

Economic Development Interactive Exercise – LNC Class XVII

Western County

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

The county 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 county 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. County 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

COUNTY'S ASSETS:

1. Vibrant arts culture with a strong emphasis on drama
2. Recently completed a “cultural assessment” and county wants to use the creative economy as a tool for economic development.
3. Strong year-round tourism – county located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

4. A community college is located in the county and there is an early college high school program to help combat the high dropout rate.
5. “Farmers Fresh Market Initiative” established which links organic farmers with high-end restaurants.

COUNTY’S CHALLENGES:

1. One of the highest unemployment rates in the state
2. Highway/road infrastructure improvements needed to assist with economic development initiatives.
3. Availability of broadband. High speed communication access, at affordable prices, is not currently available to all residents, small and large businesses, and industries.
4. High home foreclosure rate
5. Economy is transitioning from a textile, agricultural based economy and the community needs to identify new business clusters to attract to the county.

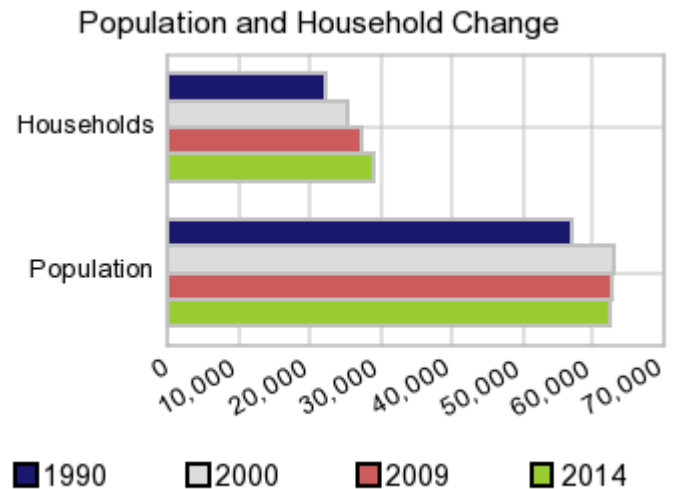
The following are the demographics for your county:

County Demographics

Population Demographics

The number of households in the study area in 1990 was **22,202** and changed to **25,191** in 2000, representing a change of **13.5%**. The household count in 2009 was **27,310** and the household projection for 2014 is **28,927**, a change of **5.9%**.

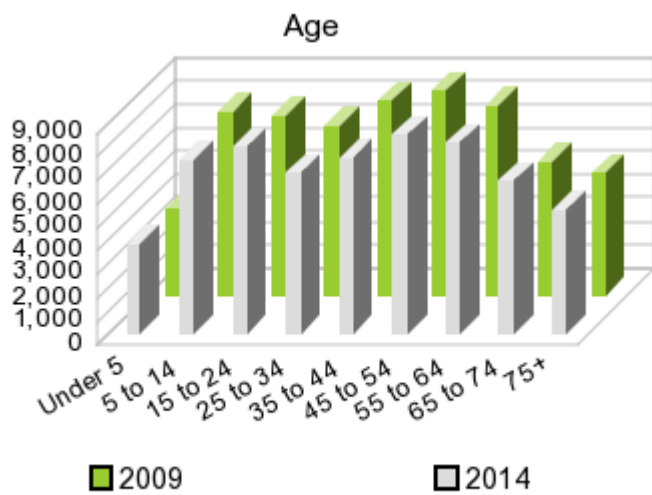
The population in the study area in 1990 was **56,927** and in 2000 it was **62,899**, roughly a **10.5%** change. The population in 2009 was **62,746** and the projection for 2014 is **62,342** representing a change of **-0.6%**.



