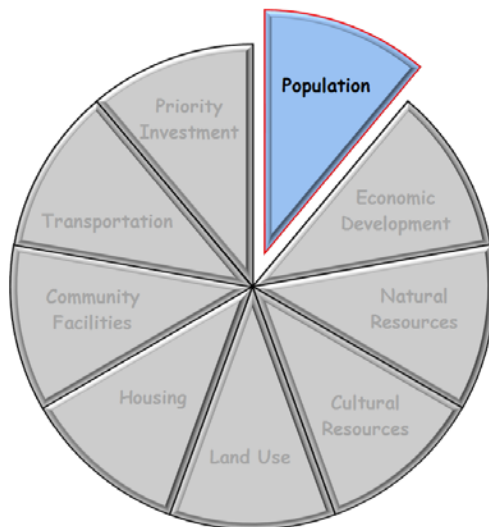


2010 Comprehensive Plan

City of Greer, SC

Section 1: Population



The population element of the comprehensive plan provides the foundation from which all other elements of the plan are developed. A thorough examination of past demographic trends along with a forecast of future growth is essential to assessing the city's needs in the planning and programming of services, housing, educational, and recreational facilities. Failure to provide the level of public services demanded could have a detrimental effect on future growth.

To develop a clear understanding of how the population affects the existing situation and future potential of the area, the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of

1994 provides the following guidelines of the essential characteristics to review for the housing element:

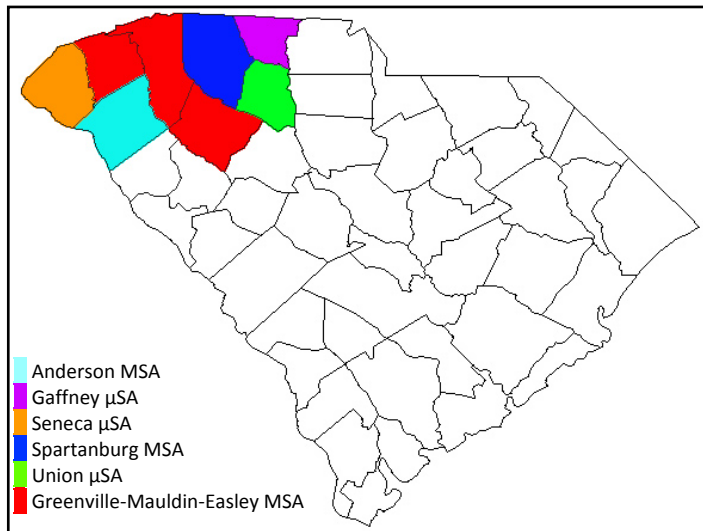
- ❖ historic trends and projections
- ❖ the number, size and characteristics of households
- ❖ educational levels and trends
- ❖ income characteristics and trends
- ❖ race; sex; age

Regional Context

In order to understand the City of Greer's population demographics, it is important to recognize the city's location in a regional context. The City of Greer, 21.6 square miles, is located in both Greenville County and Spartanburg County along the commercial I-85 corridor between Atlanta and Charlotte. Greer is equidistant from both the City of Greenville and the City of Spartanburg and at the center of some of the most significant infrastructure improvements and economic development that has occurred in both counties over the past 50 years. Traditionally, Greer's population has been impacted primarily from the commercial and industrial development concentrated in and around its core. However, over the past 20 years the regional economic

development footprint has begun to impact the city growth. With its central location and abundance of land available for residential development the city has quickly become one of the fastest growing cities in the state.

