



## POPULATION ELEMENT

### OVERVIEW

York County’s previous comprehensive plan (Vismor, McGill, and Bell, 1986) made the statement “planning is for people”. Not only is this true for the current population, it is especially important for the future residents of York County. The population element provides the framework for any comprehensive plan; land use and community facility decisions are derived from population growth trends and demand.

According to a 2002 study by the Census Bureau, York County is the sixty-ninth fastest growing county in the United States, while Mecklenburg County is the fifty-ninth fastest growing county. Further, the report ranks York County’s growth over any other county in South Carolina, including Beaufort County. From 1990 to 2000, the County’s population grew by 25,18 percent (33,117 persons) to 164,614 persons. This was the sixth largest population increase out of the forty-six South Carolina counties. As is evident by the census report, after 2000, York County has surpassed all other counties in the state. Part of the reason for York County’s sustained growth pattern over the past 25 years is its proximity to the Charlotte, North Carolina metro area. The City of Charlotte and its Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) have historically been among the fastest growth areas in the South. The Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill (MSA), which is comprised of six North Carolina counties and one South Carolina county (York), grew by more than 29% from 1990 to 2000. As of 2000, the Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill MSA had a population of nearly 1.5 million, the largest metropolitan population in North and South Carolina.

**Table P-1 Historical York County Population Trends**

Year	Population	Total Increase	Percent Change
1950	71,596		
1960	78,760	7,164	10.00%
1970	85,216	6,456	8.20%
1980	106,720	21,504	25.23%
1990	131,497	24,777	23.22%
2000	164,614	33,117	25.18%

Source: US Census Bureau

Within York County, the largest growth is currently around the Fort Mill Area. The major contributing factor is the proximity to Charlotte as well as Lake Wylie. Rock Hill’s growth has been steady over the past ten years, and the population is expected to continue increasing in the future; however, the growth of the city of York is minimal, and this trend is probably because there are few industries in the town and it is farther from Charlotte than other York County cities.



**Table P-2 York County Population Trends by Locality**

Population	1990	2000	Annual % Change	2002	2005	2015	2025
Clover	3,422	4,014	1.47%	4,132	4,309	4,942	5,575
Fort Mill	4,930	7,587	5.39%	8,405	9,632	14,823	20,014
Rock Hill	41,643	49,765	1.95%	51,706	54,617	65,267	75,917
York	6,709	6,985	0.41%	7,042	7,128	7,420	7,712
York County	131,497	164,614	2.52%	172,911	185,355	232,021	278,698

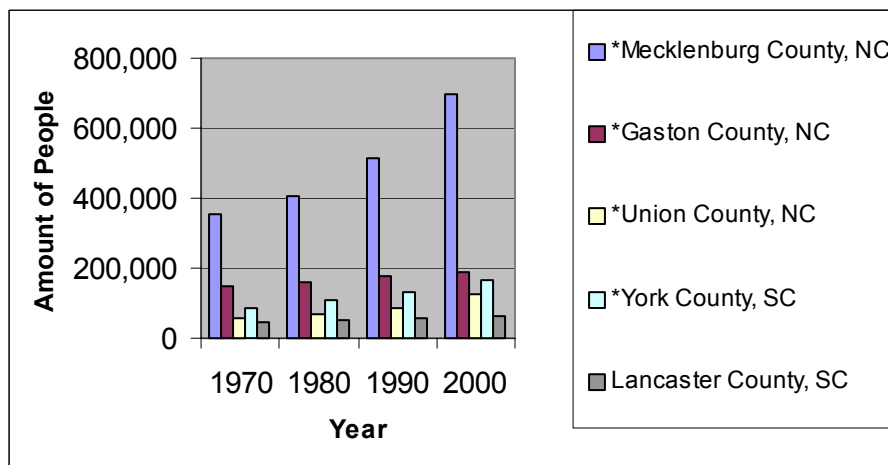
Source: US Census Bureau

**Table P-3 Regional Population Trends**

Regional Population Projections	1990	2000	% Change	2005	2015	2025
Cherokee County, SC	44,506	52,537	18.0%	57,277	67,613	124,890
Chester County, SC	32,170	34,068	5.9%	35,073	37,142	72,215
Lancaster County, SC	54,516	54,516	12.5%	57,934	65,197	123,130
Cleveland County, NC	84,714	96,287	13.7%	102,864	116,917	219,781
Gaston County, NC	175,093	190,365	8.7%	198,667	215,995	414,662
Mecklenburg County, NC	511,433	695,454	36.0%	820,571	1,115,825	1,936,396

