

CHAPTER ONE: POPULATION ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

One of the basic elements of this comprehensive plan is an analysis of Beaufort's current and projected demographic makeup. The purpose of an analysis of population is to understand the past trends that have affected the City and to identify likely scenarios for the City's future demographic composition

Areas of Analysis

In this analysis, the City of Beaufort is placed in comparison with other parts of Beaufort County, with the entirety of Beaufort County, and with the state of South Carolina. National figures are also included for certain areas. By comparing the City to these other areas, it is possible to put Beaufort's statistics in perspective. To say that Beaufort has a slow rate of growth, for example, is only valid if that rate is compared with other significant areas.

In addition to the City of Beaufort, Beaufort County and the State of South Carolina, there are areas within Beaufort County which are valuable to consider in this population analysis. The Beaufort County Planning Areas are divisions of Beaufort County used by the Lowcountry Council of Governments and the Beaufort County Planning Department to analyze Beaufort County. These six areas include the Sheldon Township, Lady's Island, Beaufort/Port Royal Island, St. Helena's Township, Bluffton Township, and Daufuskie Island. The Town of Hilton Head Island is considered separately from the planning areas. Demographic statistics and projections for these planning areas have been compiled by the Lowcountry Council of Governments and are used in this report.

POPULATION

Total Population

The Bureau of the Census indicates that the population of the City of Beaufort was 9,576 persons in 1990. This figure compares to a 1980 population count of 8,634 and a 1970 count of 9,434. The City of Beaufort has seen its population decline 8.5 percent in the 1970's and rebound in the form of a 10.9 percent increase in population from 1980 to 1990.

As shown in Table 1, the pattern of population change in the City of Beaufort from 1970 to 1990 contrasts with the patterns of change in Beaufort County and South Carolina. Whereas the populations of Beaufort County and South Carolina grew steadily over this twenty-year period, the City of Beaufort fluctuated by losing population and regaining what had been lost. Beaufort County grew 27.8 percent from 1970 to 1980 and 32.2 percent from 1980 to 1990. This translates into a total growth rate of 69 percent over the twenty-year period. The state of South Carolina's population increased over 20 percent from 1970 to 1980 and another 11.7 percent from 1980 to 1990, or nearly 35 percent over twenty years. The City of Beaufort grew only 1.5

percent during this same twenty year period. Thus, even though the population of Beaufort has increased from 1980 to 1990, there was effectively no growth in the City between 1970 and 1990

The City of Beaufort’s growth rate has been slow in comparison to other parts of Beaufort County (Table 2). The unprecedented growth of Hilton Head is well documented. Other municipalities have grown less drastically. Since 1970, the following changes in population have occurred in the Beaufort County Planning Areas according to the Lowcountry Council of Governments: Bluffton Township 157 percent, Hilton Head Island 108.8 percent (from 1980 to 1990), Lady’s Island 63.1 percent (from 1980 to 1990), Sheldon Township 26.2 percent, St. Helena 15 percent, Beaufort/Port Royal Island 8.2 percent.

Table 1: City of Beaufort Population Trends, 1960-1990

Year	City of Beaufort	% Change	Beaufort County	% Change	South Carolina	% Change
1960	***	***	41,052	***	2,382,594	***
1970	9,434	***	51,136	+24.6%	2,590,516	+8.7%
1980	8,634	-8.5%	65,364	+28.6%	3,121,820	+20.5%
1990	9,576	+10.9%	86,425	+32.2%	3,486,703	+11.7%

Source: 1990 US Census

Table 2: Beaufort County Planning Area Population Trends, 1960-1990

Year	Beaufort/Port Royal Island	Sheldon Township	St. Helena	Bluffton Township	Lady’s Island
1960	31,711	3,293	6,047	3,135	***
1970	37,636	2,530	5,718	2,757	***
1980	39,017	2,994	5,091	3,652	3,094
1990	40,710	3,194	6,579	7,084	5,046

Source: Lowcountry Council of Governments

Population Estimates

Population analysis generally concerns two issues: an estimate of the current population and projections of future populations. The U.S. Census has provided estimates for the City of Beaufort population following the 1990 Census tabulation for the years 1991 through July 1996 (see Table 3). The census bureau’s estimates show Beaufort’s population to have increased at a slow rate from 1990 to 1994. Following 1994, the census has estimated that there was no growth in the City of Beaufort up to July 1996. The July 1996 population estimate is 9,897.