Figure 1-1
Core Based Statistical Areas of Upstate South Carolina



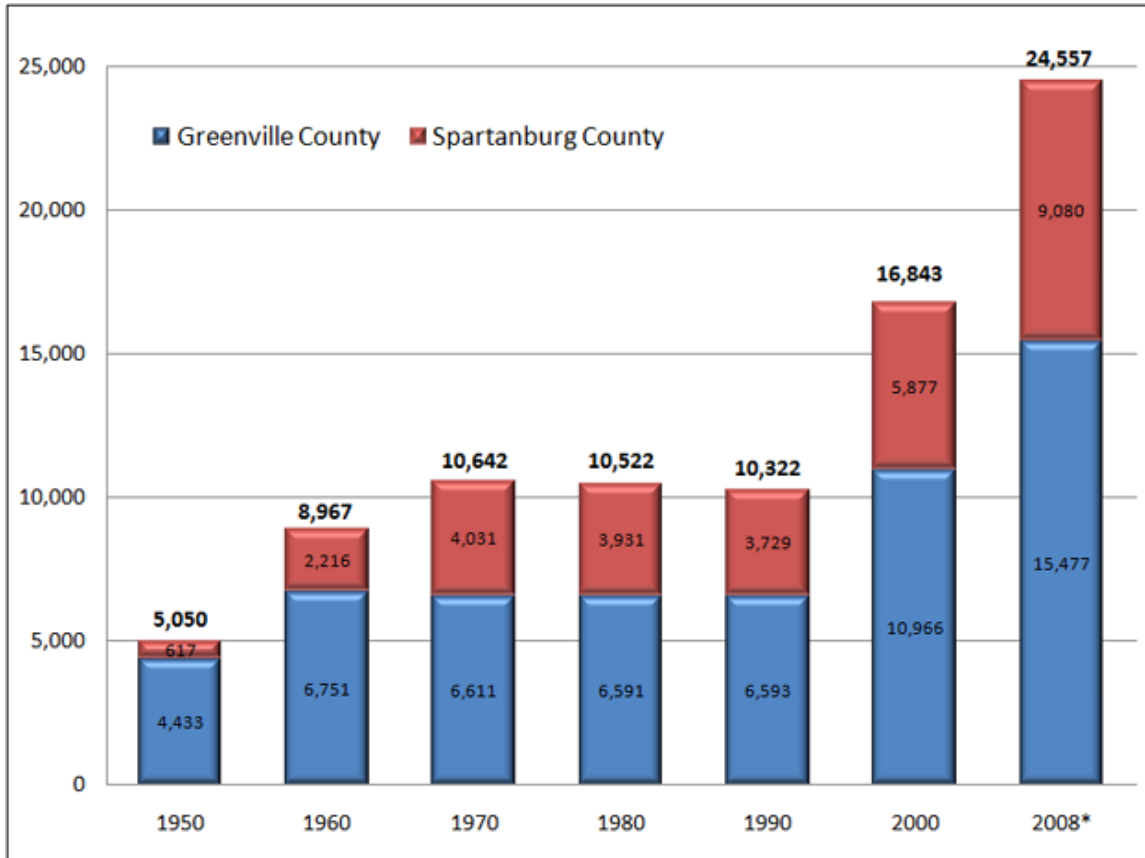
The City of Greer is part of the Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson, SC Combined Statistical Area (CSA) shown in Figure 1-1. This 5,194 square mile area is comprised of three Metropolitan Statistical Areas (Anderson MSA, Greenville-Mauldin-Easley MSA, and Spartanburg MSA) and three Micropolitan Statistical Areas (Gaffney μSA, Seneca μSA, and Union μSA) in eight Upstate counties of northwestern South Carolina. The U.S. Census Bureau established CSAs as an aggregate of adjacent statistical areas linked by community ties.

Population Trends

The city’s population growth between 1950 and 1970 can be attributed to the commercial and industrial boom starting in the late 1940s with construction of U.S. Hwy 29/Wade Hampton Blvd., the Superhighway, followed by the completion of Interstate 85 and the Greenville-Spartanburg Airport in the early 1960’s. This transportation infrastructure continues to play a primary role in the economic development of the area. In 1994, the BMW Manufacturing Company’s decision to locate its North American automotive assembly plant just outside of the city sparked a new, and ongoing, commercial and industrial boom for the area.

Figure 1-2 shows the city’s census numbers over the past 50 years. Between 1950 and 1970, the city’s population doubled. The number of residents remained the same for the next 20 years. Starting in the early 90s the city again began experiencing significant growth with a 63% increase in the number of residents for a total population of 16,843 in 2000. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates the city’s population to be 24,577 as of July 1, 2008. These trends have followed cycles of economic development and infrastructure improvement in the area.

Figure 1-2
City of Greer Population 1950 - 2008



*Estimated (U.S. Census Bureau)

U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder

In 1970, 62% of the city’s residents lived in Greenville County, increasing to 65% by 2000. Since 2000, the city has seen significant housing development within both counties, although 2008 estimates indicate a slight shift with 63% of the residents living in Greenville County. This shift can likely be attributed to housing developments taking advantage of the availability of rural land in western Spartanburg County while Greenville County has maintained its dominance due to the expansion of housing development from the suburban areas of eastern Greenville County.

Within a regional context it is easy to see the magnitude of the city’s population growth. For change in percentage of existing population, the City of Greer has outpaced all other cities and counties in the CSA since 1990. The city has also outpaced a majority of the municipalities and counties in the CSA for the number of residents added per day.

