

Economic Development Interactive Exercise – LNC Class XVII

Small Western City

GOAL: To develop a strategic plan for carrying out economic development in your city. You are a resident of a small city located in the mountains. The current “business as usual” plan no longer works in your city and you’ve been asked to serve on a committee to develop a new strategic plan for the city.

The city has a particular set of resources with which to work and the challenge is to ensure sustainability over time with limited resources. As a result of the recession, your resources have become more constrained and it’s likely this will be the case for the foreseeable future.

CHALLENGE: How do you bring the right people in your city together to make things happen, to bring about change and formulate an economic development strategic plan for the future?

In doing so, pay specific attention to equity, inclusiveness, responsiveness to challenges, communication and use of power. Leadership demands confidence and competence to carry out hard decisions, communication skills to explain to constituencies why you’re doing what you’re doing, and trust by demonstrating fairness and effectiveness with diminishing resources.

3 Roles to be Assigned in Your Group:

1. Facilitator of the group discussion
2. Scribe/time keeper
3. Reporter (report on the group discussion and resulting plan at the end of the session)

“Indeed a new definition of leadership can be expressed as the ‘ability to align strengths (toward a purpose) in such a way that weaknesses are irrelevant.’” - Peter F. Drucker

GROUP DISCUSSION: During several working sessions spread throughout the two days in Elizabeth City, your group will be asked to work together to

1. *Inquire* into strengths and opportunities;
2. *Imagine* the best pathway to sustainable growth;
3. *Discuss innovating* to create the initiatives, strategies, structure, systems, and plans; and
4. *Define inspiring* action-oriented activities that achieve results.

This will be achieved by considering and answering the following questions:

- Strategic Inquiry
 - **Strengths**
 - What do we do really well?
 - What are our greatest assets?

- **Opportunities**
 - What are our best possible opportunities to serve the community?
 - How are we to partner with others?
- Appreciative Intent
 - **Aspirations**
 - To what do we aspire?
 - What is our preferred future?
 - **Results**
 - What are our measurable results?
 - What do we want to be known for?

OTHER QUESTIONS FOR YOUR GROUP:

1. How do you take what you want to do from a concept into action?
2. Who will be responsible for implementing the new strategic plan?
3. What are the top two economic development strategies that must be accomplished first?
4. What will you do differently from others in tackling similar problems?

During your discussions, please consider the perspectives of the following stakeholders when answering the questions and moving toward formulation of the strategic plan:

1. City economic developer
2. Community college president
3. Chamber of commerce executive director
4. Public school superintendent
5. Member of an environmental advisory group
6. Member of a social services board
7. Executive director of a council of government (a regional planning agency)
8. Tourism official
9. Retiree who negatively views further expansion and growth of the community and dislikes “outsiders” moving to the community

CITY’S ASSETS:

1. Thriving arts community and outstanding outdoor recreation opportunities which helps drive tourism to the area.
2. A state university is located in the city with an enrollment of approximately 17,000 students.
3. A university and regional medical center is located in the city which serves as an economic driver.
4. Large retiree population

5. Abundance of natural resources. Blue Ridge Mountains, Blue Ridge Parkway, Horn in the West Outdoor Drama, ski resorts, rivers, hiking, biking and state and federal parks.
6. Recently created a Tourism Development Authority from a new (non-municipal) occupancy tax and successfully established a web site and hired staff to promote tourism for the entire county.

CITY’S CHALLENGES:

1. Although the unemployment rate has remained relatively low, many residents work two jobs to make ends meet.
2. Single family housing starts are down 15% and a high-end resort with lots starting at \$500,000 recently went bankrupt.
3. A couple large employers are struggling with reduced orders and cutbacks.
4. The city has a water problem and is negotiating with a neighboring county to take water from a nearby river. This has been a very contentious issue.
5. The local university, which is a state university, has been hit hard with deep budget cuts.