Robert and Company has prepared an update to the Census bureau’s estimated population for the

City of Beaufort’s current population based on City building permit activity for single family and multi-family residential units from 1992 to 1998. The resulting estimate for Beaufort’s current number of occupied housing units is 4,287 which translates into an estimated current population of 10,718 persons.

The process for producing these estimates involved several steps. First, the numbers of permits for new construction of single family and multi-family housing units were collected for each year available after January, 1990. These numbers are currently available for all but the years 1990 and 1991. An average number of permits per month was calculated to be 5.43. This average was extrapolated over the total number of months from the 1990 Census tabulation to the current date in order to ascertain an estimated number of total permits issued. When added to the 1990 Census figure for housing units, the result was an estimated number of total housing units. This number, when discounted for an 8.2 percent vacancy rate consistent with the 1990 Census rate provides the estimated number of occupied housing units as 4,287. From the current estimated number of housing units, an estimate of the total population was derived using the average household size statistic from the 1990 Census: 2.5 persons per household. This rate yields the total population estimate of 10,718 persons.

When placed in context with other comparable estimates of Beaufort’s population, the estimate resulting from this calculation is on the high side, but reasonably so. U.S. Census estimates of population for the years 1991 to 1996 show Beaufort to have grown at a rate of 0.57 percent per year. Comparably, this 1998 estimate of 10,718 translates into a yearly growth rate of 1.33 percent per year. The consideration of 1996 and 1997 in this estimate contributes to the higher rate as there was significantly increased permit activity during those two years. Therefore, even though the estimate of 10,718 persons is potentially higher than the Census bureau would estimate, this is probably a reasonable estimate based on the increased activity of the past two years.

Table 3: City of Beaufort Population Estimates, 1990-1998

Date	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1998*
Population	9,576	9,721	9,838	9,876	9,981	9,981	9,897	10,718*
Percent Change		1.5%	1.2%	0.4%	1.1%	0%	-0.8%	*

Source: Population Estimates Program, Population Division, US Bureau of the Census

Data released to the public November 1997.

* 1998 Population Estimate from Robert and Company building permits analysis, for comparison with Census estimates.

Future Population Projections

The Beaufort County Planning office and the Lowcountry Council of Governments have estimated the 1995 population of Beaufort County to be 95,278 persons. The 1995 estimated population for the Beaufort/Port Royal Planning area is 41,351. (The Beaufort/Port Royal Island Planning Area includes the cities of Beaufort and Port Royal along with Parris Island and the Marine Corps Air Station.) These projections represent increases of 10.2 percent and 1.6 percent respectively (see Table 4). For the year 2000, there is a projected rate of growth for the County of 26.3 percent from 1990 and 3.1 percent for the Beaufort/Port Royal Island Planning area. The further projections into the year 2020 continue a pattern of slow growth (about 2.5 percent) for the Beaufort/Port Royal Island Planning area and fast growth for the County. The apparent explanation for a much slower projected rate of growth in the Beaufort and Port Royal areas is the fact that this is the most developed area of the County where further expansion is more difficult than in Beaufort County's less developed areas.

As reliable projections of future City of Beaufort populations are not readily available from the Census bureau or other sources, Robert and Company has prepared such projections based on current estimates and available data. Generally it is preferable to make population projections for large populations such as a state or county. As reliable Census projections exist for South Carolina and Beaufort County, it is valuable to look to these when projecting population for a smaller geography. In a simple sense, the population of a city such as Beaufort can be projected as a share of the projected population of the county or state. One interesting factor of the current population estimate based on building permit data is that it seems to fall between the projected year 2000 population as a share of South Carolina and the projected year 2000 population as a share of Beaufort County. That is to say that the Census has projected a population for South Carolina in the year 2000 of 3,916,703 and the City of Beaufort's share of that according to 1990 findings, 0.3 percent, equates to a City population projection of 10,757. The comparable figure derived from County projections is 12,091 which is significantly higher due to the anticipation of more rapid growth in Beaufort County than in the State as a whole. Tables 5, 6 and 7 depicting the City of Beaufort population projection analysis indicate statistical projections of the City's population to 2020 based on share of County projection, share of State projection, and the average of these two. These figures may be viewed as high projections, low projections and middle projections. It must be remembered, however, that various activities and policies of the City in the future may have a dramatic effect on future population beyond the statistical constraints of these projection methods.