Percent Change

| | 1990 Census | 2000 Census | 2009 Estimate | 2014 Projection | 1990 to 2000 | 2009 to 2014 |
|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Total Population | 56,927 | 62,899 | 62,746 | 62,342 | 10.5% | -0.6% |
| Total Households | 22,202 | 25,191 | 27,310 | 28,927 | 13.5% | 5.9% |

Population by Age



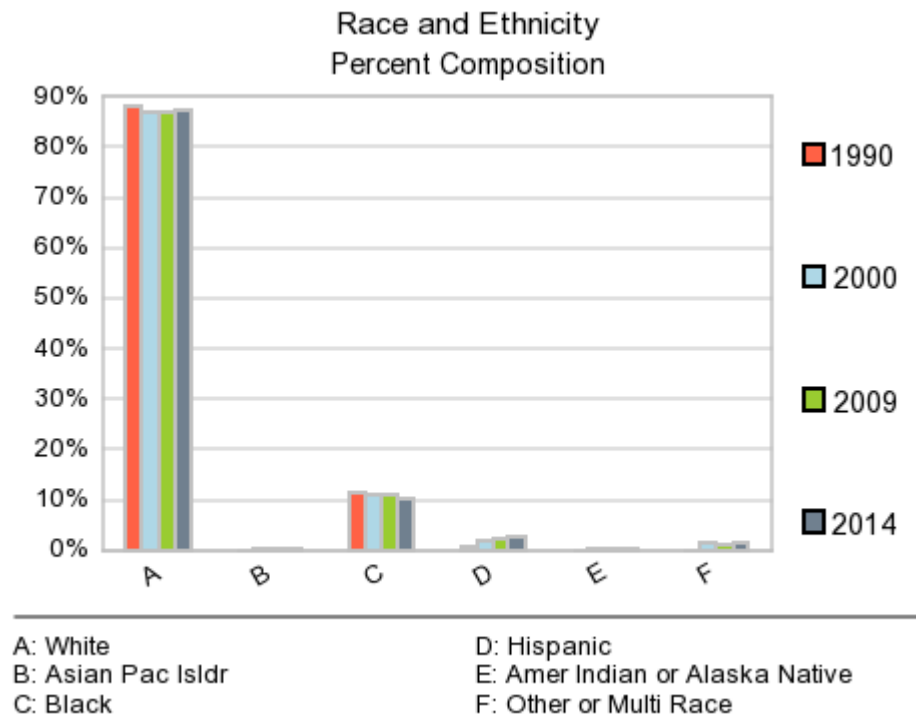
In 1990, the median age of the total population in the study area was **35.6**, and in 2000, it was **38.3**. The median age in 2009 is **40.9** and it is predicted to change in five years to **41.7** years. In 2009, females represented **52.4%** of the population with a median age of **42.4** and males represented **47.6%** of the population with a median age of **39.3** years. In 2009, the most prominent age group in this geography is **Age 45 to 54** years. The age group least represented in this geography is **18 to 24** years.

Age Groups

| | 1990 | | 2000 | | 2009 | | 2014 | | Percent Change | |
|----------|--------|-------|--------|-------|----------|-------|------------|-------|----------------|--------------|
| | Census | % | Census | % | Estimate | % | Projection | % | 1990 to 2000 | 2009 to 2014 |
| 0 to 4 | 3,679 | 6.5% | 3,887 | 6.2% | 3,789 | 6.0% | 3,841 | 6.2% | 5.7% | 1.4% |
| 5 to 14 | 7,692 | 13.5% | 8,651 | 13.8% | 7,873 | 12.5% | 7,443 | 11.9% | 12.5% | -5.5% |
| 15 to 19 | 4,204 | 7.4% | 3,848 | 6.1% | 4,145 | 6.6% | 3,970 | 6.4% | -8.5% | -4.2% |
| 20 to 24 | 4,016 | 7.1% | 3,589 | 5.7% | 3,544 | 5.6% | 4,068 | 6.5% | -10.6% | 14.8% |
| 25 to 34 | 8,353 | 14.7% | 8,384 | 13.3% | 7,272 | 11.6% | 6,900 | 11.1% | 0.4% | -5.1% |
| 35 to 44 | 8,083 | 14.2% | 9,188 | 14.6% | 8,306 | 13.2% | 7,539 | 12.1% | 13.7% | -9.2% |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 45 to 54 | 6,290 | 11.1% | 8,679 | 13.8% | 8,765 | 14.0% | 8,496 | 13.6% | 38.0% | -3.1% |
| 55 to 64 | 5,729 | 10.1% | 6,606 | 10.5% | 8,112 | 12.9% | 8,197 | 13.1% | 15.3% | 1.0% |
| 65 to 74 | 5,090 | 8.9% | 5,255 | 8.4% | 5,729 | 9.1% | 6,563 | 10.5% | 3.2% | 14.6% |
| 75 + | 3,785 | 6.6% | 4,812 | 7.7% | 5,211 | 8.3% | 5,321 | 8.5% | 27.1% | 2.1% |

