18.34%	15.31%	10.66%	
Fulton County							
1990	257,142	79,679	79,233	42,923	32,183	23,122	2.44
2000	321,242	103,473	98,237	49,126	39,484	30,922	2.44
Percent share:							
1990	100.00%	30.99%	30.81%	16.69%	12.52%	8.99%	
2000	100.00%	32.21%	30.58%	15.29%	12.29%	9.63%	
U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 and 1990, SF-3 Sample Data, 2000: Tables H16 & H18, 1990: H018.							

The physical size of housing in the United States has been increasing. In 1970, the average size per unit constructed was 1,500 square feet. In 2004, each unit was estimated to be 2,391 square feet, and by 2025 the average units is forecasted to be about 3,000 square feet. The average household size in 1970 was 3.11 persons resulting in 482 square feet per occupant. In 2004, the average household size had declined to 2.57 people per household and the square footage per occupant was 844. By 2025, if current trends continue, there will be nearly 1,200 square feet per occupant. The effect of this is to consume more land if floor area ratios (FAR) are constant. At the same time, the number of single person households has increased from 18.2% in 1980 to 25% in 2005 and the number of family households has decreased from 64% in 1980 to 58% in 2005.

In 2004, 95% of permitted housing were single family units many with four bedrooms despite an average household size of 2.37 persons per household and a trend towards even smaller sizes in the future. Moreover, the acreage per housing unit has been increasing rather than decreasing. This may indicate that new housing is not taking into consideration the changing household size and composition.

**1.3.0.0 Age Distribution**

**1.3.1.1 Inventory**

The median age of the population increased from 29.5 in 1980 to 32.7 in 2000 and is forecasted to increase to 34.0 by 2025. However, Fulton County has a large percentage of its population in the young working ages of both genders aged 19 through 40 as compared to the United States. This is balanced by much lower percentages of the population in ages 58 through 95. The school age population is also low in ages 10 through 18. Table 1-12 tabulates population by age from 1980 through 2025 by five year age groups.





**Table 1-12: Population by Age in Fulton County**

Age Interval	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Under 5	40,242	48,217	56,819	61,698	67,345	74,751	80,663	85,978
5 to 9	43,163	43,704	58,129	60,014	62,177	68,471	75,084	80,792
10 to 14	45,608	40,643	54,118	59,646	59,349	63,524	69,136	75,608
15 to 19	52,578	46,403	55,166	61,910	66,850	67,869	71,813	77,945
20 to 24	60,320	56,317	64,660	75,131	81,550	88,327	88,883	93,935
25 to 29	59,503	64,640	78,488	85,874	90,896	100,166	107,397	108,181
30 to 34	52,435	62,582	73,046	73,962	76,526	86,897	94,563	101,324
35 to 39	38,836	57,079	71,884	69,339	68,157	73,314	82,205	89,314
40 to 44	30,397	51,878	65,966	70,342	67,821	67,736	72,080	80,591
45 to 49	27,353	38,503	58,192	69,261	72,795	69,194	68,366	72,568
50 to 54	28,065	28,586	50,940	61,697	56,400	66,297	69,063	64,809
55 to 59	26,702	23,653	35,031	47,138	41,801	50,173	58,379	60,754
60 to 64	23,246	21,954	24,577	31,498	41,801	50,173	58,379	60,754
65 to 69	20,932	20,255	19,125	21,785	27,582	36,823	43,782	50,895
70 to 74	16,763	15,911	16,634	16,981	19,102	24,376	32,289	50,895
75 to 79	11,761	12,948	13,896	14,832	15,203	17,347	22,040	29,316
80 to 84	6,982	8,931	9,753	11,664	12,489	12,883	14,734	18,877
85 +	5,018	6,747	9,582	12,027	14,788	17,219	18,956	21,639
Median age	29.5	32.0	32.7	33.2	30.4	33.4	33.7	34.0
Total Population	589,904	648,951	816,006	904,796	972,678	1,161,057	1,140,576	1,221,054

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census for 1980, 1990 and 2000 and forecasts by Fulton County E&CD driven by U.S. Census Bureau Projections to 2100 benchmarked to the 2000 Census counts. Revised: 04/27/2005

Table 1-13 aggregates the population into six age groups representing major stages in life such as 0 to 4 years old (preschool children), 5 through 17 (total school age) and 18 through 44 year old group (starting their own households and careers). By age 44, the birth rates are close to zero and most careers are mature and settled. The peak earning years (45 through 64) contains people who have become very skilled in their careers and have historically reached their peak earnings. After age 65, there are two groups- the age 65 through 84 year olds who are still largely active, self sufficient and able, and the 85 and over group who are increasingly frail, increasingly dependent on others for transportation, health care and other services and have high rates of living in assisted living facilities and nursing homes (247 people in the 2000 Census listed their ages as 100 and over, however Census Bureau studies show a tendency of people to over-report ages in these ages).

**Table 1-13: 1980-2025 Fulton County Stage of Life Age Group Population**

Stage of Life	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
0-4 Preschool	40,242	48,217	56,819	62,180	67,345	74,751	80,663	85,978
5-17 School Age	120,318	112,189	145,347	156,030	161,636	172,732	187,308	203,167
18-44 Family Forming	262,522	311,057	376,110	395,668	411,691	443,599	473,852	504,523





**Table 1-13: 1980-2025 Fulton County Stage of Life Age Group Population**

Stage of Life	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
45-64 Peak Earning	105,366	112,696	168,740	212,296	242,843	261,328	266,952	268,270
65-84 Younger Seniors	56,438	58,045	59,408	66,363	74,377	91,429	112,844	137,475
85 + Older Senior	5,018	6,747	9,582	12,264	14,788	17,219	18,956	21,639
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>589,904</b>	<b>648,951</b>	<b>816,006</b>	<b>904,801</b>	<b>972,680</b>	<b>1,061,058</b>	<b>1,140,575</b>	<b>1,221,052</b>
<b>Percents of the Total:</b>								
0-4 Preschool	6.8%	7.4%	7.0%	6.9%	6.9%	7.0%	7.1%	7.0%
5-17 School Age	20.4%	17.3%	17.8%	17.2%	16.6%	16.3%	16.4%	16.6%
18-44 Family Forming	44.5%	47.9%	46.1%	43.7%	42.3%	41.8%	41.5%	41.3%
45-64 Peak Earning	17.9%	17.4%	20.7%	23.5%	25.0%	24.6%	23.4%	22.0%
65-84 Younger Seniors	9.6%	8.9%	7.3%	7.3%	7.6%	8.6%	9.9%	11.3%
85 + Older Senior	0.9%	1.0%	1.2%	1.4%	1.5%	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau for 1980, 1990 and 2000. 1990 and 2000 are available on the Census Bureau's web site: www.census.gov and the 1980 figures were obtained from the Atlanta-Fulton Central Library. Fulton County E&CD using a building permit method to forecast total population and drove age changes with national change rates using Jennifer Cheeseman Day's 1999 to 2100 forecasts adjusted to the 2000 census counts. Revised: 04/27/2005

In Fulton County, the largest group is the family forming persons age 18 to 44 with an estimated 43.7% of the population or 391,202 in 2005. It is expected to rise to 504,523 persons by 2025. The second largest group, with 212,296 or 23.5%, is age group 45 to 64. This is the group with greatest growth in the next five years. The population age 65 years and over is increasing dramatically as the "Baby Boom" begins to enter this age group. The younger seniors (age 65 to 84) currently number 65,614 and are forecast to increase to 137,475 by 2025, double the current figure. The 85 and older age group currently number 12,126 persons, and are expected to nearly double by 2025. If life expectancy is increased significantly by medical breakthroughs, this group could increase even more.

