

CHAPTER ONE POPULATION

POPULATION TRENDS

An understanding of Lanier County and the City of Lakeland's past, present and future trends; its characteristics and distribution throughout the city and the unincorporated county; provides insight about forthcoming needs such as utilities, schools, housing, police, fire protection, emergency medical services, and recreation; and a foundation through which these needs can be addressed.

During the 1930s decade Lakeland's population grew by 500 persons resulting from the establishment of a lumber mill. The lumber mill's subsequent destruction in 1951 accounts for Lakeland's marginal population growth during the succeeding decade. Between 1960 and 2000 Lanier County gained 2,144 persons. This equates to a 42.1 percent increase in total population over 40 years, or a *real* gain in population of 1.05% annually. During this same 40-year period, the South Georgia Region gained 51.4 percent and the State of Georgia gained 108.7 percent in population. Lanier County's population is not unlike that of its neighboring counties, exhibiting dramatic immigration trends during the 1980s, a mass exodus at the turn of the decade, and entering the post exodus period with a marginal growth rate. Table 1-1 illustrates the numerical and percentage change in population over a forty-year period for Lanier County, Lakeland, and the unincorporated area. Table 1-2 enumerates Lanier County's vital statistics for this same time period. The distribution in population between Lakeland and the unincorporated area in 1960 depicts a 44/56 percent split respectively. By 1970 this distribution approached 51% for Lakeland and 49% in the unincorporated area, but resumed its 44/56 percent dichotomy in 1990 and 38/62 percent by 2000. Future population projections conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Census and Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., substantiate a positive growth rate through 2025.

**TABLE 1-1
1960 - 2000 TOTAL POPULATION FOR GREATER LANIER AND LAKELAND**

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Greater Lanier	5,097	5,031	5,654	5,531	7,241
Lakeland	2,236	2,569	2,647	2,467	2,730
Lanier, Unincorp.	2,861	2,462	3,007	3,064	4,511
RDC	150,165	157,500	186,200	192,673	227,421
State	3,943,116	4,605,600	5,486,800	6,522,645	8,229,820

NUMERICAL AND PERCENTAGE CHANGE

	1960-1970		1970-1980		1980-1990		1990-2000		1960-2000	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Greater Lanier	- 66	- 1.3	623	12.4	- 123	- 2.2	1,710	30.9	2,144	42.1
Lakeland	333	14.9	78	3.0	- 17	- 0.6	263	10.7	494	22.1
Lanier, Unincorp.	- 339	- 13.9	545	22.1	63	2.1	1,447	47.2	1,650	57.7
RDC	7,335	4.9	28,700	18.2	9,248	5.0	31,704	16.2	77,256	51.4
State	662,484	16.9	881,600	19.1	1,021,685	18.6	1,707,175	26.2	4,286,704	108.7

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 1960 -2000.

**TABLE 1-2
BIRTHS, DEATHS, & NATURAL INCREASE IN GREATER LANIER 1960 - 1999**

YEAR	BIRTHS	DEATHS	NATURAL INCREASE
1960	145	49	96
1961	103	45	58
1962	126	36	90
1963	139	46	93
1964	145	54	91
1965	118	58	60
1966	89	42	47
1967	81	47	34
1968	94	54	40
1969	114	57	57
1970	85	44	41
1971	98	43	55
1972	89	77	12
1973	99	52	47
1974	84	67	17
1975	82	57	25
1976	93	67	26
1977	106	45	61
1978	96	44	52
1979	108	60	48
1980	79	49	30
1981	78	62	16
1982	85	48	37
1983	110	62	48
1984	104	50	54
1985	92	51	41
1986	94	57	37
1987	95	66	29
1988	101	75	26
1989	73	56	17
1990	92	58	34
1991	83	55	28
1992	86	62	22
1993	74	50	24
1994	88	64	24
1995	90	59	31
1996	85	69	16
1997	78	72	6
1998	89	70	19
1999	82	46	36