Population by Race/Ethnicity



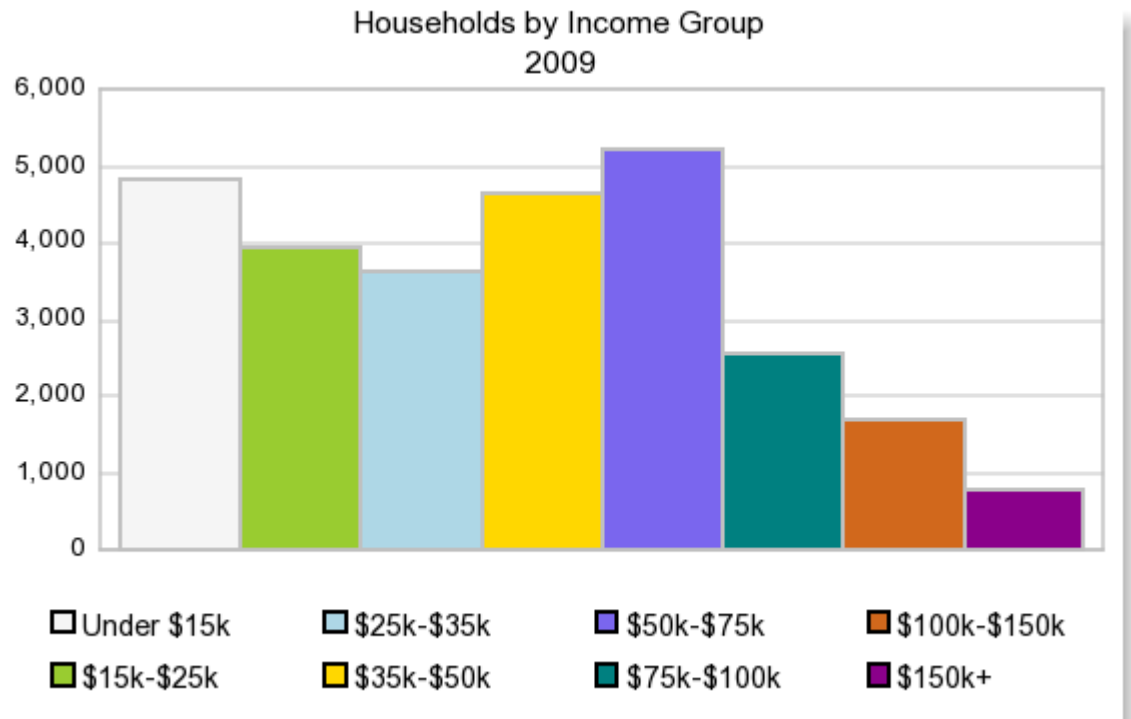
In 2009, the predominant race/ethnicity category in this study area is **White**. The race & ethnicity category least represented in this geography is **American Indian, Alaska Native**.

| Race & Ethnicity | 1990 | | 2000 | | 2009 | | 2014 | | Percent Change | |
|------------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|----------|-------|------------|-------|----------------|--------------|
| | Census | % | Census | % | Estimate | % | Projection | % | 1990 to 2000 | 2009 to 2014 |
| White | 50,142 | 88.1% | 54,592 | 86.8% | 54,599 | 87.0% | 54,497 | 87.4% | 8.9% | -0.2% |
| Black | 6,514 | 11.4% | 7,066 | 11.2% | 6,918 | 11.0% | 6,511 | 10.4% | 8.5% | -5.9% |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------|
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 95 | 0.2% | 125 | 0.2% | 165 | 0.3% | 168 | 0.3% | 31.6% | 1.8% |
| Asian or Pacific Islander | 98 | 0.2% | 226 | 0.4% | 309 | 0.5% | 292 | 0.5% | 130.6% | -5.5% |
| Other Race | 78 | 0.1% | 423 | 0.7% | 361 | 0.6% | 524 | 0.8% | 442.3% | 45.2% |
| Two or More Races | | | 467 | 0.7% | 394 | 0.6% | 350 | 0.6% | | -11.2% |
| Hispanic Ethnicity | 342 | 0.6% | 1,136 | 1.8% | 1,429 | 2.3% | 1,646 | 2.6% | 232.2% | 15.2% |
| Not Hispanic or Latino | 56,586 | 99.4% | 61,763 | 98.2% | 61,317 | 97.7% | 60,696 | 97.4% | 9.1% | -1.0% |