**Table 1-14: Stage of Life Age Group Population for Unincorporated Fulton County in 2000**

Stage of Life	North Fulton	Sandy Springs	Southwest Fulton	South Fulton	Total Unincorp.
0-4 Preschool	8,170	4,691	783	2,762	16,406
5-17, School Age	21,660	10,589	2,147	8,808	43,204
18-44 Family Forming	37,922	43,617	4,681	15,771	101,991
45-64 Peak Earning	19,842	18,558	2,909	10,871	52,180
65-84 Younger Seniors	3,519	7,178	715	2,836	14,248
85 + Older Senior	322	1,201	65	296	1,884
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>91,435</b>	<b>85,834</b>	<b>11,300</b>	<b>41,344</b>	<b>229,913</b>
<b>Percents of the Total:</b>					
0-4 Preschool	8.9%	5.5%	6.9%	6.68%	7.14%
5-17, School Age	23.7%	12.3%	19%	21.30%	18.8%
18-44 Family Forming	41.5%	50.8%	41.4%	38.14%	44.4%
45-64 Peak Earning	21.7%	21.6%	25.7%	26.3%	22.7%
65-84 Younger Seniors	3.8%	8.4%	6.3%	6.8	6.2%
85 + Older Senior	0.3%	1.4%	0.6%	0.7%	0.82%
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

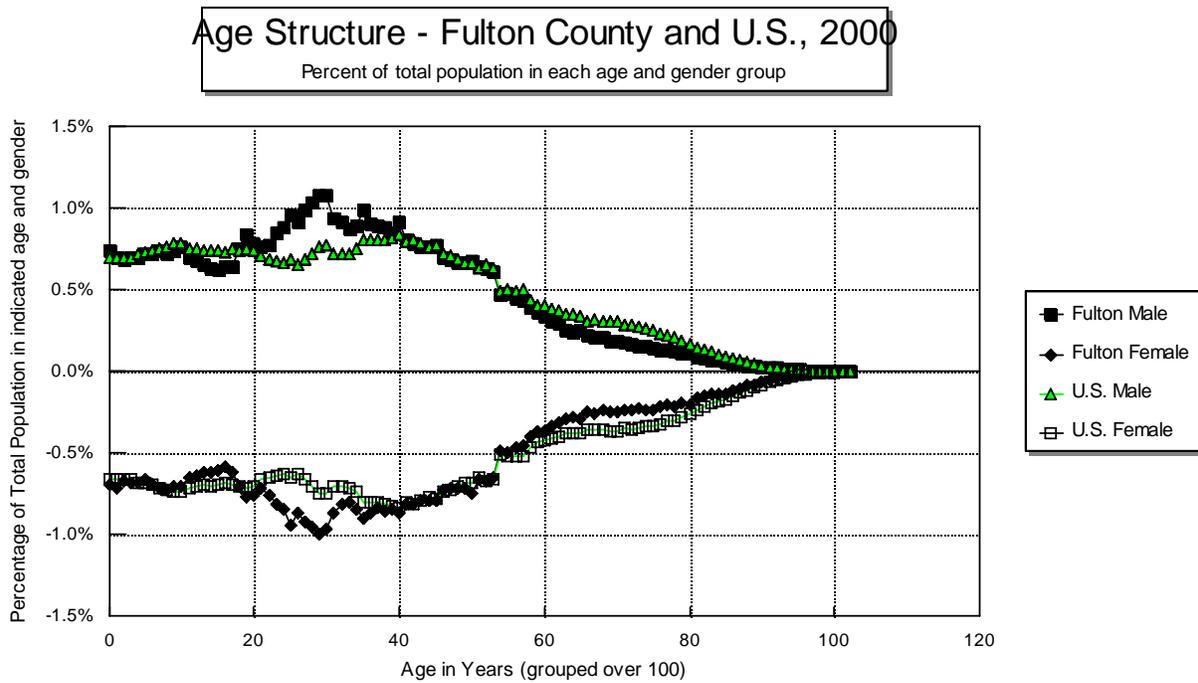
Source: United States Bureau of the Census, Census 2000, special tabulations using GIS by Planning area





Table 1-14 aggregates the population in the unincorporated Fulton County into the six age groups. The Planning Areas have different age structures reflecting the period when growth occurred. Given recent growth in North Fulton, it is not surprising that it has the highest percentage of preschool age children between 0 and age 4, (8.9%) while Sandy Springs had 5.5%, South Fulton 6.7%, and Southwest had 6.9%. Similarly the school age population is highest in North Fulton (23.7%) contrasted with 12.3% in Sandy Springs, 19.0% in Southwest Fulton and 21.3% in South Fulton and. Sandy Springs had the highest percentage in the 18 to 44 family forming group, followed by North Fulton at 41.5%, Southwest Fulton had 41.4%, while South Fulton had 38.1% and. Persons in the peak earning age (45 to 64) are generally higher in the unincorporated area when compared to the entire the County. In this category, South Fulton had the highest at 26.3%, followed by Southwest at 25.7%, North Fulton at 21.7% and Sandy Springs at 21.5%. Sandy Springs has a higher percentage of the 65 years and older population. This is to be expected since Sandy Springs developed earlier than the other Planning Areas. Younger Seniors, age 65 to 84 years are 3.8% in North Fulton, 8.4% in Sandy Springs, 6.3% in Southwest Fulton and 6.9% in South Fulton. The remaining group, older seniors age 85 and over, constitute 0.35% of North Fulton, 1.4% of Sandy Springs, 0.58% of Southwest Fulton and 0.72% of South Fulton.