For the planning purposes of this Comprehensive Plan, the future population projections that are the average of the share of South Carolina and the share of Beaufort County will be used. As seen in Table 7, these projections indicate the population of the city to be 11,424 in the year 2000, then 13,562 in the year 2010, and 15,736 in the year 2020.

Table 4: LCOG Population Projections, 1990-2020

Year	Beaufort/Port Royal Island	Change	Beaufort County	Change	South Carolina	Change
1990	40,710	***	86,425	***	3,486,703	***
1995	41,351	1.6%	95,278	10.2%	3,717,703	6.6%
2000	41,992	1.6%	109,123	14.5%	3,916,703	5.3%
2010	43,104	2.6%	138,369	26.8%	4,293,703	9.6%
2020	44,046	2.2%	168,336	21.7%	4,667,703	8.7%

Source: Lowcountry Council of Governments

Table 5: City of Beaufort Population Projection as Share of Beaufort County, 1990-2020

Year	City of Beaufort	Change	Beaufort County	Change
1990	9,576	***	86,425	***
1995	10,557	10.2%	95,278	10.2%
2000	12,091	14.5%	109,123	14.5%
2010	15,331	26.8%	138,369	26.8%
2020	18,652	21.7%	168,336	21.7%

Source: Robert and Company Population Projections, 1998

Table 6: City of Beaufort Population Projection as Share of South Carolina, 1990-2020

Year	City of Beaufort	Change	South Carolina	Change
1990	9,576		3,486,703	***
1995	10,210	6.6%	3,717,703	6.6%
2000	10,757	5.4%	3,916,703	5.3%
2010	11,792	9.6%	4,293,703	9.6%
2020	12,820	8.7%	4,667,703	8.7%

Source: Robert and Company Population Projections, 1998

Table 7: City of Beaufort Population Projection as the Average of State and County Share Calculations, 1990-2020

Year	County Derived	State Derived	Average
1990	9,576	9,576	***
1995	10,557	10,210	10,384
2000	12,091	10,757	11,424
2010	15,331	11,792	13,562
2020	18,652	12,820	15,736

Source: Robert and Company Population Projections, 1998

AGE DISTRIBUTION

The City of Beaufort has a fairly typical distribution of ages among its population (Table 8). This distribution resembles very closely the distribution for Beaufort County with the exception being a lower percentage of persons between the ages of 18 and 20 years. In the City, 58 percent of the population falls into the categories of 0 to 17 and 25 to 44 which are the ages for a typical family household. The median age in the City is 31.8 which is somewhat higher than the 30.1 median age for the County.

The age of Beaufort’s population has changed significantly between the years 1970 and 1990 (see Table 9). In general, Beaufort has grown in the share of residents 25 to 44 years old and those 60 years and over while decreasing the share of children, teenagers, young adults, and 45 to 60 year-olds. These numbers reveal several trends that have affected the population. Beaufort has become increasingly attractive to retirees. The absolute population of 60 to 64 year-olds has increased 31.3 percent and the 65 and older group 113.9 percent since 1970. Beaufort’s families have decreased in size. The fact that the 25 to 44 age group has grown 45 percent while the 5 to 24 age group declined 17 percent can most reasonably be explained with smaller numbers of children in family households and an increase of households without children. Finally, the significantly higher rates of 25 to 44 year-olds and lower rates of 45 to 59 year-olds can be seen to trace the population bulge of the “baby boomers” through time. Thus, in the future, Beaufort can reasonably expect to have an increasingly aged population with fewer young adults to fill the workforce. This condition may, however, be lessened by the impact of a steady level of young families at the nearby military bases.