Source: Georgia Vital Statistics Reports, 1960-1999

COMPONENTS OF POPULATION CHANGE FOR GREATER LANIER

Population	1970	5,031
Population	1960	5,097
Population Change - 1960-1970		- 66
Births	1960-1969	1,154
Deaths	1960-1969	488
Natural Increase - 1960-1969		666
Net Out-migration		732 (12.7%)
Population	1980	5,654
Population	1970	5,031
Population Change - 1970-1980		623
Births	1970-1979	940
Deaths	1970-1979	556
Natural Increase - 1970-1979		384
Net In-migration		239 (4.4%)
Population	1990	5,531
Population	1980	5,654
Population Change - 1980-1989		- 123
Births	1980-1989	911
Deaths	1980-1989	576
Natural Increase - 1980-1989		335
Net Out-migration		458 (7.6%)
Population	2000	7,241
Population	1990	5,531
Population Change 1990-2000		1,710
Births	1990-1999	847
Deaths	1990-1999	610
Natural Increase 1990-1999		237
Net In migration		1,473 (26.6 %)

Between 1960 and 2000 Lanier County exhibited diverse migration trends. During the 1960's decade Lanier experienced a net out-migration of 12.7% of its population, or 732 people, but in the 1990's there was a net in-migration of 1,473 persons or 26.6 percent. Migration, whether in-migration or out-migration, is determined by calculating the Rate of Natural Increase (Birth-deaths), using this rate to forecast the future population (assuming zero migration), and subsequently subtracting the anticipated population from the actual. From 1970-1980 Lanier experienced an in-migration of 4.4% or 239 people. The 1980's decade was concluded by an out-migration of 458 people, 7.6% of the population. Crude birth and death rates are expressed per thousand of population and reflect the interaction of two factors: the age structure of a population, and its age-specific fertility and death rates. The death rates for Lanier County have remained predominantly static, at an average rate of 9.5 per thousand population. An exception is noted in 1980 when the death rate fell to 8.6. Considering the influx of population in 1980 due to immigration, the death rate could reflect an increase in the younger population. Unlike the death rate, the birth rate has continued to fall over the past forty years, with a marked decrease by 1980 and then leveling off thereafter. In 1960 the birth rate was 28.1 per thousand and in 1990 it was 16.6 per thousand. In 1980 the birth rate declined to 13.9 per thousand. The South Georgia RDC region, Georgia, and the United States births per thousand in 1980 were 16.8, 16.1, and 16, respectively. The unusually low birth rate is indicative of changing population demographics as well as a period of economic decline. This is further evidenced by the fact that Lanier's per capita income was only 40% of that earned by the state. In the long run sustained periods of economic stagnation and lower income levels leads to a lower birth rate and an exportation of labor.

Migration is predominantly caused by the under utilization of labor. Out-migration has numerous detrimental impacts on the local economy to include: reducing the skilled labor force, robbing the economy of entrepreneurs, and fostering a pessimistic attitude toward progress. A variety of factors have contributed to the surplus of labor and its consequent migration. These factors are expounded upon in the succeeding pages.

CHANGING AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES, MARKETS AND CROP ALLOTMENTS In the past, the major agricultural dependency of the county has been peanuts, cotton, and tobacco crops, which have acreage allotment controls. Decreasing percentages of acreage allotments, dependency upon price supports, and rising costs have discouraged the small farmer and contributed greatly to the loss of population in the county. Since 1978 the number of farms in Lanier County has decreased by over 35%. Furthermore, technological advancement in agricultural production has decreased the necessity for having small farm centers in every county. Farmers today are more mobile and tend to carry on their business for agricultural products in larger distribution centers such as Valdosta and Tifton.

MECHANIZATION Mechanization of agricultural procedures required higher capital outlays for profitable farming, resulting in larger land holdings and a decreasing dependency upon unskilled labor.

EDUCATION In 1970, 72 percent of the population over 25 years had less than a four-year high school education. By 2000 this figure had dropped to 33 percent. If the number of skilled jobs in a particular economy does not commensurate with the growing education levels attained by the labor force, the result is a surplus in skilled labor, which is subsequently exported.

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT CAPACITY By 1990 Lanier's capacity to employ its labor force locally had diminished considerably. As a percentage of local jobs, Lanier had the ability to employ 82% of its labor force in 1970, as opposed to 35 percent in 2000. In addition, the percentage of Lanier's labor force employed outside the county rose from 43 percent in 1970 to 65 percent in 2000. Finally, the close proximity of Valdosta plays an integral role in the percentage of Lanier's commuting labor.