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

**Figure P-1 Regional Area Growth (1970-2000)**



York County’s population has historically been predominantly white. In 2000, the county’s white population accounted for 77.2 percent of the total, a slight decrease in the 1990 percentage share of 78.3%. The slight decrease in percentage share was due to significant growth in the non-white population from 1990 to 2000 that rose from 27,000 to 38,950, a 44 percent increase. and a steady, moderate increase in white population. The County’s Hispanic population has also had a fairly large increase in the past decade, rising from 735 to 3,220 persons.

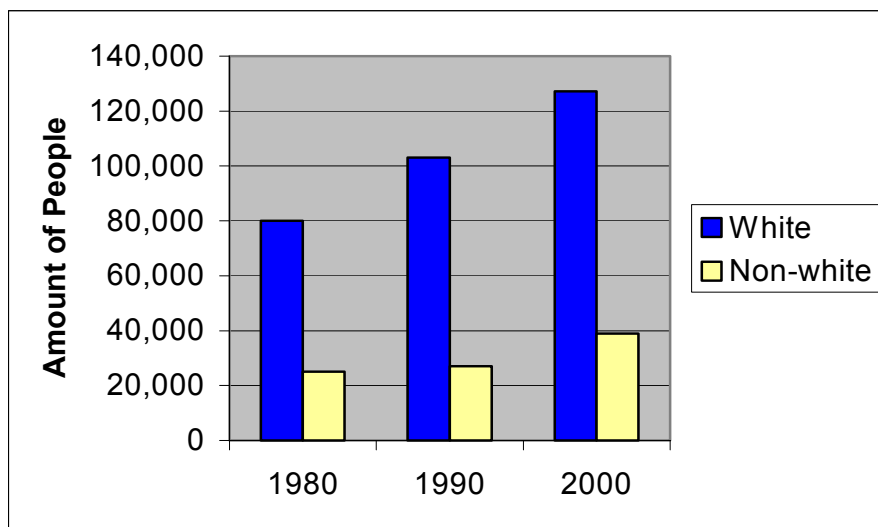


**Table P-4 York County Persons by Race**

York County Persons by Race	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	2005	2015	2025	% of Total
<b>Total:</b>	<b>131,497</b>		<b>164,614</b>		<b>185,343</b>	<b>232,021</b>	<b>278,698</b>	
<b>White</b>	103,000	78.3%	127,162	77.2%	142,077	175,406	208,735	74.9%
<b>Non-white</b>	27,000	20.5%	38,950	23.7%	47,569	68,623	89,677	32.2%

Source: US Census Bureau

**Figure P-2 York County Racial Distribution (1980-2000)**



Source: US Census Bureau

The Hispanic population of York County has grown dramatically over the past ten years. The population had more than quadrupled. This trend is consistent with the national statistics; Hispanics are currently the largest growing minority in the country. If the trend continues, Hispanics are expected to comprise almost a quarter of the County population by 2025.

**Table P-5 York County Projections of Persons by Ethnicity**

York County Persons by Ethnicity	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	2005	2015	2025	% of Total
<b>Total:</b>	<b>131,497</b>		<b>164,614</b>		<b>185,343</b>	<b>232,021</b>	<b>278,698</b>	
Hispanic Origin	735	0.6%	3,220	2.0%	8,663	37,954	67,244	24.1%
Non-Hispanic Origin	130,762	99.4%	161,394	98.0%	176,679	194,067	211,454	75.9%

Source: US Census Bureau

Gender distribution in York County is almost completely even; however, the male population is growing slightly. By 2025, the male population will be about 1.5 less than the female population. The gender distribution is consistent with national figures.