Table 8: City of Beaufort Age Distribution, 1990

Age	City of Beaufort	Share of Total	Beaufort County	Share of Total
0-4	863	9%	7,387	8.5%
5-17	1,701	17.7%	14,431	16.7%
18-20	1,031	4%	6,378	7.4%
21-24	644	6.7%	6,353	7.4%
25-44	2,998	31.3%	27,102	31.4%
45-54	821	8.6%	6,751	7.8%
55-59	376	3.9%	3,385	3.9%
60-64	415	4.3%	3,974	4.6%
65 & Older	1,371	14.3%	10,664	12.3%

Source: 1990 US Census

Table 9: Trends in the Age Distribution of Beaufort’s Population, 1970-1990

Age	1970		1980		1990		Change in Share	Absolute Change
	Total	Share	Total	Share	Total	Share	1970-1990	1970-1990
0-4	873	9.2%	652	7.6%	863	9%	-0.2%	-1.1%
5-17	*	*	*	*	1,701	17.7%	*	*
18-20	*	*	*	*	1,031	4%	*	*
21-24	4,070	43.1%	2,863	33.2%	644	6.7%	-36.4%	-84.1%
25-44	2,065	21.9%	2,296	26.6%	2,998	31.3%	+9.4%	+45.2%
45-54	1,023	10.8%	864	10%	821	8.6%	-2.2%	-19.7%
55-59	446	4.7%	522	6%	376	3.9%	-0.8%	-15.7%
60-64	316	3.4%	432	5%	415	4.3%	+0.9%	+31.3%
65 & Older	641	6.8%	1,005	11.6%	1,371	14.3%	+7.5%	+113.9%

Source: US Census: 1970, 1980, and 1990 tabulations.

RACIAL COMPOSITION AND TRENDS

A comparison of the racial compositions of the City of Beaufort, Beaufort County and the state of South Carolina (Table 10) shows Beaufort to resemble the levels of diversity of both the County and the State. Analysis of the change in Beaufort’s racial composition from 1970 to 1990 reveals a few different issues. The decline of the majority white population from 1970 to 1980 is consistent with the overall population decline during that period (Table 11). An increase in white population of 3.4 percent between 1980 and 1990 has failed to return that population to its 1970 level. The black population similarly experienced a loss from 1970 to 1980, but has rebounded at a much higher rate of 28.8 percent and is thus greater in 1990 than 1970. The most drastic population changes in terms of percentage change have occurred within the Hispanic ethnic group and the conglomeration of “other” races including the Asian population. The high rates of growth in these groups are likely due to the effects of the economic growth of Beaufort County and a sharp increase in jobs which traditionally attract immigrant and migrant workers.

Table 10: 1990 Beaufort Racial Composition, Comparisons with County and State, 1990

Race Category	City of Beaufort	% of Total	Beaufort County	% of Total	South Carolina	% of Total
White	6,669	69.6%	59,843	69.2%	2,406,974	69.1%
Black	2,669	27.9%	24,582	28.4%	1,039,884	29.8%
Other	238	2.5%	2,000	2.4%	39,845	1.1%
Hispanic (of any race)	199	2%	2,168	2.5%	30,551	0.9%

Source: 1990 US Census

Table 11 : City of Beaufort Racial Composition, 1970-1990

Race	1970	1980	1990	% Change 1970-1980	% Change 1980-1990
White	7,239	6,448	6,669	-10.9%	+3.4%
Black	2,158	2,073	2,669	-3.9%	+28.8%
Other	37	113	238	+205%	+110.6%
Hispanic	---	115	199	---	+73%

Source: US Census: 1970, 1980, and 1990 tabulations.

HOUSEHOLDS

A household is defined as all persons who occupy a given housing unit such as a house, apartment, group of rooms or single room occupied as separate living quarters. Since the 1980's there has been a national trend of growing numbers of small family households, non-family households and single-parent households resulting in greater numbers of smaller sized households. Statistics for Beaufort, Beaufort County and South Carolina reflect this national trend (Table 12).

An average household in the City of Beaufort in 1990 contained 2.5 persons. This number represents a decrease from 2.63 in 1980 and 3.05 in 1970. Such a decrease is consistent with Beaufort County, South Carolina and much of the United States. The 1990 average of 2.5 is slightly lower than averages in the County and State as were rates for 1970 and 1980. Overall, the number of households increased from 1970 to 1980 by 171 households and from 1980 to 1990 by 599 households. The trend, therefore, over this 20 year period has been a stable population with increasing numbers of households and decreasing size of each household.

