

## CHAPTER FIVE: HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

An in depth examination of the existing housing supply in Lanier County is necessary in order to assess the quantity and types of housing needed in the next 25 years. A tabular summary of state, county, unincorporated areas, and city-housing data follows.

**TABLE 5-1  
1980-2000 STATE OF GEORGIA HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS**

Category	1980	1990	2000		# Change 1980 - 2000	% Change
Total Units	2,012,640	2,638,418	3,281,737		1,269,097	63.1
Single Family	1,525,070	1,801,627	2,291,837	69.8	766,767	50.3
Multi-Family	334,622	508,903	681,019	20.8	346,397	103.5
Manufactured Homes	152,948	305,055	394,938	12.0	241,990	158.2
Owner Occupied Units	1,216,459	1,536,759	2,029,293	61.8	812,834	66.8
Renter Occupied Units	655,913	829,856	977,076	29.8	321,163	49.0
Vacant Units	140,988	271,803	275,378	8.4	134,380	95.3
Owner to Renter Vacancy Rate	NA	0.32	0.51			-
Owner Vac. Rate	NA	2.36	2.24			-
Renter Vac. Rate	NA	12.36	8.46			-
Built before 1939	296,662	212,294	192,972	5.9	-103,690	-35.0
Lacking complete plumbing	35,769	28,462	29,540	0.9	-6,229	-17.4
Median Value Owner Occupied	\$23,100	\$71,278	\$111,200	-	\$88,100	381.4
Lower Quartile		\$47,300	\$77,000			
Upper Quartile		\$102,100	\$167,000			
Median Rent	\$153	\$365	\$505	-	\$352	230.0
Lower Quartile		\$202	\$320			
Upper Quartile		\$466	\$692			
All other Units	4,289	22,833	4,313	0.1	24	0.6

Source: US Bureau of Census 1980, 1990, and 2000. NA = Not Available NR = Not Reported

**TABLE 5-2**  
**1980 – 2000 GREATER LANIER HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS**

	Year-Round				All		1980 - 2000	
	1980	%	1990	%	2000	%	Change	%
Total Units	2,029		2,202		3,011		982	48.4
Single Family	1,532	75.5	1,332	60.5	1,663	55.2	131	8.6
Multi-Family	128	6.3	116	5.3	112	3.7	-16	-12.5
Manufactured Homes	369	18.2	754	34.2	1,220	40.5	851	230.6
Vacant Units	207	10.2	237	10.8	418	13.9	211	101.9
Owner Occupied Units	1,263	62.2	1,404	63.7	1,979	65.7	716	56.7
Owner Vacancy Rate	NA	--	--	--	1.54			--
Renter Occupied Units	559	27.6	561	25.5	614	20.4	55	9.8
Renter Vacancy Rate	NA	--	--	--	15.31			--
Built before 1939	285	14.0	233	10.6	159	5.3	-126	- 44.2
Lacking Complete Plumbing	175	8.6	65	3.0	82	2.7	-93	- 53.1
Owner Median Value	\$30,390	--	\$32,708	--	\$62,200		\$31,810	104.7
25th Percentile Value	NR	--	\$19,625	--	\$42,300			--
75th Percentile Value	NR	--	\$51,285	--	\$89,900			--
Renter Median Rent	\$123	--	\$147	--	\$275		\$152	123.6
25th Percentile Value	NR	--	\$101	--	\$200			--
75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Value	NR		\$196		\$372			
Median Value Manufactured Homes		--		--	\$29,600		--	--