AGE COMPOSITION

One characteristic that is influenced by changing economic conditions is age composition. Tables 1-3 and 1-4 numerically illustrate the percentage changes in age composition for both Lanier County and Lakeland. The decrease in the percentage of the population aged 0-4 is consistent with the prevailing economic conditions of the state and nation. As disposable income declines the affordability of couples to have children diminishes. The age group 65 and up has, and will continue to increase as a percentage of the population due to continued advancements in medicine. Note the percentage increase in population in the age groups 25-44 from 1980 – 2000. This reflects the migratory patterns exhibited by the county over this 20-year period. The age demographics for Lakeland mirror that of Lanier County, except for the elevated percentage of those 65 and up. The percentage and number of this age group has decreased over the past 20 years in Lakeland from 367/13.9 percent in 1980 to 363/13.3 percent in 2000. By 2025, Greater Lanier will have 15.8 percent (1,395 persons) of its population in the 65 and older category.

**TABLE 1-3
1980 - 2025 GREATER LANIER POPULATION BY AGE (NUMBER OF PERSONS)**

	1980	%	1985	%	1990	%	1995	%	2000	%
0 to 4	512	9.1	497	8.6	450	8.1	494	7.6	522	7.2
5 to 14	1,058	18.7	988	17.1	921	16.6	1,073	16.5	1,098	15.2
15 to 24	1,058	18.7	983	17.0	838	15.1	970	14.9	1,064	14.7
25 to 34	768	13.6	890	15.4	885	15.9	991	15.3	1,030	14.2
35 to 44	595	10.5	698	12.1	764	13.7	958	14.8	1,180	16.3
45 to 54	566	10.0	549	9.5	573	10.3	623	9.6	853	11.8
55 to 64	428	7.6	481	8.3	475	8.5	561	8.6	629	8.7
65 & up	671	11.9	684	11.9	655	11.8	719	11.1	772	10.7
Total	5,656		5,770		5,561		6,489		7,246	

	2005	%	2010	%	2015	%	2020	%	2025	%
0 to 4	534	7.1	543	6.9	558	6.8	572	6.8	577	6.5
5 to 14	1,107	14.7	1,079	13.8	1,118	13.7	1,152	13.6	1,166	13.2
15 to 24	1,049	13.9	1,073	13.7	1,080	13.2	1,079	12.7	1,122	12.7
25 to 34	1,115	14.8	1,250	16.0	1,187	14.6	1,197	14.1	1,170	13.3
35 to 44	1,094	14.5	1,013	12.9	1,121	13.7	1,260	14.9	1,200	13.6
45 to 54	1,049	13.9	1,162	14.8	1,192	14.6	1,020	12.0	1,134	12.9
55 to 64	721	9.6	780	10.0	977	12.0	1,087	12.8	1,002	11.4
65 & up	813	10.8	926	11.8	1,022	12.5	1,153	13.6	1,395	15.8
Total	7,527		7,826		8,155		8,466		8,811	

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002.

**TABLE 1-4
1980 - 2000 LAKELAND POPULATION BY AGE (NUMBER OF PERSONS)**

	1980	%	1990	%	2000	%
0 to 4	222	8.4	223	9.0	225	8.2
5 to 14	497	18.8	405	16.4	406	14.9
15 to 24	478	18.1	389	16.4	455	16.7
25 to 34	329	12.4	372	15.1	375	13.7
35 to 44	284	10.7	290	11.8	399	14.6
45 to 54	289	10.9	228	9.2	261	9.6
55 to 64	181	6.8	215	8.7	249	9.1
65 & up	367	13.9	345	14.1	363	13.3
Total	2,647		2,467		2,730	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, and 2000.

SEX AND RACE CHARACTERISTICS

The percentage of males and females remained relatively constant in Lanier County in 1990 and 2000 (see Table 1-5). The only significant deviations are the elevated number of females in Lakeland. Females represented 54.0 percent of the population in 1990, but dropped to 49.4 percent in 2000, which is contrasted to the state and region averages of 48.1 percent males and 5.7% females. Lanier County's overall gender percentages, however, are consistent with the South Georgia Region and the State of Georgia.