**Table P-6 York County Persons by Gender**

York County Gender Distribution	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	2005	2015	2025	% of Total
<b>Total:</b>	<b>131,497</b>		<b>164,614</b>		<b>185,343</b>	<b>232,021</b>	<b>278,698</b>	
Male	63,000	47.9%	79,751	48.4%	90,353	114,377	138,401	49.7%
Female	68,000	51.7%	84,863	51.6%	95,385	119,040	142,694	51.2%

Source: US Census Bureau

**URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION COMPOSITION**

Overall, York County's population has continued to become more urbanized since 1990 with approximately 64 percent living in or around urban areas. The urban population of York County grew by more than 41 percent from 1990 to 2000, compared to a 4 percent increase in the rural areas. This trend is likely to continue with the increased development around urbanized areas. By 2025, approximately 84 percent of housing will be in urban areas. As space becomes more limited, sprawl around urban areas is likely to occur. The key is finding a balance between development/growth and preserving the character and natural beauty of York County.

**Table P-7 York County Urban and Rural Population Growth**

York County Urban and Rural Population	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	2005	2015	2025	% of Total
<b>Total:</b>	<b>131,497</b>		<b>164,614</b>		<b>185,343</b>	<b>232,021</b>	<b>278,698</b>	
Urban:	74,824	56.9%	105,846	64.3%	127,788	180,769	233,749	83.9%
Rural:	56,673	43.1%	58,766	35.7%	59,851	62,062	64,272	23.1%

Source: US Census Bureau

**MIGRATION AND MOBILITY**

York County's sustained population growth is due predominantly to the in-migration of new residents who work in the Charlotte Metro area. During the period from 1995 through 2000, the county displayed a net in-migration of 33,345 persons. The three counties that most contributed to York County's in-migration were Mecklenburg County, Gaston County, and Richland County (5,564; 1,730; and 964 persons respectively). Mecklenburg County contributed to 16.7 percent of new residents in York County during the past five years. **Table P-8** shows where people from York County lived five years before the Census. For example, the people who currently live in York County reported where they lived in 1995. The Table reinforces the trend that many new people have moved into the County during the past five years, and many of these people are from local South Carolina counties or from counties in North Carolina in close proximity to York County. During the next few decades, these trends are expected to continue.

**Table P-8 York County Mobility Trends (1965-1995)**

	1965	1975	1985	1995
Total Persons 5 and Over	77,491	98,401	121,904	153,591
Same House	42,450	55,683	66,385	80,253
Different House in US	31,215	42,718	55,206	71,425
Same State	25,854	30,186	37,007	7,886
Same County	22,058	24,805	30,176	38,080
Different County	3,796	5,381	6,831	33,345
Different State	5,361	12,532	18,199	25,479

Source: US Census Bureau

### HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE

Across the United States the structure of the American household has been experiencing some significant changes. Non-family and female-headed households have shown dramatic increases over the decade from 1990 to 2000. Please note, a family household consists of a householder and one or more other persons living in the same household. Birth, marriage, or adoption must relate these persons. Non-family households include single persons, roommates, or unmarried couples. Female households increased 46.7 percent, while non-family households increased over 500 percent (from 4,849,043 into 1990 to 33,692,754 in 2000). Another significant trend in the composition of U.S. households is the decline in married-couple households with children. In addition, the number of households containing married couples without children (29,657,727) exceeds the number of married couples with children (24,835,505).