1.3.1.2 Assessment



Graph 1-3. Age Structure in Fulton County Contrasted with the United States

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000 single year of age tabulations from the Census Bureau's web site





Graph 1-3 contrasts the percentage of the population in each single year of age from 0 to 110 and over for the United States and for Fulton County in the 2000 Census (the female population is displayed as negatives to make the chart work, so the females are below the 0% center and males above it). The graph clearly shows that Fulton County's population is much more concentrated in the working and first home buying ages of 20 through 40 years than the nation. It is believed that the higher concentrations in the young working ages are due to the greater employment opportunities in Fulton County at the time of the Census. Since 2000, the County and the nation have been adversely affected a recession which only now is regaining employment losses. This is balanced by lower shares in other ages particularly the 60 through 80 years and the 10 through 18 year olds. The graph is almost symmetrical indicating that both genders share in these age differences. Note also that the females over age 65 outnumber the males; this difference is particularly noticeable after age 80.

### 1.4.0.0 Racial Composition

#### 1.4.1.1. Inventory

According to the 2000 Census, Fulton County is almost half White (48.1%) and half African-American (44.5%) with less than ten percent of the population being of other races (Table 1-15). In the 2000 Census, Fulton County ranked 15<sup>th</sup> largest in the U.S. in the number of African Americans. In the 2004 American Community Survey, Fulton County ranked 12<sup>th</sup> with 42.3% black. The percentage of African Americans and Whites has been declining since 1980 and is projected to continue to decline. However, the percent of African Americans is declining at a faster rate. Hispanic persons are an ethnic group and can be of any race. They are listed by the Census Bureau as a separate group. The 2000 Census counted Hispanics to be 5.9% of the County. This population, constituting just 2.1% of Fulton's population in 1990, is projected to be 13% of the population by 2025. It is likely that this ethnic group will continue to grow much more rapidly than other racial groups. In the US, Hispanics have overtaken African Americans as the largest minority group in America, but not in Fulton County. The Asian population stands at just 3.0% of the population. The 2000 Census for the first time enabled people to indicate multiple races. The "Other races" category tends to be checked by Hispanic, and Middle Eastern individuals who do not feel the other listed categories fit them.

**Table 1-15: Fulton County Population by Race**

Race	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
White	280,334	309,901	353,603	392,598	434,140	462,621	484,306	517,089	550,303
White %	47.52%	47.75%	48.66%	48.11%	48.53%	47.56%	45.64%	45.34%	45.07%
African American	303,508	324,008	343,337	363,565	388,341	420,781	463,470	489,193	512,843
Percent	51.45%	49.93%	47.25%	44.57%	43.41%	43.26%	43.68%	42.89%	42.00%
Am. Ind, Esk, Aleut	644	981	1,223	1,514	1,789	1,945	2,228	2,509	2,931
Percent	0.11%	0.15%	0.17%	0.19%	0.20%	0.20%	0.21%	0.22%	0.24%
Asian/Pacific Is.	2,926	8,380	15,899	25,169	29,521	38,129	52,098	62,732	75,095
Percent	0.50%	1.29%	2.19%	3.08%	3.30%	3.92%	4.91	5.50%	6.15%
Other	2,492	5,681	12,628	21,216	25,496	30,056	35,333	40,719	46,400
Percent	0.42%	0.88%	1.74%	2.6	2.85%	3.09%	3.33%	3.57%	3.80%





**Table 1-15: Fulton County Population by Race**

Race	1980	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Two+ races	NA	NA	NA	11,853	15,302	19,146	23,622	28,334	33,482
Percent	NA	NA	NA	1.45%	1.71%	1.97%	2.23%	2.48%	2.74%
Spanish Origin	7,574	13,373	28,886	48,056	60,474	74,313	105,151	131,965	163,133
Percent	1.28%	2.06%	3.97%	5.89%	6.76%	7.64%	9.91%	11.57%	13.36%

Source: US Census Bureau, Census counts for 1980, 1990 and 2000. Forecasts by Fulton County E&CD based on a shift share method using U.S. population forecasts to 2100.

Table 1-16 shows the 1990 and 2000 census population percentages of major racial groups in the County, the United States and Georgia. In 2000, Fulton County's population had a higher percent of African Americans and a lower percent of Whites than the United States and the State of Georgia.

**Table 1-16: US, Georgia, & Fulton County Percent of Population by Race: 1990 and 2000**

	1990			2000		
	US	Georgia	Fulton	US	Georgia	Fulton County
White	83.93	71.01	47.7	81.05	65.13	48.11
African American	12.27	26.96	49.93	12.69	28.80	44.57
Asian/Pacific Islander	3.00	1.17	1.29	3.76	2.40	3.08
Other	0.80	0.86	0.88	2.50	3.66	1.03
Spanish Origin	9.00	1.68	2.06	12.55	5.32	5.89

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, from the web site: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov), Summary File 1, 100% counts.

There is considerable variation in the racial mix in the Planning Areas in Fulton County (Table 1-17). The White population was 83.3% in North Fulton, 77.6% in Sandy Springs, 3.0% in Southwest Fulton and 21.6% in South Fulton. The African-American population was 5.3% in North Fulton, 12.0% in Sandy Springs, 95.5% in Southwest Fulton and 75.3% in South Fulton. This represents a great deal of variation from Fulton County's total White population of 48.1% and African American population of 44.5%. American Indian population, totaling just 1,514 persons in 2000, is less than one percent in all Planning Areas: 0.11% in North Fulton, 0.18% in Sandy Springs, 0.07% in Southwest Fulton 0.19% in South Fulton. Asian and Pacific Islander population including Hawaiians also varies greatly: 8.6% in North Fulton, 3.3% in Sandy Springs, 0.3% in Southwest Fulton and 0.5% in South Fulton. The "Other" group, slightly smaller than Asians, is 1.1% in North Fulton, 4.9% in Sandy Springs, 0.27% in Southwest Fulton and 0.9% in South Fulton.

Hispanic population may be of any race and is listed separately in the Census. Here again there are large variations among the planning areas: North Fulton had 3.5%, Sandy Springs had 9.9%, Southwest Fulton 0.8% and South Fulton 1.8%. Note that Sandy Springs had the largest concentration but its 9.9% was still much lower than the 12.55% in the United States.





**Table 1-17: 2000 Fulton County & Planning Area Population by Race**

Race	Fulton Co	North Fulton	Sandy Springs	Southwest Fulton	South Fulton
White	392,598	76,195	66,573	341	8,944
White %	48.11%	83.33%	77.56%	3.02%	21.63%
African American	363,565	4,878	10,333	10,791	31,151
African American %	44.57%	5.33%	12.04%	95.5%	75.34%
Am. Indian, Eskimo & Aleut	1,514	101	154	8	80
Percent	0.19%	0.11	0.18%	0.07%	0.19%
Asian/Pacific Islander	25,169	7,837	2,821	35	221
Asian/Pacific Islander %	3.08%	8.57%	3.29%	0.31%	0.53%
Other	21,216	972	4,241	30	379
Other %	2.6	1.06%	4.94%	0.27%	0.92%
Two or more races	11,853	1,425	1,669	86	548
Two or more races %	1.45%	1.56%	1.94%	0.76%	1.33%
Spanish Origin	48,056	3,186	8,517	95	749
Spanish Origin %	5.89%	3.48%	9.92%	0.84%	1.81%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 SF-1 tabulations with percent calculations by DE&CD.