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

NR = Not Reported      NR = Not Available

**TABLE 5-3  
UNINCORPORATED LANIER HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS  
1980 - 2000**

	Year-Round				All		1980 - 2000	
	1980	%	1990	%	2000	%	Change	%
Total Units	1,101		1,200		1,842		741	67.3
Single Family	788	71.6	709	59.1	919	49.9	131	16.6
Multi-Family	68	6.2	17	1.4	5	0.3	-63	-92.6
Manufactured Homes	245	22.3	474	39.5	908	49.3	663	270.6
Vacant Units	140	12.7	142	11.8	220	11.9	80	57.1
Owner Occupied Units	701	63.7	844	70.3	1,398	75.9	697	99.4
Owner Vacancy Rate	NA	--	NR	--	NR		--	--
Renter Occupied Units	260	23.6	214	17.8	224	12.2	-36	-13.8
Renter Vacancy Rate	NA	--	NR	--	NR		--	--
Built before 1939	155	14.1	125	10.4	72	3.9	-83	-53.5
Lacking Complete Plumbing	133	12.1	28	2.3	31	1.7	-102	-76.7
Owner Median Value	NA	--	NA	--	NA		--	--
25th Percentile Value	NA	--	NA	--	NA		--	--
75th Percentile Value	NA	--	NA	--	NA		--	--
Renter Median Rent	NA	--	NA	--	NA		--	--
25th Percentile Value	NA	--	NA	--	NA		--	--
75th Percentile Value	NA	--	NA	--	NA		--	--

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

NR = Not Reported      NR = Not Available

**TABLE 5-4  
1980 – 2000 LAKELAND HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS**

	Year-Round				All		1980 - 2000	
	1980	%	1990	%	2000	%	Change	%
Total Units	928		1,002		1,169		241	30.0
Single Family	744	80.2	623	62.2	744	63.6	0	0.0
Multi-Family	60	6.5	99	9.9	107	9.2	47	78.3
Mobile Homes	124	13.4	280	27.9	312	26.7	188	151.6
Median Value Manufactured Homes					\$23,100		--	--
Vacant Units	67	7.2	95	9.5	198	16.9	131	195.5
Owner Occupied Units	562	60.6	560	55.9	581	49.7	19	3.4
Owner Vacancy Rate	NA	--		1.2		2.2	--	--
Renter Occupied Units	299	32.2	347	34.6	390	33.4	91	30.4
Renter Vacancy Rate	NA	--	7.2%	--		16.3	--	--
Built before 1939	130	14.0	108	10.8	87	7.4	-43	-33.1
Lacking Complete Plumbing	42	4.5	37	3.7	51	4.4	9	21.4
Owner Median Value	\$31,068	--	\$30,440	--	\$55,300		\$24,232	78.0
25th Percentile Value	NR	--	\$17,444	--	\$38,100		--	--
75th Percentile Value	NR	--	\$47,012	--	\$77,600		--	--
Renter Median Rent	\$121	--	\$144	--	\$258		\$137	113.2
25th Percentile Value	NR	--	\$100	--	\$173		--	--
75th Percentile Value	NR	--	\$194	--	\$330		--	--

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

NR = Not Reported    NR = NOT AVAILABLE

**TABLE 5-5  
1980 - 2025 PERSONS PER HOUSING UNIT IN GREATER LANIER**

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: Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., 2002; and South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2004.

**TABLE 5-6  
1980 - 2025 GREATER LANIER NUMBER OF OCCUPIED HOUSEHOLDS**

Unit	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Lanier (total)	1,836	1,977	2,593	2,735	2,854	2,964	3,052	3,118
Lakeland	868	913	971	1,012	1,056	1,096	1,129	1,154
Lanier, unincorp.	968	1,064	1,622	1,723	1,798	1,868	1,923	1,964
South Ga. 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

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002 and South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2004.

### Numerical and Percentage Change

Unit	1980 - 1990		1990 - 2000		2000 - 2010		2010 - 2020		2000 - 2025	
	number	%								
Lanier (total)	141	7.7	616	31.2	261	10.1	198	6.9	525	20.2
Lakeland	45	5.2	58	6.4	85	8.8	40	3.6	183	18.8
Lanier, unincorp.	96	9.9	558	52.4	176	10.9	125	7.0	342	21.1
South Ga. 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 and South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2004.