Households by Income

In 2009 the predominant household income category in this study area is \$50K - \$75K, 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 | 6,982 | 31.4% | 5,544 | 22.0% | 4,831 | 17.7% | 4,809 | 16.6% | -20.6% | -0.5% |
| \$15,000 - \$24,999 | 4,570 | 20.6% | 4,560 | 18.1% | 3,958 | 14.5% | 3,801 | 13.1% | -0.2% | -4.0% |
| \$25,000 - \$34,999 | 4,275 | 19.3% | 3,876 | 15.4% | 3,613 | 13.2% | 3,662 | 12.7% | -9.3% | 1.4% |
| \$35,000 - \$49,999 | 3,854 | 17.4% | 4,259 | 16.9% | 4,649 | 17.0% | 4,680 | 16.2% | 10.5% | 0.7% |
| \$50,000 - \$74,999 | 1,919 | 8.6% | 4,360 | 17.3% | 5,223 | 19.1% | 5,698 | 19.7% | 127.2% | 9.1% |
| \$75,000 - \$99,999 | 330 | 1.5% | 1,444 | 5.7% | 2,566 | 9.4% | 3,020 | 10.4% | 337.6% | 17.7% |
| \$100,000 - \$149,999 | 144 | 0.6% | 799 | 3.2% | 1,693 | 6.2% | 2,245 | 7.8% | 454.9% | 32.6% |
| \$150,000 + | 137 | 0.6% | 349 | 1.4% | 777 | 2.8% | 1,012 | 3.5% | 154.7% | 30.2% |
| Average Hhld Income | \$28,694 | | \$39,876 | | \$47,574 | | \$49,933 | | 39.0% | 5.0% |
| Median Hhld Income | \$23,885 | | \$31,329 | | \$39,138 | | \$41,541 | | 31.2% | 6.1% |
| Per Capita Income | \$11,256 | | \$15,970 | | \$21,248 | | \$23,751 | | 41.9% | 11.8% |

Educational Attainment

| | 1990 Census | 2000 Census | 2009 Estimate | 2014 Projection | 1990 to 2000 | 2009 to 2014 |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Age 25+ Population</i> | 37,330 | 42,924 | 43,395 | 43,016 | 15.0% | -0.9% |
| <i>Grade K - 8</i> | 6,630 | 4,317 | 4,127 | 3,400 | 17.8% | -34.9% |
| <i>Grade 9 - 12</i> | 8,551 | 7,955 | 7,310 | 6,590 | 22.9% | -9.9% |
| <i>High School Graduate</i> | 11,141 | 14,275 | 14,857 | 14,747 | 29.8% | -0.7% |
| <i>Some College, No Degree</i> | 5,299 | 7,970 | 8,177 | 8,185 | 14.2% | 0.1% |
| <i>Associates Degree</i> | 2,085 | 2,625 | 3,045 | 3,494 | 5.6% | 14.7% |
| <i>Bachelor's Degree</i> | 2,481 | 3,672 | 3,971 | 4,309 | 6.7% | 8.5% |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|-------|
| <i>Graduate Degree</i> | 1,148 | 3.1% | 1,677 | 3.9% | 1,908 | 4.4% | 2,291 | 5.3% | 46.1% | 20.1% |
| <i>No Schooling Completed</i> | | | 433 | 1.0% | | | | | | |

Employment

Statistics for December 2009:

Labor force: 28,805

Employed: 23,948

Unemployed: 4,857

Unemployment rate: 16.9%