York County has experienced changes in household composition similar to the national changes. From 1990 to 2000, a total of 14,045 (29.9 percent) households were added in York County. The County's 25.2 percent growth in households was the sixth largest increase in South Carolina. As with the national average, the largest growth categories were non-family, female-headed, and families without children. Non-family households grew by more than 45.4 percent, while households comprised of married couples with children households grew by only 11.1 percent. By 2025, non-family households will account for more than 33 percent of households in the county, and female-headed households will make up close to 15 percent of households. The trends in household composition have lead to a decline in household size. York County's average persons per household dropped from 2.72 in 1990 to 2.63 in 2000. This trend is expected to continue considering that more couples are having fewer children, they are waiting later in life to have children, and the number of non-family households is growing significantly.

**Table PF-9 York County Household Composition**

York County Household Composition	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	2005	2015	2025	% of Total
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>47,006</b>		<b>61,051</b>		<b>70,172</b>	<b>91,139</b>	<b>112,105</b>	
<b>Family</b>	<b>35,908</b>	<b>76.4%</b>	<b>44,195</b>	<b>72.4%</b>	<b>49,295</b>	<b>60,671</b>	<b>72,048</b>	<b>64.3%</b>
With Children	18,860	40.1%	21,630	35.4%	23,218	26,629	30,039	26.8%
Without Children	17,048	36.3%	22,565	37.0%	26,216	34,700	43,184	38.5%
Married Couple	28,381	60.4%	34,358	56.3%	37,976	45,974	53,971	48.1%
With Children	14,080	30.0%	15,637	25.6%	16,502	18,326	20,151	18.0%
Without Children	14,301	30.4%	18,721	30.7%	21,614	28,294	34,975	31.2%
<b>Female Headed</b>	<b>5,962</b>	<b>12.7%</b>	<b>8,116</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>9,582</b>	<b>13,044</b>	<b>16,506</b>	<b>14.7%</b>
<b>Non-family</b>	<b>11,098</b>	<b>23.6%</b>	<b>16,136</b>	<b>26.4%</b>	<b>19,799</b>	<b>28,786</b>	<b>37,774</b>	<b>33.7%</b>
Persons Per Household	2.72		2.63		2.64	2.55	2.49	

Source: US Census Bureau

**AGE COMPOSITION**

As was quoted earlier in the introduction, “planning is for people”, but it is imperative that we understand who we should plan for. That is why age composition is an integral part of the population element. Different age groups have different needs and provide different functions for the area in which they live. This translates into services the county must or should provide as well as benefits the county gains from its residents.

From 1990 to 2000, York County experienced a 25 percent increase in population. The overall working age group (20-64 years) grew by 26.7 percent (20,914 persons) in York County. The vast majority of the county’s growth came from the 45 through 59 age group, which increased by 54.2 percent (10,991 persons). This segment of the population represents the post-world war II baby-boomers who are moving to York County for quality of life reasons and are looking to retire soon. The 35 to 44 age cohort represents people that have been in the labor force for several years; they likely moved here for an employment opportunity in the county or surrounding metropolitan area; and they are likely to have small children or will be in the near future. The lower end of the working-age-group, ages 20 through 24, declined about 2.5 percent during the past decade. The trends established by census data support the assumption that more Charlotte employee commuters are moving to York County.

Another age group that increased dramatically from 1990 to 2000 was the 75 and over group (42.6 percent). Within this segment of the population, most of the growth occurred in the 85 and over group. Persons 60 years and older have a growth rate of about 20 percent during the past decade. More senior citizens are moving into the County. The 60 and over age group presents the county with the task of providing services for the needs of senior citizens, as well as a decline in tax revenue generated from this group due to fixed incomes and diminished spending habits. Developments such as Eden Gardens or Carolina Village are helping to meet the needs of this population.