**1.4.1.2 Assessment**

In Fulton County, the percentage of African American population peaked at 51.45% in 1980 and was estimated to be 43.6% in 2004. Fulton County's historic high shares of African Americans will very gradually lessen. In the very long range, it is expected that Fulton County will approach the national rate currently about 13%. For the 2025 period, a figure of about 42% for Fulton County is more reasonable. The racial composition will be tracked by the annual American Community Surveys of the U.S. Census Bureau and E&CD will revise its forecasts from time to time if actual trends depart from its forecasts.

The Hispanic population was less than 1% of the total in 1970 (3,996 people) and just 1.3% in 1980 (7,574 people). In 2005, it stands at 6.76% (60,474 people). Since Fulton County is still far below the national average of 12.55%, it is expected that their share of the population will increase faster than the increases projected for the nation and by 2025 this could grow to 163,133 or 13.4% of population. This will be monitored and adjusted as American Community Survey data shows divergence from the forecasts. The impact on the Fulton County is an increasing task of educating non-English speakers. Already the children of recent Hispanic immigrants are learning English, and educational programs (including adult education) are focusing on English as a second language.

**1.5.0.0 Educational Attainment**

**1.5.1.1. Inventory**

The United States is a leader in the world in possessing well equipped and staffed colleges and universities. The result of these resources is that the U.S. has 44.5 million college graduates or 24.4 percent of its adult population age 25 and over. Only Norway, with 25.6%, has a greater percentage and the world total is just 4%. The United States, with 4.6% of the world's adult





population, has 28% of the world’s college graduates. These figures are not static and the U.S. is rapidly increasing its pool of college graduates. Table 1-18 presents 2000 Census data for the educations attainment of the population over 25 years old for the United States, Georgia, ARC and Fulton County.

High School (or G.E.D) completion is increasing in the United States. Only 13.5% of adults in 1910 achieved high school graduation, but by 1970 had passed the 50% mark and was measured at 55.2%. Since that time, high school graduation has been seen as a must for all school systems in the United States. By 2000 84.1% of adults (including older adults born at times where it was still difficult to complete high school) had achieved high school graduation. In the future, it is believed that by 2025 91.5% of Americans will have achieved high school graduation or more. There will be a threshold so that great improvements beyond 90% will be increasingly harder to accomplish.

While the United States has significantly reduced the share of people with less than 5 years of education, Fulton County started with higher shares in this category. In 1960, with the beginning of the civil rights movement, 8.3 % of U.S. population was in this category while 12.0% of Fulton County’s adults fell into this category. Since then Fulton County has caught up with the nation.

Approximately 84.0% of Fulton County’s population age 25 and over has a high school diploma or higher, compared with 80.4% in the United States and 78.6% in Georgia. College or higher attainment in Fulton (41.4%) was much higher than the nation at 24.4%, Georgia’s at 24.3% and ARC’s at 33%. The Census Bureau’s annual American Community Survey for 2001 ranked Fulton as the fifteenth highest County in the nation by percent of the population with a bachelor’s degree or more. In 2004, Fulton County ranked 17<sup>th</sup> in the nation with 45.7% of the population achieving a college education or more. Georgia ranked 25<sup>th</sup> among states with 25.6% achieving college graduation or more. The overall rate in the United States was 27%. The City of Atlanta ranked 6<sup>th</sup> in the nation with 42.9% of the population achieving college education and 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation or 17.1% of 25 and over with advanced degree. Fulton County ranked 28<sup>th</sup> in the nation, with 15.9% achieving advanced degrees.

**Table 1-18: Educational Attainment for population 25 years+ For US, Georgia, ARC & Fulton County**

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>Georgia</b>	<b>ARC</b>	<b>Fulton County</b>
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	7.55%	7.58%	4.84%	5.14%
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade (no diploma)	12.05%	13.85%	9.07%	10.85%
High School graduate (or GED)	28.63%	28.65%	23.51%	19.36%
Some College, no degree	21.05%	20.41%	23.25%	18.55%
Associate Degree	6.32%	5.20%	6.34%	4.7%
Bachelor’s Degree	15.54%	16.00%	22.52%	26.65%
Graduate or Professional Degree	8.86%	8.30%	10.47%	14.73%
High School Graduate or higher	80.4%	78.6%	86.1%	84.0%
Bachelor’s degree or higher	24.4%	24.3%	33.0%	41.4%

Source: Census SF-3 Data from profiles on the Census Bureau web site: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

Table 1-19 shows the educational attainment of unincorporated Fulton County and the Planning Areas. Approximately 92.3% of the unincorporated population age 25 and over has a high school





diploma or higher, compared with 84% for Fulton County. North Fulton has 96.5%, Sandy Springs has 94.3%, South Fulton has 82.0% and Southwest Fulton has 85.2%. In Fulton County, 41.4% of the population has a bachelor’s degree or higher and in unincorporated Fulton County, 51.5% of the population has a bachelor’s degree or higher. North Fulton has 61.5%, Sandy Springs has 60.8%, South Fulton has 21.0% and Southwest Fulton has 31.2%. Of the ten incorporated cities, Alpharetta achieved 57.1%, followed by Roswell at 52.6% and Atlanta at 34.6%.

**Table 1-19: Educational Attainment for population 25 years+, for Unincorporated Fulton & Planning Areas**

Educational Attainment	North Fulton	Sandy Springs	Southwest Fulton	South Fulton	Unincorporated Fulton
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	1.33%	2.58%	3.85%	5.00%	2.68%
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade (no diploma)	2.20%	3.15%	10.94%	12.99%	5.23%
High School graduate (or GED)	11.03%	10.95%	25.02%	28.72%	15.37%
Some College, no degree	18.19%	16.56%	24.15%	26.71%	19.65%
Associate Degree	5.73%	5.99%	4.80%	5.56%	5.74%
Bachelor’s Degree	41.87%	39.59%	17.71%	14.22%	34.15%
Graduate or Professional Degree	19.66%	21.17%	13.53%	6.8%	17.37%
High School Graduate or higher	96.5%	94.3%	85.2%	82.0%	92.3%
Bachelor’s degree or higher	61.5%	60.8%	31.2%	21.0%	51.5%

Source: Census SF-3 Data from profiles on the Census Bureau

Table 1-20 shows educational attainment in neighboring Counties in the ARC Atlanta Region. Of the ARC Counties, Fayette County has the highest high school graduation rate, with 92.4%, while Clayton’s rate of 80.1% is the lowest. Fulton County leads the Region in the attainment of Bachelor’s degree or higher with 41.4%, followed by Cobb County with 39.8%, DeKalb with 36.3%, Fayette with 36.2%, and Forsyth at 34.6%.