**Table 5-7: Renter/Owner Housing Cost As A Percentage Of Household Income - 1980**

Unit	RENTERS			HOMEOWNERS			Total Hsgholds	Total Hsgholds Greater than 30%	%	% Mobile Homes
	Households			Households						
	Costs Greater			Cost Greater						
	than 30%	Sub-Total	%	than 30%	Sub-total	%				
Ben Hill	477	1,167	40.80%	435	1,562	27.80%	2,729	912	33.40%	11.90%
Brooks	432	935	46.20%	419	1,815	23.10%	2,750	851	30.90%	14.00%
Cook	325	836	38.90%	536	2,133	25.10%	2,969	861	29.00%	12.10%
Echols	20	67	29.90%	25	259	9.70%	326	45	13.80%	24.00%
Irwin	209	530	39.40%	242	1,127	21.50%	1,657	451	27.20%	10.60%
Lanier	118	368	32.10%	137	676	20.30%	1,044	255	24.40%	18.20%
Lowndes	3,026	7,711	39.20%	2,004	10,182	19.70%	17,893	5,030	28.10%	10.20%
Tift	1,171	2,948	39.70%	916	4,713	19.40%	7,661	2,087	27.20%	14.80%
Turner	328	721	45.50%	307	1,179	26.00%	1,900	635	33.40%	10.40%
Region	6,106	15,283	40.00%	5,021	23,646	21.20%	38,929	11,127	28.60%	12.70%

Source: U. S. Bureau of Census, Summary Tape File 3A, 2000. Analysis: South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2003.

**Table 5-8: Renter/Owner Housing Cost As A Percentage Of Household Income - 1990**

Unit	RENTERS			HOMEOWNERS			Total Hsgholds	Total Hsgholds Greater than 30%	%	% Mobile Homes
	Households			Households						
	Costs Greater			Cost Greater						
	than 30%	Sub-Total	%	than 30%	Sub-total	%				
Ben Hill	771	1,749	44.10%	513	2,704	19.00%	4,453	1,284	28.80%	20.70%
Brooks	453	1,074	42.20%	543	1,982	27.40%	3,056	996	32.60%	36.80%
Cook	348	977	35.60%	331	2,136	15.50%	3,113	679	21.80%	27.10%
Echols	36	95	37.90%	43	252	17.10%	347	79	22.80%	42.90%
Irwin	254	574	44.30%	230	1,120	20.50%	1,694	484	28.60%	23.40%
Lanier	126	428	29.40%	104	664	15.70%	1,092	230	21.10%	34.20%
Lowndes	3,706	9,691	38.20%	2,173	11,390	19.10%	21,081	5,879	27.90%	15.50%
Tift	1,425	3,588	39.70%	886	5,117	17.30%	8,705	2,311	26.50%	23.70%
Turner	370	839	44.10%	268	1,140	23.50%	1,979	638	32.20%	20.10%
Region	7,489	19,015	39.40%	5,091	26,505	19.20%	45,520	12,580	27.60%	21.70%

Source: U. S. Bureau of Census, Summary Tape File 3A, 1990. Analysis: South Georgia Regional Development Center, 1996, 2003.

**Table 5-9: Renter/Owner Housing Cost As A Percentage Of Household Income - 2000**

Unit	RENTERS			HOMEOWNERS			Total Hsgholds	Total Hsgholds Greater than 30%	%	% Mobile Homes
	Households			Households						
	Costs Greater			Cost Greater						
	than 30%	Sub-Total	%	than 30%	Sub-total	%				
Ben Hill	779	2,185	35.70%	635	3,022	21.00%	5,207	1,414	27.20%	25.20%
Brooks	418	1,346	31.10%	604	2,350	25.70%	3,696	1,022	27.70%	32.40%
Cook	471	1,417	33.20%	614	2,433	25.20%	3,850	1,085	28.20%	35.20%
Echols	74	272	27.20%	64	321	19.90%	593	138	23.30%	54.00%
Irwin	222	780	28.50%	284	1,372	20.70%	2,152	506	23.50%	32.10%
Lanier	188	578	32.50%	263	964	27.30%	1,542	451	29.20%	40.50%
Lowndes	4,791	12,672	37.80%	3,180	15,043	21.10%	27,715	7,971	28.80%	14.90%
Tift	1,462	4,530	32.30%	911	5,809	15.70%	10,339	2,373	23.00%	27.50%
Turner	319	948	33.60%	275	1,217	22.60%	2,165	594	27.40%	30.40%
Region	8,724	24,728	35.30%	6,830	32,531	21.00%	57,259	15,554	27.20%	24.20%