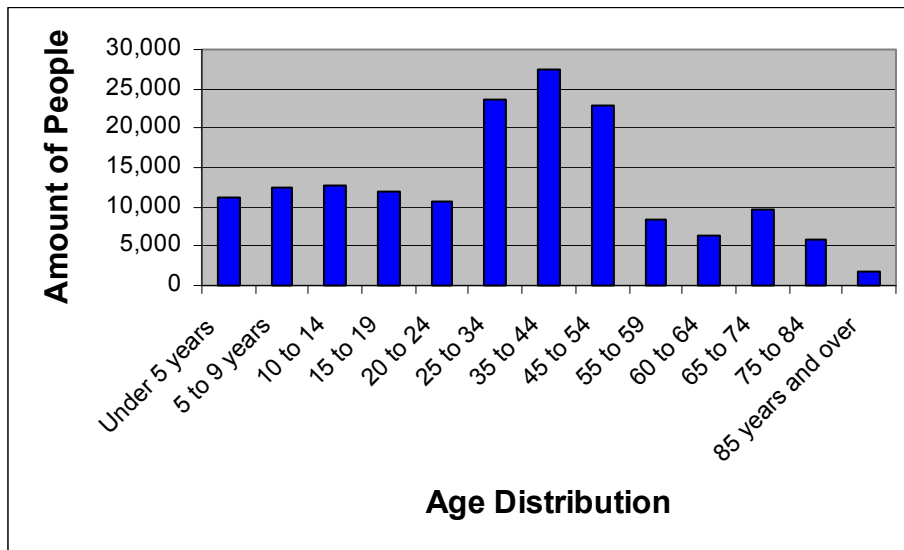
Another age group to experience growth during the 1990 - 2000 decade was children under 19 years. The number of persons in this group increased by 23.4 percent. Within this group, children under 5 and between 15 and 19 years grew the least (15.6 percent and 12.5 percent respectively). The pre-school, 0 through 5, age group may have shown little growth because of the rising number of families and non-families choosing not having children. The 15 to 19 year age group's low growth may be due to the number of young adults moving out of the county to attend college or seek employment. **Figure P-3** shows a graphic representation of the growth in the county's age groups.

**Table P-10 2000 York County Age Distribution**

Age Distribution	Persons	% of Total
Under 5 years	11,144	6.8%
5 to 9 years	12,386	7.5%
10 to 14	12,623	7.7%
15 to 19	12,025	7.3%
20 to 24	10,663	6.5%
25 to 34	23,635	14.4%
35 to 44	27,488	16.7%
45 to 54	22,960	13.9%
55 to 59	8,295	5.0%
60 to 64	6,323	3.8%
65 to 74	9,565	5.8%
75 to 84	5,735	3.5%
85 years and over	1,772	1.1%
Median Age	34.9	

Source: US Census Bureau

**Figure P-3 York County Age Distribution Graph**



Source: US Census Bureau



**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

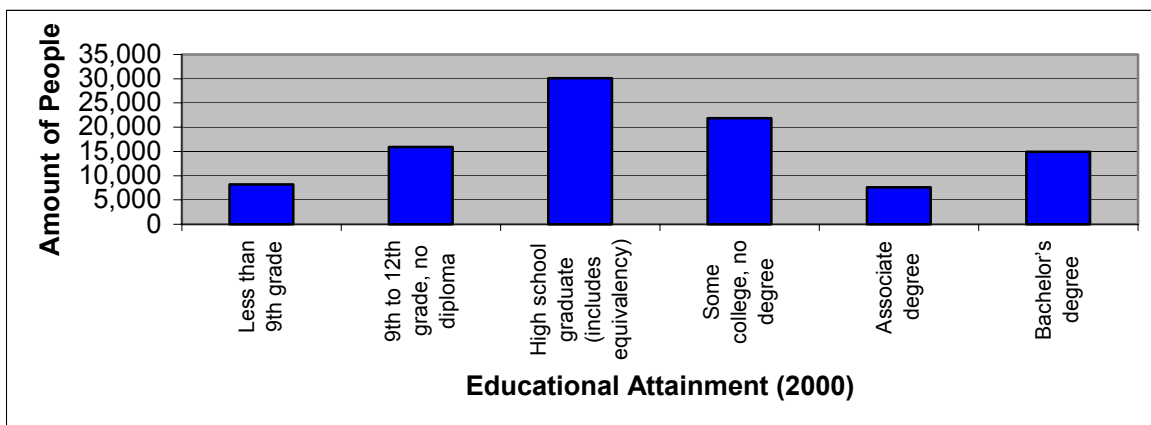
According to the South Carolina Department of Education and the United States Census Bureau, York County’s school enrollment rose rapidly (27.8 percent) from 1990 to 2000. The county’s public and private school enrollment for grades preschool to twelfth increased from 25,713 to 35,377 (37.6 percent). **Table P-11** displays the educational attainment of York County’s population 25 years old and over. Approximately 25 percent of the county population has less than a high school diploma, which is consistent with the state average. In 1990, approximately 67 percent of residents had a high school degree (or equivalent) or higher educational status. In 2000, the percentage rose to approximately 77 percent. The percentage of persons with a high school diploma or higher is consistent with the state average. In the past decade, the percentage of county residents with less than a ninth grade education declined from 13.9 percent in 1990 to 7.7 percent in 2000. This average is slightly less than the state average (8.3 percent) and slight above the national average (7.5 percent). Between 1999-2000, the County dropout rate was 2.4, compared with the state 3.2 percent. This rate is an improvement from the 1995-1996 dropout rate of 4.6 percent. In 1995-1996, the County’s dropout rate was higher than the state average of 2.9 percent.