**Table 1-20: Educational Attainment for population 25 years and over in Surrounding Counties**

Educational Attainment	Cobb	Gwinnett	DeKalb	Fayette	Douglas	Cherokee	Clayton
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	3.87	4.56	5.65	2.22	5.52	5.79	6.44
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade (no diploma)	7.34	8.15	9.3	5.40	13.33	9.77	13.49
High School graduate (or GED)	20.75	22.0	20.32	24.02	34.62	27.30	31.89
Some College, no degree	22.43	23.94	22.39	24.95	22.02	23.73	25.54
Associate Degree	5.85	7.29	6.05	7.23	5.25	6.43	6.0
Bachelor’s Degree	28.02	24.08	22.74	23.91	13.45	19.63	12.21
Graduate or Professional Degree	11.73	9.98	13.56	12.26	5.78	7.35	4.43
High School Graduate or higher	88.88	87.3	85.1	92.4	81.1	84.4	80.1
Graduate or Professional degree	39.8	34.1	36.3	36.2	19.2	27.0	16.6

Source: Census SF-3 Data from profiles on the Census Bureau web site: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

### 1.5.1.2. Assessment

The 2000 census recorded that in the U.S. 80.4% of persons age 25 and over had graduated from high school (including GED) and 24.4% had graduated from college; but this is changing. In 1910 just 2.7% of the adult population possessed college degrees and by 1960 that figure had increased to 7.7%, by 1990 21.3% had college degrees and the last census in 2000 counted





25.6%. If this trend has continued, the current figure for 2005 is 27.8%. By 2025 it is likely that 32% to 35% of U.S. adults will possess a college degree or more.

Fulton County and the Atlanta Region have a much higher college graduation rates than the national average or Georgia, which was slightly below the national average with 24.3%. In 2000, 41.4% of Fulton County's population had achieved college graduation or more, while the 28 County Atlanta MSA reached 31.4% and the 10 County ARC region was 34.8%.

Despite strong and growing educational attainment, Fulton County can and should be doing better. This region and Fulton County are competing in the marketplace of the world. Fulton County's high schools are tasked to reduce and hopefully eliminate dropouts, teach language skills to those with limited English language proficiency, and hold themselves accountable to meeting and exceeding reasonable thresholds on national tests. This plan's creation has included representation by the Fulton County Board of Education and includes goals set by the school system. At all community meetings, the issues of overcrowding and low achievements were raised. Even in areas where there was high test performance, citizens believe the school system can do better.

Many homebuyers consider the quality of neighborhood schools and prospective employers tend to locate in areas where employees have the skills and education matching their requirements. Therefore, the best school districts tend to attract and retain the best new residents or employers.

### **1.5.2.0 Dropout Rates**

#### **1.5.2.1 Inventory**

The Fulton County Public School system and the Atlanta Public School System both serve Fulton County. The Atlanta Public Scholl system serves the City of Atlanta while the Fulton County Public School system serves the rest of Fulton County. This report will focus on the Fulton County Public School system. During the 2002-2003 school year, Fulton County Public Schools had a dropout rate of 3.8% compared with 5.5% for the state. The County and the State are working hard to lower the dropout rates. The rates are highest among students who indicate Native American race/ethnicity and lowest among Asians according to the 2002-2003 State of Georgia K-12 Annual Report Card on K-12 Public Schools. Hispanics have high dropout rates and the number of Hispanic students in the schools is rapidly increasing.

The "Dropout rate" has been replaced by the "Graduation rate" in all Georgia schools and the following describes what it is and how it is calculated. To comply with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), Georgia has defined a graduate as a student who leaves high school with a Regular Diploma (this does not include Certificates of Attendance or Special Education Diplomas) in the standard time (i.e., 4 years). In prior years, Georgia has reported a completion rate that allowed the inclusion of students receiving a Certificate of Attendance or a Special Education Diploma. Because of the NCLB timeline for reporting information, graduation rate is calculated by using information in the relevant Student Records.





The actual graduation rate calculation is a proxy calculation; in other words, the lack of unique statewide student identifiers does not allow for tracking of individual students across the four high school years. The graduation rate reflects the percentage of students who entered ninth grade in a given year and were in the graduating class four years later. The 2003-2004 K-12 Report Card provides the 2002, 2003, and the 2004 graduation rates.

Completers are those students who exit from high school with some credential. Some exit with regular diplomas and others exit with either a Special Education Diploma or a Certificate of Attendance. Graduates are completers who have met course and assessment criteria. Graduates have completed a high-school program of study of a minimum of 22 Carnegie units and have passed the four subject areas (English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies) of the Georgia High School Graduation Test and the Georgia High School Writing Test.

### 1.5.2.2 Assessment

According to the Georgia Department of Education, each year in Georgia the 12th grade class is approximately 40% smaller than the 9th grade class four years earlier. Georgia has one of the highest dropout rates in the country. In an era of increasing mobility, dropout rates are very hard to calculate. It is argued that many students drop out of one school, but are enrolled in a public school elsewhere, or enroll in a private school. To deal with this the state and all its school systems use "graduation rates". There is also a tendency for students who fail to graduate to enroll in G.E.D. classes. This is usually fueled by the fact that all but the low skill jobs require high school graduation, and to an increasing degree, require college or graduate degrees. Colleges require graduation from high school.

In response to citizen concern that a significant proportion of their tax dollars was being devoted to public education, but with disappointing results, the Governor's Office of Student Achievement was formed to focus attention and resources on searching for solutions to this problem at a statewide level. One way to do this is to issue an annual "Report Card on K-12 Public Schools" which can be accessed through the web site: <http://reportcard2005.gaosa.org/k12/reports>. This report provides metrics to track progress or lack of progress.

The report card for Fulton County indicates that for the 2003-2004 school year the graduation rate was 72.9%. This is lower than the 74.0% in 2002-2003 and that was lower than 2001-2002 at 76.8%. According to a recent study by the Civil Rights Project at Harvard University, Fulton County has a graduation rate of 68%.

### 1.5.3.0 Standardized Achievement Test Scores

The Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) scores for Fulton County (2004) were 523 for verbal and 533 for Math, making the total 1,056 (Table 1-21). These scores are excellent compared with Georgia's 494 verbal, 498 math and 987 total, and very good compared with the national scores of 508 verbal, 518 math and 1,026 total. Unlike many states, Georgia has a very high percentage of high school seniors taking the SAT which tends to lower its scores (Table 1-21) (these scores do not include the private schools).