Source: U. S. Bureau of Census, Summary Tape File 3A, 2000. Analysis: South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2003.

## **Types of Housing in Georgia**

Interpreting housing statistics from the Census Bureau is complicated by changes in definitions and reporting standards. In 1980, housing characteristics were presented only for year-round housing units. In 1990 and 2000 housing characteristics are shown for all housing units, which includes year-round units plus seasonal, migratory and recreational units. Care should be utilized in interpreting these statistics.

## **Condition of Housing in Georgia**

Table 5-1 reviews two traditional indicators of housing quality. The "Built before 1939" statistic summarizes the inventory of older houses. Obviously, this is an incomplete indicator since some older houses may have been restored and/or remodeled. The "Lacking Complete Plumbing" value is probably more indicative of substandard housing.

## **Housing Costs in Georgia**

Table 5-1 provides insights into the cost of owning and renting housing in Georgia. Median values for owner-occupied housing and median rent for rented units reported in the 1980, 1990 and 2000 Censuses are listed. Note that these figures are estimates provided by owners and renters filling out census questionnaires.

In addition, lower quartile and upper quartile values as reported in the 2000 Census are provided. Combined with the median (e.g. the "middle" value), useful insights into the cost of housing can be obtained. Note that these dollar values are in the "actual dollars" of the year reported, not in "constant dollars" that removes the effects of inflation.

## **Types of Housing in Greater Lanier**

The increase in Greater Lanier's housing units from the year 1980 to 2000 totaled 982 (See Tables 5-2 ). Manufactured homes represented 86.7 percent of this increase while single-family homes comprised the remainder. During this same period multi-family housing decreased by 16 units. Characteristic of statewide trends, manufactured homes in Lanier County have risen as a percentage of the housing market. In 1970, manufactured homes constituted 7.4% of the housing stock and in 2000 it rose to 40.5 percent. Three out of four of the manufactured homes in Lanier County are located in the unincorporated areas.

Single-family housing has decreased as a percentage of the housing market in Greater Lanier, plummeting from 85.8 percent of the housing stock in 1970 to 55.2 percent in 2000. Of the 1,663 single-family homes in Greater Lanier 44.7 percent (744) are located in Lakeland. Multi-family homes have exhibited a similar pattern, dropping from 6.8% of the market in 1970 to 3.7 percent in 2000. Of the 112 multi-family homes in Lanier County, 95.5 percent (107) are located in Lakeland.

Owner occupancy in Greater Lanier has risen moderately (62.2 percent to 65.7 percent) between 1980 and 2000. Common to most of rural Georgia is the placement of manufactured homes as a permanent residence. Lanier is no exception. The affordability and increased

quality of manufactured homes have resulted in creating a substitute for single-family housing. This has served to elevate the owner occupancy rate for Lanier County.

Rental occupancy in the unincorporated area has dropped by 13.8 percent between 1980 and 2000. Since the preponderance of manufactured homes are located in the unincorporated area, this decrease corresponds with the increase in manufactured home purchases. Lakeland's increase in renter occupancy rates is indicative of a growing population (See Table 5-4).

### **Housing Value and Condition**

The cost of housing is reflected in the median value of owner occupied units and the median rents paid by renters. Greater Lanier and Lakeland's median housing unit values rose between 1980 and 2000 by 104.7 percent and 123.6 percent respectively. The state displayed similar growth in median housing values with a rise of 381.4 percent. Similar to the state the median rent for Greater Lanier increased by 123.6 percent while the state figure rose by 230 percent.