**TABLE 1-5
1990 - 2000 POPULATION BY SEX FOR LANIER COUNTY AND LAKELAND**

Unit	1990				2000			
	Males	%	Females	%	Males	%	Females	%
Greater Lanier	2,688	48.5	2,843	51.5	3,669	48.7	3,572	51.3
Lakeland, city	1,137	46.0	1,330	54.0	1,382	50.6	1,348	49.4
Unincorporated Area	1,551	50.6	1,513	49.4	2,287	50.7	2,224	49.3
RDC	94,391	48.3	101,075	51.7	111,664	49.1	115,757	50.9
State	3,333,713	48.5	3,333,713	51.5	4,048,690	49.2	4,181,130	50.8

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1980 and 2000.

Tables 1-6 and 1-7 portray the past, present, and future trends in racial composition for Lanier County, Lakeland, and the unincorporated area. Future projections for the County's racial divisions remain consistent with previous trends, with whites representing 69.5 percent of the population, blacks 25.6 percent, and others comprising 2.8 percent. Although the County's racial delineation remains static, historical data reveals a migratory pattern between Lakeland and the unincorporated area. Lakeland's percentage of whites since 1980 has decreased by 12.7 percent, while the unincorporated area percentage has risen by 0.7 percent. The reverse is noted for the black population, which increased in Lakeland by 9.5 percent and decreased in the unincorporated area by 2.6 percent.

**TABLE 1-6
1980 - 2025 GREATER LANIER POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNIC BACKGROUND
(NUMBER AND PERCENT OF PERSONS)**

	1980	%	1985	%	1990	%	1995	%	2000	%
White	4,246	75.1	4,258	73.8	4,014	72.2	4,139	71.6	5,185	71.6
Black	1,391	24.6	1,455	25.2	1,484	26.7	1,557	26.9	1,856	25.6
Other	19	0.3	57	1.0	63	1.1	87	1.5	200	2.8
Hispanic	19	ND	23	ND	68	ND	94	ND	126	ND
Total	5,852		5,902		5,978		5,783		7,241	
	2005	%	2010	%	2015	%	2020	%	2025	%
White	5,405	71.8	5,599	71.5	5,769	70.7	5,902	69.7	6,123	69.5
Black	1,905	25.3	1,973	25.2	2,092	25.7	2,236	26.4	2,335	26.5
Other	62	0.8	72	0.9	82	1.0	86	1.0	89	1.0
Hispanic	155	2.1	182	2.3	212	2.6	242	2.9	264	3.0
Total	7,527		7,826		8,155		8,466		8,811	

Source: Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., 2002. Percent calculations by South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2004. Note ND in "Hispanic" denotes an ethnic origin, not a race, so no percentage calculations were made. Persons of Hispanic origin are also counted in the White, Black and Other totals.

TABLE 1-7
1980 - 2000 LAKELAND AND UNINCORPORATED LANIER COUNTY POPULATION BY RACE
(NUMBER AND PERCENT OF PERSONS)

	Lakeland						Lanier Co. Unincorporated					
	1980	%	1990	%	2000	%	1980	%	1990	%	2000	%
White	1,850	69.9	1,496	60.6	1,561	57.2	2,396	79.6	2,518	81.4	3,624	80.3
Black	790	29.8	935	37.9	1,072	39.3	601	20.0	549	17.7	784	17.4
Other	7	0.3	36	1.5	52	1.9	12	0.4	27	0.9	148	3.3
Hispanic	ND	ND	ND	ND	78	2.9	ND	ND	ND	ND	48	1.1
Total	2,647		2,467		2,730		3,009		3,094		4,511	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, and 2000.

POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD PROJECTIONS

Population projections are mathematical determined forecasts of future population levels within a given geographic environment. They are used to assess and address anticipated facility, service, and other needs by a county and/or city. Various trend projections are used to predict population changes. Most population projection methods rely on a known base year population, usually the most current U.S. Census count conducted every ten years. Because populations are influenced by a number of variables, mathematical models attempt to incorporate and predict the causal relationship between these variables and future population changes. Since the degree and nature of these relationships differ from population to population, the application of macro models to microenvironments and visa versa is not practical. For instance, the impact on the population from the closure of a company employing 200 people in a population of 500,000 is starkly different to that of the same company closing in a population of 500.