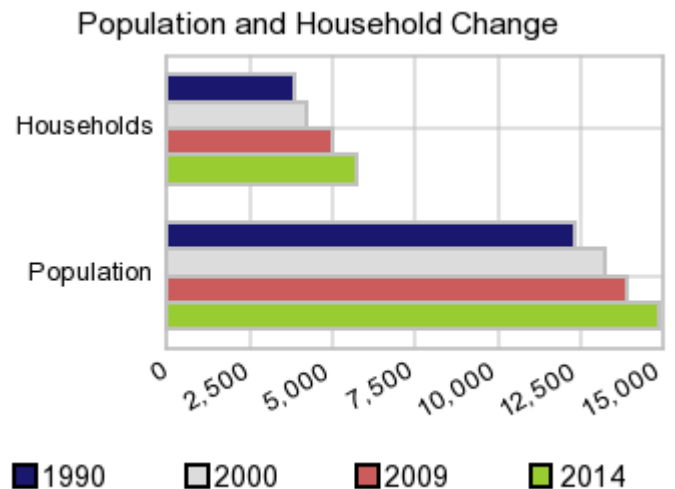
The following are the demographics for your city:

Small Western City Demographics

Population Demographics

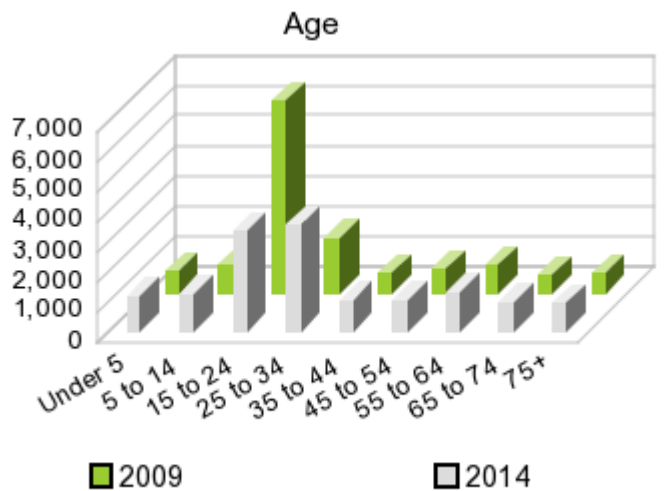
The number of households in the study area in 1990 was **3,856** and changed to **4,218** in 2000, representing a change of **9.4%**. The household count in 2009 was **4,988** and the household projection for 2014 is **5,721**, a change of **14.7%**.

The population in the study area in 1990 was **12,333** and in 2000 it was **13,219**, roughly a **7.2%** change. The population in 2009 was **13,860** and the projection for 2014 is **14,870** representing a change of **7.3%**.



	Percent Change					
	1990 Census	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2014 Projection	1990 to 2000	2009 to 2014
Total Population	12,333	13,219	13,860	14,870	7.2%	7.3%
Total Households	3,856	4,218	4,988	5,721	9.4%	14.7%

Population by Age



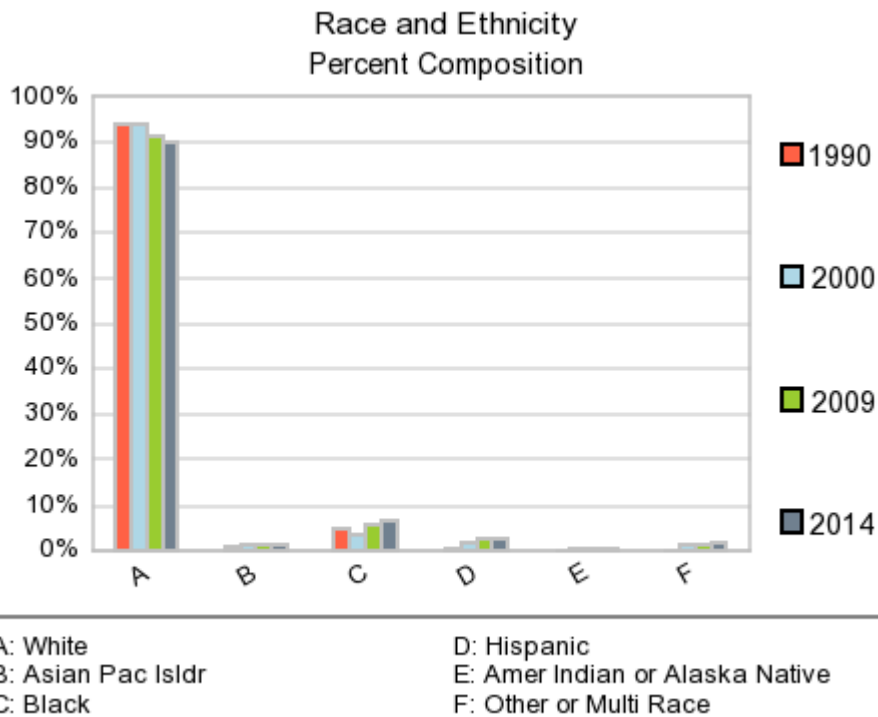
In 1990, the median age of the total population in the study area was **21.8**, and in 2000, it was **21.4**. The median age in 2009 is **23.5** and it is predicted to change in five years to **28.2** years. In 2009, females represented **51.4%** of the population with a median age of **23.5** and males represented **48.6%** of the population with a median age of **23.5** years. In 2009, the most prominent age group in this geography is **Age 18 to 24** years. The age group least represented in this geography is **65 to 74** years.