**Table P-11 York County Educational Attainment**

Educational Attainment (2000)	Number of Residents	Percentage of Residents
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	8,177	7.7%
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade, no diploma	15,888	15.0%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	30,127	28.5%
Some college, no degree	21,842	20.7%
Associate degree	7,610	7.2%
Bachelor’s degree	14,945	14.1%
Graduate or Professional Degree	7,168	6.8%
Percent high school graduate or higher	77.2%	N/A
Percent bachelor’s degree or higher	20.9%	N/A

Source: US Census Bureau

**Figure P-4 York County Population Educational Attainment**



Source: US Census Bureau

**INCOME AND POVERTY**

Income levels in York County increased substantially from 1989 to 1999. The county's median household income grew from \$31,288 to \$44,539. The County's 1999 median household income was over \$7,000 higher than the state median. According to the 2000 Census, York County has the third highest median household income in the state, behind Greenville and Lexington counties. Among the surrounding counties, **Table P-12**, York County has the third highest growth rate during the past decade, and the second highest income. By 2025, York County's median household income will be approximately \$78,992, while the state median will be only \$65,230. Further, Mecklenburg County's median household income is expected to remain higher than the County's through the next few decades.

**Table P-12 Regional Median Household Income**

Regional Median Household Income	1989	1999	% Change	2005	2015	2025
<b>South Carolina</b>	\$26,256	\$37,082	41.2%	\$43,578	\$54,404	\$65,230
<b>York County, SC</b>	\$31,288	\$44,539	42.4%	\$52,490	\$65,741	\$78,992
<b>Chester County, SC</b>	\$23,054	\$32,425	40.6%	\$38,048	\$47,419	\$56,790
<b>Lancaster County, SC</b>	\$25,320	\$34,688	37.0%	\$40,309	\$49,677	\$59,045
<b>Union County, SC</b>	\$21,526	\$31,441	46.1%	\$37,390	\$47,305	\$57,220
<b>Mecklenburg County, NC</b>	\$33,830	\$50,579	49.5%	\$60,628	\$77,377	\$94,126

Source: US Census Bureau

Among the County's households, the householders with highest median earnings are between 45 to 54 years, followed by individuals between 35 to 44 years. This distribution is consistent with national and state averages. There is currently about a \$12,000 difference between male and female median earnings. While York County's median income for each gender is about \$10,000 less than national average, the difference in income between the sexes is consistent with national average.