The trends seen in Beaufort since 1970 will likely continue into the twentieth century. As the statistics for age in Beaufort show the city to be growing in numbers of elderly residents there will likely be more small households accommodating elderly couples or singles.

Table 12: City of Beaufort Household Size, 1970-1990

Year	Geographic Area					
	City of Beaufort		Beaufort County	South Carolina		
	Number	Size	Number	Size	Number	Size
1970	3074	3.05	51136	3.47	734373	3.39
1980	3245	2.63	65364	2.84	1029981	2.93
1990	3844	2.5	30712	2.6	1258044	2.68

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 1970, 1980 and 1990.

EDUCATION

Educational Attainment

Education related statistics available for the City of Beaufort, Beaufort County and South Carolina are useful to gauge the quality of education in Beaufort against other areas. In total, a higher percentage of residents 25 years old and older in Beaufort have graduated from high school than in the state as a whole (Table 13). This rate, 81 percent in Beaufort, is lower than the Beaufort County rate of 83.3 percent however. The City of Beaufort and Beaufort County have higher percentages of residents with college degrees than South Carolina. In the City of Beaufort, 15.4 percent of residents hold a bachelor’s degree and an additional 9.3 percent hold a graduate degree of some type.

Indicators of educational attainment show considerable improvements in the education of Beaufort’s residents from 1980 to 1990 (Table 14). Generally speaking, rates of students not completing high school are down while rates of those earning college degrees are up. Where in 1980 a total of 29 percent of the 25 and older population had not completed high school, that rate in 1990 improved to 19 percent. Also between 1980 and 1990, an increase of over 35 percent was achieved in the number of residents holding a college degree. Though 19 percent may still not be acceptable as the percentage of residents completing high school, the improvements from 1980 to 1990 show promise for further improvement in Beaufort’s education standard.

Table 13: City of Beaufort Educational Attainment, 1990

Years of School Completed	All Residents 25 or Older					
	City of Beaufort	Beaufort County		South Carolina		
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0-8	384	6.4%	3,059	5.9%	295,167	13.6%
9-11	756	12.6%	5,614	10.8%	392,093	18.1%
12*	1,875	31.3%	14,291	27.4%	639,358	29.5%
13-15**	1,110	18.5%	11,933	22.9%	342,965	15.8%
Associate’s	387	6.5%	3,392	6.5%	137,174	6.3%
Bachelor’s	925	15.4%	9,652	18.5%	243,161	11.2%
Graduate	554	9.3%	4,184	8%	117,672	5.4%
Total	5,991		52,125		2,167,590	

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census

* High School Graduate

** “Some College” not resulting in a college degree.

Table 14: City of Beaufort Trend in Educational Attainment, 1980-1990

Years of School Completed	All Residents 25 or Older				
	1980	1990			% Change 1980-90
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
0-8	657	12.8%	384	6.4%	-41.6%
9-11	829	16.2%	756	12.6%	-8.8%
12*	1,509	29.5%	1,875	31.3%	+24.3%
13-15**	1,029	20.1%	1,110	18.5%	+7.9%
Associate's	*		387	6.5%	
Bachelor's	1,095	21.4%	925	15.4%	+35.1%**
Graduate	**		554	9.3%	
Total	5,119		5,991		

* no 1980 tabulation for Associates degree

**no 1980 tabulation for graduate degree, percent change is for bachelor + graduate degrees

INCOME

Median Household Income

Median Household Income refers to the average of all household incomes within an area. The median household income level for the City of Beaufort was \$26,468 in 1990. Within its context, as shown in Table 15, the City has a slightly higher median income level than South Carolina as a whole, but a somewhat lower level than Beaufort County where the average is \$30,450. This lower level is probably a factor of the slower population growth in the City as poorer residents have maintained their position in the City while the County has received an influx of higher income households. Regardless, Beaufort’s median household income level increased by nearly 75 percent from 1980 to 1990.

Per Capita Income

Per Capita Income is a measure of the average income per person in a population. The 1990 per capita income level for Beaufort was \$13,731. This compares to \$15,213 in Beaufort County, \$11,897 in South Carolina, and \$14,420 in the United States (Table 16). Beaufort and Beaufort County are marginally improved over the state and are consistent with the national level of per capita income.