Age Groups

Age Groups	Percent Change									
	1990 Census	%	2000 Census	%	2009 Estimate	%	2014 Projection	%	1990 to 2000	2009 to 2014
0 to 4	261	2.1%	217	1.6%	762	5.5%	1,227	8.3%	-17.0%	61.0%
5 to 14	555	4.5%	495	3.7%	970	7.0%	1,243	8.4%	-10.9%	28.2%
15 to 19	2,867	23.3%	3,405	25.8%	1,855	13.4%	777	5.2%	18.8%	-58.1%
20 to 24	4,641	37.6%	5,063	38.3%	4,603	33.2%	2,625	17.7%	9.1%	-43.0%

25 to 34	1,103	8.9%	997	7.5%	1,860	13.4%	3,562	24.0%	-9.6%	91.5%
35 to 44	770	6.2%	740	5.6%	720	5.2%	1,062	7.1%	-3.9%	47.6%
45 to 54	688	5.6%	751	5.7%	851	6.1%	1,069	7.2%	9.2%	25.6%
55 to 64	558	4.5%	580	4.4%	925	6.7%	1,316	8.9%	3.9%	42.2%
65 to 74	480	3.9%	442	3.3%	633	4.6%	1,042	7.0%	-7.9%	64.7%
75 +	409	3.3%	530	4.0%	705	5.1%	962	6.5%	29.4%	36.4%

Population by Race/Ethnicity



In 2009, the predominant race/ethnicity category in this study area is **White**. The race & ethnicity category least represented in this geography is **American Indian, Alaska Native**.

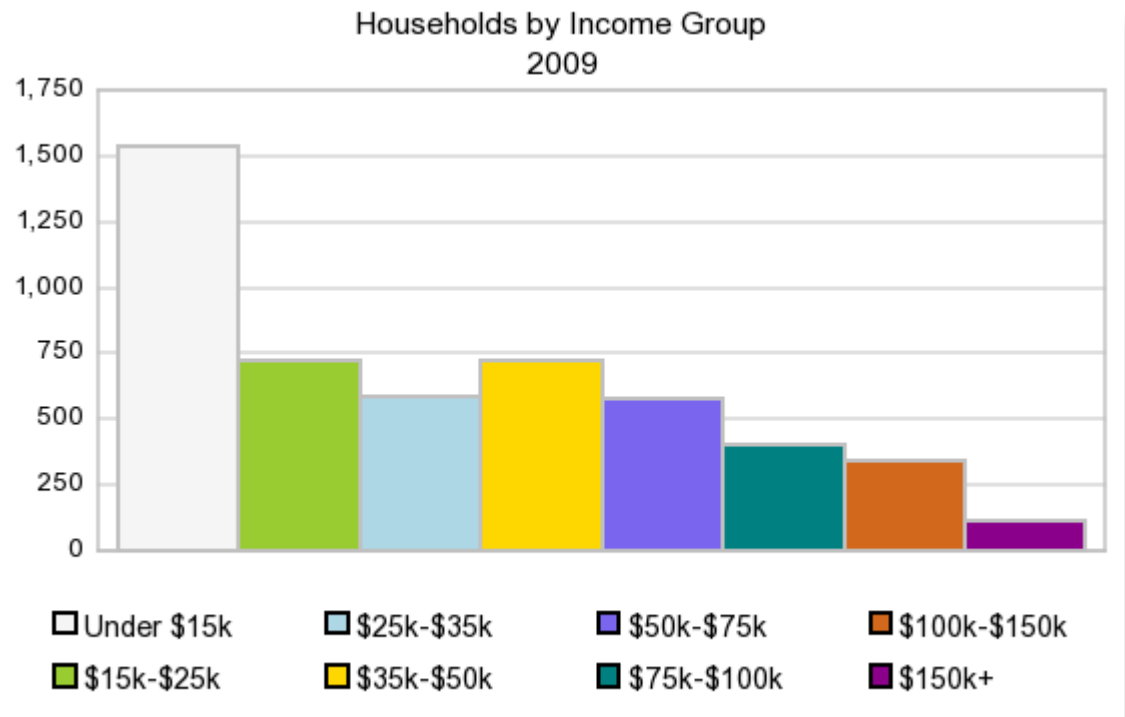
Race & Ethnicity

						Percent Change			
1990 Census	%	2000 Census	%	2009 Estimate	%	2014 Projection	%	1990 to 2000	2009 to 2014