In 2002, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs commissioned Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., a private forecasting company, to produce county data for use in local planning efforts across the state. Woods and Poole draws upon information from the Bureau of Census and the Bureau of Economic Analysis as a basis for its forecasts. This data is then "enhanced" by using inter-census estimates prepared by the Census Bureau, along with additional information and statistical techniques, to project trends in migration.

Woods and Poole projected moderate and steady growth in Lanier County through 2025. These projections follow:

<u>2005</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2025</u>
7,527	7,826	8,155	8,466	8,811

The projection recognizes and considers previous birth and death rates, rates of natural increase, age composition, and economic conditions, along with a host of other variables. The projection does not anticipate unpredictable changes, which could significantly alter the predicted size and pattern of development. The future population outlook to 2025 for Greater Lanier County, the Region, and the State are illustrated in Table 1-8.

TABLE 1-8
2000 - 2025 POPULATION PROJECTIONS GREATER LANIER, LAKELAND, REGION, AND STATE

Unit	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	
Greater Lanier	7,241	7,298	7,355	7,412	7,469	
Lakeland	2,730	2,756	2,782	2,808	2,834	
Unincorp.	4,511	4,542	4,573	4,604	4,635	
RDC	227,421	231,200	215,000	217,070	219,140	
State	8,229,820	8,338,460	8,449,130	8,560,620	8,670,510	
Unit	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	
Greater Lanier	7,527	7,826	8,155	8,466	8,811	
Lakeland	2,860	3,052	3,100	3,217	3,348	
Unincorp.	4,667	4,774	5,055	5,249	5,463	
RDC	221,514	232,085	243,361	255,122	267,460	
State	8,784,650	9,349,660	9,940,380	10,550,700	11,185,100	
	2000 - 2010 Numerical Change	%	2010 - 2020 Numerical Change	%	2000 - 2025 Numerical Change	%
Greater Lanier	585	8.1	640	8.2	1,570	21.7
Lakeland	322	11.8	165	5.4	618	22.6
Unincorp.	263	5.8	475	9.9	952	21.1
RDC	4,664	2.1	23,037	9.9	40,039	17.6
State	1,119,840	13.6	1,201,040	12.8	2,955,280	35.9

Source: Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.; 2002. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000. South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2004.

HOUSEHOLD AND INCOME CHARACTERISTICS

According to Woods and Poole Economics Inc., the number of occupied housing units in Lanier County increased by 42 percent (773 units) between 1980 and 2000. Table 1-9 reflects the 1980 to 2025 occupied housing trends for Lanier County, Lakeland, the unincorporated area, the Region, and the State, as projected by Woods and Poole. Lanier County's projected growth in housing is governed by its anticipated future economic and population conditions. Although Lanier's estimated growth is considerably less than the state and region averages, it commensurate with Lanier's projected economic and population development patterns.

TABLE 1-9
1980 - 2025 GREATER LANIER NUMBER OF OCCUPIED HOUSEHOLDS

Uni	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Greater Lanier	1,836	1,977	2,609	2,735	2,854	2,964	3,052	3,118
Lakeland	868	913	971	1,012	1,056	1,096	1,129	1,154
Unincorp.	968	1,064	1,622	1,723	1,798	1,868	1,923	1,964
RDC	61,783	66,061	76,532	81,006	85,293	89,213	92,652	95,305
State	1,886,550	2,380,830	3,022,410	3,265,030	3,501,680	3,727,580	3,929,140	4,108,410

NUMERICAL AND PERCENTAGE CHANGE

Unit	1980 - 1990		1990 - 2000		2000 - 2010		2010 - 2020		2000 - 2025	
	number	%								
Greater Lanier	141	7.7	632	32.0	245	9.4	198	6.9	509	19.5
Lakeland	45	5.2	137	15.0	93	8.9	62	5.4	204	19.4
Unincorp.	96	9.9	495	46.5	152	9.7	136	7.9	305	19.6
RDC	4,278	6.9	10,471	15.9	8,761	11.4	10,359	12.1	18,773	24.5
State	501,253	26.6	641,580	26.9	479,270	15.9	427,460	12.2	1,086,000	35.9

Source: Woods and Poole Economics, Inc. 2002; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000; and South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2004.