Income Distribution

Over 50 percent of Beaufort’s households drew yearly incomes of more than \$25,000 in 1990. Of these households, 19.4 percent earned over \$50,000 and 2.7 percent earned over \$100,000. These higher income level rates are slightly lower than comparable rates for Beaufort County and slightly higher than those for South Carolina (Table 17). On the other end of the spectrum, some 25.8 percent of households in Beaufort earned incomes of less than \$15,000 in 1990. Many of these households can be considered as near or below the federal poverty income level. Comparable percentages of household incomes below \$15,000 for Beaufort County and the State are 22.3 percent and 28.3 percent respectively.

Table 15: City of Beaufort Median Household Income, 1970-1990

Place	Median Household Income		
	1970	1980	1990
City of Beaufort	***	\$15,130	\$26,468
Beaufort County	***	\$15,490	\$30,450
South Carolina	\$6,835	\$14,711	\$26,256

Source: US Census: 1970, 1980, and 1990 tabulations.

Table 16: City of Beaufort Per Capita Income, 1970-1990

Place	Per Capita Income		
	1970	1980	1990
City of Beaufort	\$2,672	\$7,054	\$13,731
Beaufort County	\$2,243	\$6,863	\$15,213
South Carolina	\$2,313	\$5,886	\$11,897

Source: US Census: 1970, 1980, and 1990 tabulations.

Table 17: City of Beaufort Income Distribution, 1990

Income Range	City of Beaufort	% of Households	Beaufort County	South Carolina
less than \$5,000	270	7%	7.1%	8.2%
\$5,000 to \$9,999	368	9.6%	6.6%	10.3%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	355	9.2%	8.6%	9.8%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	771	20%	17.9%	19.3%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	708	18.4%	16.4%	17%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	628	16.3%	17.8%	17.4%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	464	12.1%	14.5%	12.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	177	4.6%	5.3%	3.3%
\$100,000 or more	103	2.7%	5.6%	2.3%
Total Households	3,844		30,654	1,258,783

Source: 1990 US Census

CONCLUSION: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Based on the inventory and analysis of population and demographic data for Beaufort, the following are key issues likely to impact the City in the future:

Steady City population growth in the midst of rapid County growth:

Within the City of Beaufort, there is evidence that the population is continuing to increase at a relatively slow and steady rate. Concurrently, the rapid rate of growth in Beaufort County and

areas adjacent to Beaufort such as Lady's Island is projected to continue into the future. Within the current City boundaries, it should be assumed that the lower projections of future populations are more likely, due to the level of development of the City. The increasing urbanization of adjacent areas in Beaufort County, however, may be seen as increasing justification for annexation of land into the City which could dramatically increase the potential for population growth. Thus, Beaufort must plan for its own future growth as well as consider that of adjacent areas and the County as a whole.

Aging population with difficulty retaining young adults:

Certain segments of the population are changing. The 65 and older age category within the population has increased in share of the total population to an extent that suggests retirees are relocating to Beaufort. Conversely, the share of the population between the ages of 21 and 24 has decreased so as to suggest Beaufort's college-aged residents are increasingly moving out of the City for education and jobs. Both of these trends will impact the economic climate and service demands of Beaufort in the future.

Decreasing household sizes consistent with demographic shifts:

The average household size in 1990 of 2.5 persons per household is expected to continue to decrease as the population ages and contains a larger share of retirees. The fact that households are smaller will have future impacts on the types of housing needed in the city (more smaller units and multi-family housing) and the facilities demands of the population (retirees demand different services and facilities than young families).

Household income levels growing slowly:

Household income rates in Beaufort have remained consistent with those for South Carolina up to 1990, but have fallen short of rates for Beaufort County. Of Beaufort's households, 14.3% were below the federally determined poverty level in 1990. There is an apparent need for more high-paying professional jobs in the City.

Unexpected Outside factors and influences:

Recently announced expansions to the MCAS-Beaufort operations are only one example of the types of unexpected changes that could have considerable impact on the City's population and future development. In every case, the City of Beaufort should be flexible enough to react to any such changes by turning them into opportunities for the City.