**Table 1-21: Average SAT Scores for Schools in Fulton County, 2002 to 2005  
Fulton County Public Schools**

School	2005			2004			2003			2002		
	Verbal	Math	Total									
Benjamin Bannecker	390	401	792	407	412	819	398	401	799	407	417	824
Centennial	542	563	1104	560	572	1132	543	551	1094	540	555	1095
Chattahoochee	541	579	1120	545	577	1122	551	581	1132	531	564	1095
Creekside	416	411	826	438	430	868	431	425	856	431	441	872
Independence	489	464	952	498	486	984	514	469	983	499	474	973
McClarín	419	386	805	357	380	737	398	396	794	368	374	742
Milton	547	567	1115	546	560	1106	542	560	1102	531	545	1076
North Springs	542	543	1085	550	558	1108	532	546	1078	551	567	1118
Northview	554	591	1145	540	570	1110	504	527	1031	N/A	N/A	N/A
Riverwood	531	537	1068	528	531	1059	508	521	1029	503	531	1034
Roswell	540	557	1097	554	563	1117	554	563	1117	541	555	1096
Tri-Cities	431	424	855	416	405	821	418	405	823	422	423	845
Westlake	450	444	894	460	446	906	452	436	888	435	439	874
System	520	536	1057	523	533	1056	519	530	1049	511	528	1039
State	494	495	989	494	493	987	493	491	984	489	491	980
National	505	515	1020	508	518	1026	507	519	1026	504	516	1020

Source: Georgia Department of Education, Charlotte Robinson, Testing at 404-656-6854 Georgia and United States figures are found on the College Board web site: [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). <http://reportcard2005.gaosa.org/k12/reports>

The Fulton County Public Schools (FCPS) did not meet its 2003-2004 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) thresholds. 2,573 FCPS students took Advance Placement Tests (12.2% of high school enrollment). 71% of FCPS takers scored well. In 2003-2004, FCPS students scored 21.5 on ACT test. The public school students in the State scored 20.0 and in the nation the score was 20.9 (Table 1-22).

**Table 1-22: Average ACT Scores in Fulton County, City of Atlanta, Georgia, and United States - 2001-2005**

School System/School Year	2004-2005		2003-2004		2002-2003		2001-2002	
	Score	# Tested						
Fulton County Public Schools		1,144		1,022		925		
Composite	21.4		21.5		20.9		20.3	Not Available
English	20.9		20.9		20.3		19.7	
Mathematics	21.6		21.7		21.0		20.5	
Reading	21.6		21.8		21.1		20.6	
Science Reasoning	21.0		21.1		20.6		20.2	
Atlanta City Public Schools				397		355		
Composite	17.4		17.5		18.2		17.8	





**Table 1-22: Average ACT Scores in Fulton County, City of Atlanta, Georgia, and United States - 2001-2005**

School System/School Year	2004-2005		2003-2004		2002-2003		2001-2002	
	Score	# Tested	Score	# Tested	Score	# Tested	Score	# Tested
Test								
English	16.8		16.6		17.7		17.2	
Mathematics	17.1		17.1		17.9		17.8	
Reading	17.7		17.9		18.4		17.8	
Science Reasoning	17.6		17.7		18.1		17.9	
Total of the Two Systems				1,419		1,280		
Composite			20.4		20.2		19.6	
English			19.7		19.6		19.0	
Mathematics			20.4		20.1		19.8	
Reading			20.7		20.4		19.8	
Science Reasoning			20.1		19.8		19.6	
Georgia Systems	23,324			20,510		18,863		
Composite	20.0		20.0		19.8		19.8	
English	19.4		19.5		19.3		19.2	
Mathematics	19.8		19.9		19.7		19.8	
Reading	20.3		20.3		20.1		20.0	
Science Reasoning	19.8		19.9		19.7		19.7	
United States Systems	1,186,251			1,171,460		1,175,059		
Composite	20.9		20.9		20.8		20.8	
English	20.4		20.4		20.3		20.2	
Mathematics	20.7		20.7		20.6		20.6	
Reading	21.3		21.3		21.2		21.1	
Science Reasoning	20.9		20.9		20.8		20.8	

Source: Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement, 2003-2004 Annual Report Card on K-12 Public Schools, from the web site: <http://reportcard.gaosa/k12/reports>. <http://reportcard2005.gaosa.org/k12/reports>

### 1.5.3.2 Assessment

The SAT is a test which has been around for a long time. The old College Boards were established in 1901 by the Educational Testing Service and expanded into the Scholastic Aptitude Tests in 1926. These tests have been accused of supporting meritocracy and being discriminatory to minorities and low income applicants. The tests have taken these charges very seriously and have sought make the tests as level as possible. A whole new test has been devised after a great deal of thought and it now has three parts, including an essay. This test was put in service March 13, 2005. Because of the long history of the SATs, the Educational Testing Services' large panels of professional teachers generating the questions, and their willingness to change the test after valid criticism, the test is well regarded. For this reason, well over a million college-bound graduating seniors take it. It is not intended to rank states, and in fact the Educational Testing Service makes it clear that scores alone are poor measures of school performance. Looking at the tables it is noted that some of the higher ranking states have very low shares of test takers. Georgia has chosen to encourage a very high percentage of its graduating seniors to take the SAT tests, and has used the scores as one way of evaluating the quality of its schools and trying to promote the best efforts of educators. In the long run, this will probably be good for Georgia students. But the starting point was low and posting gains on these very difficult tests will be hard indeed.





#### 1.5.4.0 High School Graduates to Post-Secondary Education

##### 1.5.4.1 Inventory

The only information regarding Fulton County Public School graduates enrolled in post-secondary education is the High School Feedback Report from the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (USG); for the 2000-2001 high school graduates. The 2000-2001 report indicates of 3,235 students that graduated from Fulton County high schools, 1,380 enrolled in Georgia University colleges. This represents 47% of graduates compared to 35% for all high school graduates. Of these 1,380 students, 660 attended research universities; 188 regional universities; 268 state universities; 0 state colleges; and 264, two year colleges.

Of the students from the Fulton County System that attended a USG institution, 1,059 students received a HOPE scholarship. This represents 77%, nearly the same as the rate for all Georgia high school graduates entering USG universities. The high school grade point average calculated for students from Fulton County Schools who enrolled in USG institutions was 3.1, the same as the statewide systems average. The average grade point average at the end of the first year of college was 2.6 for Fulton System graduates, the same as for statewide systems.

The SAT scores from Fulton County Schools enrolled in USG schools was 529 verbal, 538 math and 1,067 composite; this compares with 507 verbal, 505 math and 1,012 for all USG freshmen. Six percent of Fulton County School graduates had not completed the college preparatory curriculum when they first enrolled in college, compared to 8 percent statewide. 13% of students from Fulton County schools were required to take remedial courses in English, reading or mathematics (termed Learning Support) compared with 19% of all Georgia freshmen.

Of 5,351 high school graduates in 2002, 3,281 were from Fulton County Public Schools (FCPS) and 2,146 from Atlanta Public Schools (APS). A total of 1,981 or 34.4% entered Georgia Public Colleges and Universities. Graduation rates from private schools have not been determined but are roughly 12% of County enrollments.