A breakout of the "plan year" (2005) data identified in Table 1-9 shows that Greater Lanier will have a total of 2,735 occupied households; Lakeland will have 1,100 and the unincorporated area a total of 1,635 occupied households. This equates to a 4.8 percent increase (126 units) between 2000 and 2005 for Greater Lanier. The City of Lakeland will have a 4.8 percent (50 units) increase and the unincorporated area will have a 4.9 percent (76 units) increase between 2000 and 2005. Population and housing unit increases during the planning period will not vary the 2000 "housing type" ratios of 60% - single family, 5% - multi-family, and 35% - mobile homes by more than 0.3%, which is an insignificant change. Unincorporated Lanier County housing type projections (2000-2025) are 183 single family, zero multi-family, and 122 manufactured homes. Lakeland's housing type projections will add 122 single family, 12 multi-family, and 70 manufactured homes.

**TABLE 1-10
1980 - 2025 PERSONS PER HOUSING UNIT IN GREATER LANIER & LAKELAND**

Unit	1980	1990	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Lanier (total)	3.05	2.76	2.67	2.66	2.65	2.65	2.64	2.63	2.62	2.62	2.62	2.65
Lakeland	3.00	2.88	2.54	2.54	2.54	2.54	2.55	2.55	2.63	2.57	2.60	2.66
Lanier, unincorp.	3.04	2.83	2.78	2.74	2.73	2.72	2.72	2.71	2.66	2.71	2.73	2.78
RDC	3.00	2.78	2.97	NA	NA	NA	NA	2.73	2.72	2.73	2.75	2.81
State	2.83	2.66	2.65	2.64	2.63	2.63	2.62	2.61	2.59	2.59	2.60	2.63

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, and 2000; Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., 2002; and South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2004.

Table 1-10 depicts a graduated decrease in the number of persons per housing unit in Lanier County, Lakeland, the unincorporated area, the region, and the state. Corresponding decreases are forecasted for the region and the state.

The following table (Table 1-11) displays the projected household and per capita income for Lanier County, Lakeland, and the state from 1980 to 2025. These figures have been converted into 1996 constant dollars allowing

for valid year-to-year comparisons. The farming sector suffered severe setbacks in the late 1970's, which heavily influenced the 1980 income levels. Income comparisons between Greater Lanier and the state must be prefaced by the disparate cost of living expenses between rural and metropolitan areas. On average, the household and per capita incomes of Greater Lanier is about 64 percent of the state.

**TABLE 1-11: MEAN HOUSEHOLD & PER CAPITA INCOME 1980 - 2025
(CONSTANT 1996 DOLLARS)**

Unit	1980		1985		1990	
	Mean Household & Per Capita Income Current \$	Per Capita (1996 \$)	Mean Household & Per Capita Income Current \$	Per Capita (1996 \$)	Mean Household & Per Capita Income Current \$	Per Capita (1996 \$)
Greater Lanier	NA 6,125	11,093	NA NA	NA	23,024 33,259	16,452
Lakeland	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
State	NA 8,477	15,353	NA	NA		20,715
Unit	1995		2000		2005	
	Mean Household & Per Capita Income Current \$	Per Capita (1996 \$)	Mean Household & Per Capita Income Current \$	Per Capita (1996 \$)	Mean Household & Per Capita Income Current \$	Per Capita (1996 \$)
Greater Lanier	25,728 14,536	14,848	27,549 17,689	16,462	30,478 20,945	17,247
Lakeland	NA	NA	22,346	13,156	NA	NA
State	35,692 21,819	22,287	42,158 27,346	25,433	44,169 32,759	26,975
Unit	2010		2015		2020	
	Mean Household & Per Capita Income Current \$	Per Capita (1996 \$)	Mean Household & Per Capita Income Current \$	Per Capita (1996 \$)	Mean Household & Per Capita Income Current \$	Per Capita (1996 \$)
Greater Lanier	33,297 25,470	18,070	36,257 31,377	18,930	39,199 38,866	19,935
State	52,533 40,239	28,549	54,203 49,960	30,141	63,964 61,935	31,767
Unit	2025					
	Mean Household & Per Capita Income Current \$	Per Capita (1996 \$)				
Greater Lanier	42,138 48,055	20,968				
State	59,049 76,626	33,413				

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002.