Housing conditions in Lanier deviate little from the state's averages (See Tables 5-1 - 5-4). The percentage of housing built before 1939 is 0.6 percent lower than the state, numbering 159 units of a total of 3,011. Of those units lacking complete plumbing, Lanier's percentage is 1.8 percent higher than that of the state. The unincorporated areas has all but eliminated units lacking complete plumbing, while substandard housing in the City of Lakeland has increased between 1990 and 2000.

### **Housing Vacancy**

Table 5-1 enumerates the rise in vacant housing units in the state between 1980 and 2000. From 1980 to 2000 the number of vacant housing units in Georgia rose from 140,988 to 275,378, an increase of 95.3 percent. As a percentage of the total number of housing units in Georgia, vacant houses rose from 7.0 percent to 8.4 percent. Furthermore, Georgia's homeowner and renter vacancy rates in 2000 were 2.2 percent and 8.5 percent respectively. Lakeland's homeowner and renter vacancy rates were equal/higher than that of the state, totaling 2.2 percent for homeowner vacancy and 16.3 percent for renter vacancy. Lanier County's percentage of vacant units between 1980 and 2000 rose by 101.9 percent, contrasted to the state increase of 95 percent. Despite this dramatic difference as a percentage of total housing units, Lanier County exceeded that of the state at 10.2 percent in 1980 and 13.9 percent in 2000. The City of Lakeland, however, exhibited significantly higher vacancy rates, totaling 9.5 percent in 1980 and 13.9 percent in 2000.

### **Renter/Owner Cost Burden**

Tables 5-7, 5-8, and 5-9 show the nine county region comparisons of the 1980-2000 renters and owner housing cost as a percentage of household income. The number and percentages are shown for all renters and owners that exceeded thirty percent of household income for rents and mortgage payments. Lanier County renters that exceed thirty percent of their household income were 32.1 percent in 1980; 29.4 percent in 1990 and 32.5 percent by 2000. Homeowners that exceed thirty percent of their household income were 20.3 percent in 1980; 15.7 percent in 1990 and 27.3 by 2000. Total households (renters and owners) that exceeded greater than thirty percent of household income for housing ranged from 255 (24.4 percent) to 451 (29.2 percent) from 1980 to 2000.

### **PUBLIC HOUSING**

Within Lakeland, 20 housing units have been developed for low/moderate income persons, the elderly, and handicapped. In accordance with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Section 8 standards, rent for such housing is determined at or below fair market price. The following list of public housing units are owned and managed by the Lakeland Housing Authority:

<u>Project Location</u>	<u>Total Units</u>	<u># of Bedrooms</u>
Corner of West Thigpen and Pine Street bedroom, 8 2-bedroom	16	8 3-
Murrell Avenue and 8th Street bedroom, 2 2-bedroom	4	2 1-

## HOUSING GOALS AND POLICIES

### GOAL

**Ensure that all people within Greater Lanier have access to adequate and affordable housing.**

### POLICY

- Housing development agenda in the City of Lakeland and Lanier County should address needs of the elderly, low and moderate-income persons and families, handicapped and developmentally disabled persons.

### GOAL

**Ensure in an equitable manner that existing residential structures and neighborhoods are preserved, improved and maintained.**

### POLICIES

- Housing development agenda should give priority to projects involved in preservation and maintenance of existing infrastructure: streets, walks, curbs, water, sewer and drainage systems, lighting and bridges.
- Neighborhood redevelopment projects should seek to conserve, rehabilitate, or relocate existing housing structures, in lieu of demolition, whenever feasible.
- The city and county are encouraged to adopt, enforce, revise and update building codes where applicable as to permit new concepts in building technology.
- Low interest loans and tax reduction activities or other alternatives should be developed to promote rehabilitation of existing housing.
- Encourage the redevelopment and renewal of blighted areas.
- Protect viable and stable neighborhoods from uses not in keeping with their established character and use.