The Fulton County's Public School System prepares a "Follow-Up Report" on each year's graduates to determine their intentions following graduation. The largest single category is to attend a four year college. Fulton County Public School finds that 84.1% of students intend to attend a four-year college, 4.9% to attend a technical institute, and 12.4% a two-year college (respondents could select more than one category).

Actual enrollment of high school graduates in the University System of Georgia is given in Table 1-23. Information in this table is presented for both Fulton County Public Schools and Atlanta City Public Schools. Not shown are the graduation intentions of graduating seniors of the 23 private schools covering grades 9 through 12 located in Fulton County. A list of these is found on the Georgia Department of Education's web site: <[http://www.doe.k12/\\_dbs/schools/private](http://www.doe.k12/_dbs/schools/private). Finally there is a report from the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia to Fulton County





Public Schools itemizing the schools attended in 2001-2002 by FCPS 2001 graduates (Table 1-24).

<b>Table 1-23: High School Graduates Entering Post-Secondary Education</b>		
<b>Fulton County Public School System:</b>	<b>Year</b>	
	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
Number of Graduates Being Reported	3,139	3,281
Graduates Entering Georgia Public Colleges		
Number	1,435	1,554
Percent	40.8%	43.1%
Requiring Learning Support Number	190	188
Requiring Learning Support Percent	13.2%	12.1%
Graduates Entering Georgia Technical and Adult Schools		
Number	84	67
Percent	2.4%	1.9%
Atlanta City Public School System:		
Number of Graduates Being Reported	2,070	2,146
Graduates Entering Georgia Public Colleges		
Number	356	427
Percent	17.2%	19.9%
Requiring Learning Support Number	114	153
Requiring Learning Support Percent	32.0%	35.8%
Graduates Entering Georgia Technical and Adult Schools		
Number	99	108
Percent	4.8%	5.0%
Fulton Plus Atlanta School Systems		
Number of Graduates Being Reported	5,209	5,427
Graduates Entering Georgia Public Colleges		
Number	1,791	1,981
Percent	32.1%	34.4%
Requiring Learning Support Number	304	341
Requiring Learning Support Percent	17.0%	17.2%
Graduates Entering Georgia Technical and Adult Schools		
Number	183	175
Percent	3.3%	3.0%
Georgia State Public School Systems		
Number of Graduates Being Reported	69,197	70,628
Graduates Entering Georgia Public Colleges		
Number	24,980	27,333
Percent	36.1%	38.7%
Requiring Learning Support Number	4,771	5,119
Requiring Learning Support Percent	19.1%	18.7%
Graduates Entering Georgia Technical and Adult Schools		
Number	6,691	5,875
Percent	9.7%	8.3%
Source: GAOSA Annual Report Cards on K-12 Public Schools, Indicators Section< <a href="http://reportcard.gaosa.org">http://reportcard.gaosa.org</a> >		





Table 1-24: University System of Georgia, High School Feedback Data Summary

College or University	Number of Freshmen Enrolled from Fulton County Public High Schools	Number of Freshmen Enrolled from All Georgia Public High Schools	Number of Freshmen Enrolled from Private High Schools	All Georgia Freshmen	Percent From FCPS	Percent From Private H.S.
Ga Institute of Technology	137	1,186	150	1,336	10.3%	11.2%
Georgia State University	192	1,985	107	2,092	9.2%	5.1%
University of Georgia	373	3,123	591	3,714	10.0%	15.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>702</b>	<b>6,294</b>	<b>848</b>	<b>7,142</b>	<b>9.8%</b>	<b>11.9%</b>
Georgia Southern University	130	2,153	283	2,436	5.3%	11.6%
Valdosta State University	44	1,326	133	1,459	3.0%	9.1%
<b>Total Regional Universities</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>3,479</b>	<b>416</b>	<b>3,895</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>10.7%</b>
Albany State University	19	358	1	359	5.3%	0.3%
Armstrong Atlantic State U	2	330	99	429	0.5%	23.1%
Augusta State University	0	526	81	607	0.0%	13.3%
Clayton College & State U	22	390	20	410	5.4%	4.9%
Columbus State University	12	661	76	737	1.6%	10.3%
Fort Valley State University	22	351	4	355	6.2%	1.1%
Georgia College & State U	17	685	143	828	2.1%	17.3%
Georgia Southwestern State	0	182	49	231	0.0%	21.2%
Kennesaw State University	53	1,223	31	1,254	4.2%	2.5%
North Georgia College & State	33	570	41	611	5.4%	6.7%
Savannah State University	11	305	14	319	3.4%	4.4%
Southern Polytechnic State U	22	357	32	389	5.7%	8.2%
University of West Georgia	63	1,481	79	1,560	4.0%	5.1%
<b>Total State Universities</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>7,419</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>8,089</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>8.3%</b>
Dalton State College	0	529	2	531	0.0%	0.4%
Macon State College	0	472	82	554	0.0%	14.8%
<b>Total State Colleges</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,001</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>1,085</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>7.7%</b>
Abraham Baldwin Agricultural	5	699	50	749	0.7%	6.7%
Atlanta Metropolitan College	46	143	2	145	31.7%	1.4%
Bainbridge College	0	218	5	223	0.0%	2.2%
Coastal Georgia Community	0	245	2	247	0.0%	0.8%
Dalton College	0	448	87	535	0.0%	16.3%
East Georgia College	11	370	60	430	2.6%	14.0%
Floyd College	0	483	17	500	0.0%	3.4%
Gainsville College	9	863	30	893	1.0%	3.4%
Georgia Perimeter College	213	2,048	130	2,178	9.8%	6.0%
Gordon College	14	758	59	817	1.7%	7.2%
Middle Georgia College	10	558	39	597	1.7%	6.5%
South Georgia College	1	272	12	284	0.4%	4.2%
Waycross College	0	138	3	141	0.0%	2.1%
<b>Total Two-Year Colleges</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>7,243</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>7,739</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>6.4%</b>
University System Total	1,461	25,436	2,514	27,950	5.2%	9.0%

Source: Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, Strategic Research and Analysis, University System of Georgia, High School Feedback Data Summary for School Systems, 2001 Georgia High School Graduates, University System Institutions Attended, 2001-2002, Fulton County Schools.





### 1.5.4.2 Assessment

A combination of FCPS and ACPS systems shows a total 34.4% of graduating seniors continuing to Georgia public colleges. What is unknown is how many attend private colleges and universities or out of state public colleges. Two factors may be causing low rates: poor preparation in public schools and lack of student financial resources. In addition there seems to be some unevenness along race and Hispanic origin. Asians are doing very well, Whites doing well, Blacks doing less well and Hispanics, faced with limited English speaking abilities, doing not well at all. The HOPE scholarship program is an excellent program that provides financial aid to students.

### 1.6.0.0 Income

#### 1.6.1.0 Average per Capita Income

##### 1.6.1.1 Inventory

Table 1-25 shows the per capita income from 1980 to 2000 for the U.S., the State of Georgia and Fulton County in 2003 dollars. In 2000, Fulton County's per capita income was \$45,605, while Georgia's was \$28,103 and the US's was \$29,760.