Table 1-12 illustrates the 2000 number and percent distribution of household incomes in Greater Lanier, Lakeland, the unincorporated area and the state. Approximately 51 percent of Greater Lanier households earn incomes less than \$30,000 annually. This represents 17 percent more than the state average. In short, more people are earning less money in Greater Lanier than that of the state. Percentages of households earning incomes in excess of \$30,000 for Lakeland and the unincorporated area are 37.3 percent and 55.3 percent respectively.

**TABLE 1-12
2000 NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME FOR GREATER LANIER,
LAKELAND, AND THE UNINCORPORATED AREA**

HOUSEHOLDS WITH INCOME	NUMBER AND PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS						
	GREATER LANIER		CITY OF LAKELAND		UNINCORPORATED		STATE
	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	%
LESS THAN \$10,000	442	16.9	263	27.4	179	10.9	10.1
\$ 10,000 - \$19,999	373	14.3	149	15.5	224	13.6	11.8
\$ 20,000 - \$ 29,999	522	20.0	189	19.7	333	20.2	12.7
\$ 30,000 - \$ 39,999	373	14.3	125	13.0	248	15.0	12.1
\$ 40,000 - \$ 49,999	240	9.2	61	6.3	179	10.9	10.9
\$ 50,000 - \$ 59,999	229	8.8	36	3.7	193	11.7	9.2
\$ 60,000 - \$ 74,999	198	7.6	51	5.3	147	8.9	10.5
\$ 75,000 - \$ 99,999	160	6.1	57	5.9	103	6.3	10.4
\$100,000 - \$124,999	34	1.3	7	0.7	27	1.6	5.2
\$125,000 - \$149,999	10	0.4	2	0.2	8	0.5	2.5
\$150,000-\$199,999	15	0.6	8	0.8	7	0.4	2.2
\$ 200,000 OR MORE	13	0.5	13	1.4	0	0.0	2.4
TOTAL	2,609		961		1,648		

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000; and South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2004.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The following three tables provide insight on education attainment levels for Lanier County. Table 1-13 reveals census data on the number of adults 25 years and older with various levels of education. The 20-year span confirms an increase in the level of education attained by individuals 25 years and older in both Lakeland and the unincorporated area

**TABLE 1-13
1980-2000 LANIER COUNTY, LAKELAND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
(NUMBER OF ADULTS, AGE 25 AND OVER)**

	LANIER UNINCORPORATED			LAKELAND		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (0-8 YEARS)	1,059	731	240	545	316	239
HIGH SCHOOL (1-3 YEARS)	777	894	521	352	400	479
HIGH SCHOOL (4 YEARS)	731	995	1,066	349	399	469
COLLEGE (1-3 YEARS)	302	533	791	108	267	288
COLLEGE (+4 YEARS)	160	179	222	96	73	172
TOTAL	3,029	3,332	2,840	1,450	1,455	1,647

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, and 2000.

From a regional perspective Lanier County has made steady progress in educational attainment. Lanier County ranked 9th out of ten counties in the percentage of individuals with high school and college diplomas in 1990 and 7th of ten in 2000. However, Lanier County ranked 6th in a percentage comparison of individuals with 1 year college experience or associate degree. The remaining table (1-15) display data on a decade of enrollment by school in Lanier County.

TABLE 1-14: 1980 - 2000 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR THE SOUTH GEORGIA REGION