**Table P-13 Median Household Income by Age**

York County Median household income 1999	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$44,539</b>
Householder under 25 years	\$26,205
Householder 25 to 34 years	\$44,038
Householder 35 to 44 years	\$52,642
Householder 45 to 54 years	\$57,500
Householder 55 to 64 years	\$47,163
Householder 65 to 74 years	\$31,863
Householder 75 years and over	\$21,066

Source: US Census Bureau



**Table PF-14 Median Earnings by Sex**

York County Median earnings 1999	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$23,898</b>
Male	\$30,650
Female	\$18,352

Source: US Census Bureau

York County has one of the lowest poverty levels in local counties as well as in the entire state. The only counties in South Carolina with lower poverty levels are Lexington and Dorchester counties. Locally, Mecklenburg is the only county with a lower poverty status. During the past decade, York and all other regional counties have lowered their poverty levels. Further, the County's poverty level is more than two percent lower than the national average of 12.4 percent. The lower poverty status of York County can be attributed to the amount of active workers in Mecklenburg area. Most new residents of the County are gainfully employed in the local area, and the Mecklenburg area is experiencing continued growth in industries and employment. According to **Table P-15**, the percent of persons in poverty in York County has maintained its comparably low poverty rate during the past decade.

**Table P-15 Total Poverty Regional**

Income in 1989 below poverty level:	Total Population	Below Poverty Level	% of Total	Total Population	Below Poverty Level	% of Total
	1989	1989		1999	1999	
<b>South Carolina</b>	3,368,125	517,793	15.4%	3,883,329	547,869	14.1%
<b>York County, SC</b>	127,623	13,207	10.3%	160,201	16,082	10.0%
<b>Chester County, SC</b>	32,010	5,381	16.8%	33,620	5,157	15.3%
<b>Lancaster County, SC</b>	54,054	7,978	14.8%	59,265	7,599	12.8%
<b>Union County, SC</b>	30,050	5,102	17.0%	29,557	4,230	14.3%
<b>Mecklenburg County, NC</b>	500,347	47,910	9.6%	681,210	62,652	9.2%

Source: US Census Bureau

**Table P-16** gives a breakdown of poverty statistics by the three largest ethnic groups in 1999. Hispanics account for only two percent of the County's population, they account for five percent of all County families in poverty. African Americans account for 40 percent of families below the poverty line. Further, as is shown in **Table P-17**, female-householders with no husband present represent 37.2 percent of families in poverty. This trend is consistent with national data.

**Table P-16 Ethnic Breakdown of Family Poverty Status**

Family Poverty Status	1999	Percent of Total
White	8,844	55.0%
Hispanic	800	5.0%
Non-White	7,238	45.0%
Black	6,414	39.9%

Source: US Census Bureau

**Table P-17 York County Poverty Levels for Household Types (1999)**

York County Persons below poverty level by household 1999	Persons	% of Total
In married-couple families	4,331	26.9%
In other families:		
Male householder, no wife present	1340	8.3%
Female householder, no husband present	5984	37.2%
Unrelated individuals	4,427	27.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,082</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: US Census Bureau

## GOALS AND STRATEGIES

### GOAL P-1

Prepare for the needs of a diverse and changing population.

#### STRATEGIES

**P-1.1 Continue to monitor and update demographic data in order to assess the changing demographic characteristics of York County throughout the planning period.**

- Update, revise and provide the latest and most detailed demographic data for planning studies such as fire, police and small-area plans, as necessary.

*Narrative:*

Planning in general focuses on people and the affect they have upon their surroundings. York County needs to accommodate continued development and economic growth, as opposed to stagnation, while maintaining the high quality of life, natural beauty and character York County has to offer. As growth continues at a high rate in York County, the County needs to monitor the changing community and address problems as they become apparent. With the increased growth, some portions of the population are not experiencing positive growth and a high quality of life.

The population element presents an inventory and analysis of the people of York County. However, the comprehensive needs of our residents as a whole are more closely addressed in



the remaining elements of this plan; housing, cultural resources, natural resources, transportation, community facilities, and land-use. The goal and strategy listed above are meant to address specific studies for which more detailed or more current demographic data is needed. Various agencies and York County Government departments frequently require detailed studies, for which the Planning & Development Services Department provides, and will continue to provide, the most accurate data possible.