Table 1-25: 1980-2000 Per Capita Income for the US, Georgia and Fulton County			
Year	US	Georgia	Fulton County
1980	\$10,183	\$8,474	\$11,086
1985	\$14,705	\$13,143	\$17,464
1990	\$19,572	\$17,722	\$26,327
1995	\$23,255	\$21,806	\$33,253
2000	\$29,760	\$28,103	\$45,605

Source: Census Bureau, STF-3 sample data, web site: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) for 1990 and 2000. Published Census report for 1980 from the Atlanta-Fulton County Central Library Reference Room Closed stacks. The 1985 was interpolated between the 1980 and 1990 census data.

##### 1.6.1.2 Assessment

Fulton County's per capita income is higher than the U.S. per capita income as well as Georgia's per capita income. This may be due to the number of higher paying jobs in Fulton County and to the higher cost of living. Between 1990 and 2000 Fulton County's per capita income increased faster than both the US and Georgia. However, according to the American Community Survey, between 2000 and 2003, Fulton County's per capita income dropped by \$1,397, probably due to the recession and the loss of high paying technology and manufacturing jobs.





**1.6.2.0 Average Household Income**

**1.6.2.1.1 Inventory**

The 2000 Census reported that Fulton County’s median household income was \$47,321 and the mean (average) household income was \$74,928 (Table 1-26). Fulton County has a higher Mean Household Income than the US and Georgia. Georgia’s median household income is \$42,433 and the mean household income is \$56,612. Large differences between the medians and means indicate larger disparity between the ordinary household and the very rich.

Unincorporated Fulton County has a higher median household income (\$54,685) and mean household income (\$76,793) than Fulton County. In unincorporated Fulton County, North Fulton has the highest median (\$78,830) and mean (\$145,131) household income, followed by Sandy Springs (\$77,801 and \$109,254).

**1.6.2.1.2. Assessment**

Household income determines the ability of each household to pay for goods and services. This plays a major role in determining the house price a household is able to afford. If current median household income in 2005 is about \$66,452 and 25% is devoted to mortgage repayment and interest rates are about 6.5% for a 30 year fixed rate mortgage, then a household could afford a house costing \$216,870 (not including taxes, insurance, utilities, maintenance, etc.).

**1.6.3.0 Household Income Distribution**

**1.6.3.1 Inventory**

Table 1-26 contrasts the 1999 income tabulated from the 2000 Census by income categories listed for the United States, Georgia and Fulton County.

<b>Table 1-26: Household Income Distribution in the US, Georgia and Fulton County in 1999 expressed as percent shares of total households.</b>			
<b>Income Range</b>	<b>United States</b>	<b>Georgia</b>	<b>Fulton County</b>
Less than \$10,000	9.54	10.13	11.24
\$10,000 to \$14,999	6.31	5.85	5.27
\$15,000 to \$19,999	6.25	5.91	5.38
\$20,000 to \$24,999	6.57	6.37	5.56
\$25,000 to \$29,999	6.44	6.37	5.49
\$30,000 to \$34,999	6.37	6.22	5.47
\$35,000 to \$39,999	5.91	5.87	4.98
\$40,000 to \$44,999	5.65	5.78	4.58
\$45,000 to \$49,999	4.97	5.07	4.04
\$50,000 to \$59,999	9.04	9.24	7.58
\$60,000 to \$74,999	10.43	10.48	8.91
\$75,000 to \$99,999	10.23	10.36	9.97
\$100,000 to \$124,999	5.20	5.25	6.80
\$125,000 to \$149,999	2.52	2.54	3.93





**Table 1-26: Household Income Distribution in the US, Georgia and Fulton County in 1999 expressed as percent shares of total households.**

Income Range	United States	Georgia	Fulton County
\$150,000 to \$199,999	2.20	2.20	4.32
\$200,000 or more	2.37	2.36	6.48
2004 American Community Survey	\$44,684	\$43,037	\$45,920
Median household Income	\$41,994	\$42,433	\$47,321
Mean household Income	\$56,644	\$56,612	\$74,928
Per Capita Income	\$21,587	\$21,154	\$30,003

Source: US Bureau of Census, 2000 Census, SF-3 sample data from the Census web site: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov). Median is the middle value such that half have higher incomes and half have lower incomes. Mean is the average and tends to be distorted by a relatively few extraordinary high values.

Table 1-27 shows the income distribution within the Planning Areas of unincorporated Fulton County.

**Table 1-27: Household Income Distribution in 1999 in Unincorporated Fulton County**

Income Range	North Fulton	Sandy Springs	Southwest Fulton	South Fulton	Unincorporated Fulton
Less than \$10,000	2.16	4.27	8.57	6.91	4.25
\$10,000 to \$14,999	1.07	3.39	4.31	4.36	2.82
\$15,000 to \$19,999	1.33	3.25	4.59	5.50	3.07
\$20,000 to \$24,000	1.63	3.92	6.23	6.02	3.64
\$25,000 to \$29,999	1.83	4.16	6.21	7.19	4.02
\$30,000 to \$34,999	2.48	5.33	4.51	7.21	4.65
\$35,000 to \$39,999	2.32	5.99	4.96	6.79	4.82
\$40,000 to \$44,999	2.68	5.48	3.49	5.86	4.48
\$45,000 to \$49,000	2.66	4.87	4.89	5.49	4.22
\$50,000 to \$59,000	6.06	8.79	8.86	11.78	8.40
\$60,000 to \$74,999	9.41	11.03	10.00	12.35	10.66
\$75,000 to \$99,999	16.22	11.04	14.70	11.29	13.06
\$100,000 to \$124,999	14.69	7.45	7.13	4.73	9.43
\$125,000 to \$149,999	9.59	4.16	4.70	1.94	5.65
\$150,000 to \$199,999	11.41	5.75	3.65	1.24	6.76
\$200,000 or more	14.44	11.13	3.23	1.33	10.06
Median Household Income	\$78,830	\$77,801	\$52,133	\$45,692	\$54,685
Mean Household Income	\$145,131	\$109,254	\$73,209	\$64,164	\$76,793

Source: US Bureau of Census, 2000 Census, SF-3 sample data from the Census web site: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).

### 1.6.3.2 Assessment

Fulton County has much higher percentage shares of households in the income categories over \$100,000 and also households with incomes less than \$10,000 than Georgia and the US. Household incomes are higher in unincorporated Fulton County than in Fulton County. North Fulton household income is significantly higher than other planning areas. In North Fulton, 66% of the households earn more than \$75,000 a year (compared to 39% in Sandy Springs, 33% in Southwest Fulton and 20% in South Fulton). On the other hand, the percentage of households earning less than \$10,000 a year is highest in Southwest Fulton.