Unit	1980 Educational Attainment						1990 Educational Attainment						2000 Educational Attainment					
	Adults, 25 & over	Elem. Grades 1-8	High School		College		Adults, 25 & over	Elem. Grades 1-8	High School		College		Adults, 25 & over	Elem. Grades 1-8	High School		College	
			No Diploma	Graduate	No Degree	Graduate			No Diploma	Graduate	No Degree	Graduate			No Diploma	Graduate	No Degree	Graduate
Ben Hill	11,175	32.3%	24.5%	25.2%	8.1%	9,810	18.5%	24.8%	35.6%	23.6%	7.6%	10,990	12.9%	21.3%	37.2%	19.1%	9.6%	
Berrien	9,581	32.8%	26.1%	27.9%	5.9%	8,782	20.4%	22.1%	34.7%	15.2%	7.5%	10,451	11.8%	22.2%	34.6%	22.0%	9.4%	
Brooks	10,235	36.8%	23.7%	24.5%	7.5%	9,363	19.1%	22.3%	36.0%	13.6%	9.1%	10,445	12.0%	20.6%	37.1%	19.1%	11.3%	
Cook	9,276	34.9%	26.4%	25.7%	5.7%	8,231	20.9%	23.9%	34.6%	14.1%	6.5%	9,876	12.9%	22.6%	36.0%	20.5%	8.2%	
Echols	1,487	33.8%	25.2%	31.4%	3.9%	1,396	18.3%	20.7%	45.3%	10.9%	4.7%	2,167	17.9%	21.7%	35.6%	16.5%	8.4%	
Irwin	6,322	34.3%	26.2%	25.1%	5.7%	5,350	21.0%	26.0%	32.9%	11.9%	8.3%	6,196	12.6%	19.7%	38.5%	19.4%	9.8%	
Lanier	3,760	35.0%	25.7%	24.1%	5.3%	3,332	21.9%	26.8%	29.9%	16.0%	5.4%	4,487	10.7%	22.3%	34.2%	24.0%	8.8%	
Lowndes	40,400	22.3%	20.6%	30.8%	13.2%	43,540	11.3%	18.9%	31.7%	21.7%	16.3%	54,237	6.6%	15.8%	30.6%	27.4%	19.7%	
Tift	21,073	31.5%	23.0%	22.9%	11.1%	20,829	17.2%	21.5%	27.0%	20.3%	14.0%	23,433	11.7%	20.4%	30.3%	21.9%	15.6%	
Turner	6,175	35.1%	25.0%	23.5%	7.8%	5,170	19.2%	25.5%	35.1%	13.0%	7.2%	5,707	10.5%	21.8%	38.7%	18.5%	10.5%	
United States	144,384,211	17.5%	13.9%	36.8%	17.0%	158,868,436	10.4%	14.4%	30.0%	24.9%	20.3%	182,211,639	7.5%	12.1%	28.6%	27.3%	24.4%	
Georgia	3,569,283	23.7%	19.9%	28.5%	13.3%	4,023,420	12.0%	17.2%	29.6%	22.0%	19.3%	5,185,965	7.6%	13.8%	28.7%	25.6%	24.3%	

PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS WITH HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA and COLLEGE

	1980	1990	2000
SGRDC	47.1%	62.2%	71%
Ben Hill	43.2%	56.8%	65.9%
Berrien	41.1%	57.4%	66.0%
Brooks	39.4%	58.7%	67.5%
Cook	38.8%	55.2%	64.7%
Echols	41.1%	60.9%	60.5%
Irwin	39.5%	53.1%	67.7%
Lanier	39.4%	51.3%	65.0%
Lowndes	57.1%	69.7%	77.7%
Tift	45.5%	61.3%	67.8%
Turner	39.8%	55.3%	67.7%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, and 2000.

TABLE 1-15
1995 - 2004 AVERAGE ENROLLMENT
FOR LANIER COUNTY

	FY 1995	FY 1996	FY 1998	FY 2000	FY 2001
Lanier Elementary	693	706	732	673	666
Lanier High /Middle	683	703	672	670	318
Lanier Middle School					336
TOTAL Enrollment	1,378	1,409	1,404	1,343	1,320

	FY 2002	FY2003	FY 2004
Lanier Elementary	682	724	761
Lanier High School	351	362	371
Lanier Middle School	340	346	344
TOTAL Enrollment	1,373	1,432	1,476

Source: Georgia Department of Education, various years.

An important element of Lanier County's educational attainment levels over the past 20 years is that it continues to make progress. Continued efforts in raising achievement test scores and abating high school dropout percentages are of paramount importance in stemming the emigration trends, and increasing the skill level of the work force. Programs such as the vocational training offered in the local system, which includes introduction to business, agriculture and industry, serve to enhance the quality of education available in Greater Lanier.