White	11,610	94.1%	12,428	94.0%	12,650	91.3%	13,406	90.2%	7.0%	6.0%
Black	595	4.8%	457	3.5%	778	5.6%	953	6.4%	-23.1%	22.6%
American Indian or Alaska Native	23	0.2%	35	0.3%	45	0.3%	47	0.3%	53.3%	3.1%
Asian or Pacific Islander	89	0.7%	155	1.2%	201	1.5%	196	1.3%	74.9%	-2.6%
Other Race	18	0.1%	66	0.5%	85	0.6%	135	0.9%	271.2%	58.1%
Two or More Races			79	0.6%	101	0.7%	133	0.9%		32.0%
Hispanic Ethnicity	73	0.6%	224	1.7%	341	2.5%	401	2.7%	208.5%	17.5%
Not Hispanic or Latino	12,260	99.4%	12,995	98.3%	13,519	97.5%	14,469	97.3%	6.0%	7.0%

Households by Income

In 2009 the predominant household income category in this study area is \$0 - \$15K, and the income group that is least represented in this geography is \$150K+.



HH Income Categories

Percent Change

	1990 Census	%	2000 Census	%	2009 Estimate	%	2014 Projection	%	1990 to 2000	2009 to 2014
\$0 - \$15,000	1,968	51.0%	1,601	38.0%	1,533	30.7%	1,622	28.4%	-18.6%	5.8%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	548	14.2%	666	15.8%	721	14.5%	803	14.0%	21.6%	11.3%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	416	10.8%	559	13.3%	581	11.7%	649	11.3%	34.5%	11.7%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	395	10.2%	486	11.5%	727	14.6%	813	14.2%	23.1%	11.8%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	330	8.6%	482	11.4%	574	11.5%	710	12.4%	45.9%	23.6%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	102	2.6%	249	5.9%	404	8.1%	462	8.1%	145.1%	14.2%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	76	2.0%	132	3.1%	336	6.7%	495	8.6%	73.2%	47.0%
\$150,000 +	22	0.6%	43	1.0%	111	2.2%	168	2.9%	95.9%	51.6%
Average Hhld Income	\$24,321		\$33,430		\$39,641		\$42,178		37.5%	6.4%
Median Hhld Income	\$14,522		\$22,767		\$28,674		\$31,331		56.8%	9.3%
Per Capita Income	\$8,783		\$10,667		\$21,435		\$23,341		21.5%	8.9%

Educational Attainment

	1990 Census		2000 Census		2009 Estimate		2014 Projection		1990 to 2000	2009 to 2014
Age 25+ Population	4,008		4,040		5,693		9,012		0.8%	58.3%
Grade K - 8	435	10.9%	263	6.5%	314	5.5%	368	4.1%	-39.5%	17.3%
Grade 9 - 12	504	12.6%	269	6.7%	306	5.4%	391	4.3%	-46.7%	27.8%
High School Graduate	676	16.9%	724	17.9%	900	15.8%	1,238	13.7%	7.1%	37.6%
Some College, No Degree	723	18.0%	647	16.0%	1,072	18.8%	1,803	20.0%	-10.5%	68.2%
Associates Degree	164	4.1%	309	7.6%	508	8.9%	915	10.2%	87.9%	80.2%

Bachelor's Degree	768	19.2%	884	21.9%	1,201	21.1%	1,866	20.7%	15.1%	55.4%
Graduate Degree	741	18.5%	917	22.7%	1,394	24.5%	2,432	27.0%	23.7%	74.4%
No Schooling Completed			28	0.7%						

Employment

Statistics for December 2009:

Labor force: 23,360

Employed: 21,548

Unemployed: 1,812

Unemployment rate: 7.8%

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP EXERCISE:

5. How do you take what you want to do from a concept into action?
6. Who will be responsible for implementing the new strategic plan?
7. What are the top two economic development strategies that must be accomplished first?
8. What will you do differently from others in tackling similar problems?