Table 1-1 details the population growth figures for the Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson, SC CSA. The CSA has experienced strong population growth since 1990. Only one county had negative growth. Table 1-2 details the population figures since 1990 of municipalities within the Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson, SC CSA whose populations exceeds 10,000.

**Table 1-1
Population Growth by County
Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson CSA
1990 – 2008**

	U.S. Census Data			1990 - 2000		2000 - 2008		1990 - 2008	
	1990	2000	2008*	% Change	per day	% Change	per day	% Change	per day
Greenville Co.	320,167	379,616	438,119	18.6%	16.3	15.4%	20.0	36.8%	18.0
Spartanburg Co.	226,800	253,791	280,738	11.9%	7.4	10.6%	9.2	23.8%	8.2
Anderson Co.	145,196	165,740	182,825	14.1%	5.6	10.3%	5.9	25.9%	5.7
Pickens Co.	93,894	110,757	116,915	18.0%	4.6	5.6%	2.1	24.5%	3.5
Oconee Co.	57,494	66,215	71,274	15.2%	2.4	7.6%	1.7	24.0%	2.1
Laurens Co.	58,092	69,567	69,681	19.8%	3.1	0.2%	0.0	19.9%	1.8
Cherokee Co.	44,506	52,537	54,394	18.0%	2.2	3.5%	0.6	22.2%	1.5
Union Co.	30,337	29,881	27,672	-1.5%	-0.1	-7.4%	-0.8	-8.8%	-0.4
CSA Total	978,476	1,130,104	1,241,618	15.5%	41.5	9.9%	38.2	26.9%	40.1

*Estimated (U.S. Census Bureau)

U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder

**Table 1-2
Population Growth by Municipality
Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson CSA
1990 – 2008**

	U.S. Census Data			1990 - 2000		2000 - 2008		1990 - 2008	
	1990	2000	2008*	% Change	per day	% Change	per day	% Change	per day
Greenville	58,292	56,002	59,988	-3.9%	-0.6	7.1%	1.4	2.9%	0.3
Spartanburg	43,467	39,673	39,584	-8.7%	-1.0	-0.2%	0.0	-8.9%	-0.6
Anderson	26,184	25,514	27,027	-2.6%	-0.2	5.9%	0.5	3.2%	0.1
Greer	10,322	16,843	24,557	63.2%	1.8	45.8%	2.6	137.9%	2.2
Mauldin	11,587	15,224	21,784	31.4%	1.0	43.1%	2.2	88.0%	1.6
Easley	15,195	17,754	20,325	16.8%	0.7	14.5%	0.9	33.8%	0.8
Simpsonville	11,708	14,352	17,144	22.6%	0.7	19.5%	1.0	46.4%	0.8
Gaffney	13,145	12,968	13,200	-1.3%	0.0	1.8%	0.1	0.4%	0.0
Clemson	11,096	11,939	13,012	7.6%	0.2	9.0%	0.4	17.3%	0.3

*Estimated (U.S. Census Bureau)

U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder

Population Demographics

The Census Bureau is charged with collecting population and demographic data every 10 years for everyone living in the United States. The next census is in 2010. The data collected impacts communities in a variety of important ways such as legislative districting at the national, state and local level and school district assignments. By forecasting growth based on population trends, communities are able to develop effective short and long range infrastructure strategies to meet the needs for affordable housing, access to medical facilities for the elderly, schools for children, job training centers for the workforce, etc. The data is also used to determine the annual allocation of approximately \$300 billion in federal funds to local, state, and tribal governments for neighborhood improvements, public health, education, transportation, and much more.

Race

Table 1-3 shows the racial demographics for the city. Since 1960, the percent of the total population that identified themselves as White has steadily decreased. And from 1990 to 2000 this trend carried over to those who identified themselves as Black. The decreases in these two demographics coincide with an increase in the Hispanic demographic. In keeping with national trends, and the efforts for a more efficient census process, the city will likely see this trend continue as conservatively estimated in the figures for 2010.

Table 1-3
City of Greer Population By Race
1950 – 2010

	1950	%	1960	%	1970	%	1980	%	1990	%	2000	%	2010*	%
White	4348	86.1	7,967	88.8	8,021	75.4	7,850	74.6	7,524	72.9	11,935	70.8	18,459	69.8
Black	702	13.9	1,000	11.2	2,608	24.5	2,641	25.1	2,738	26.5	3,285	19.5	5,077	19.2
Hispanic							13	0.1	21	0.2	1,377	8.2	2,228	8.4
Other					13	0.1	21	0.2	39	0.4	246	1.5	714	2.6

*Estimated (City of Greer)

U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder

Age

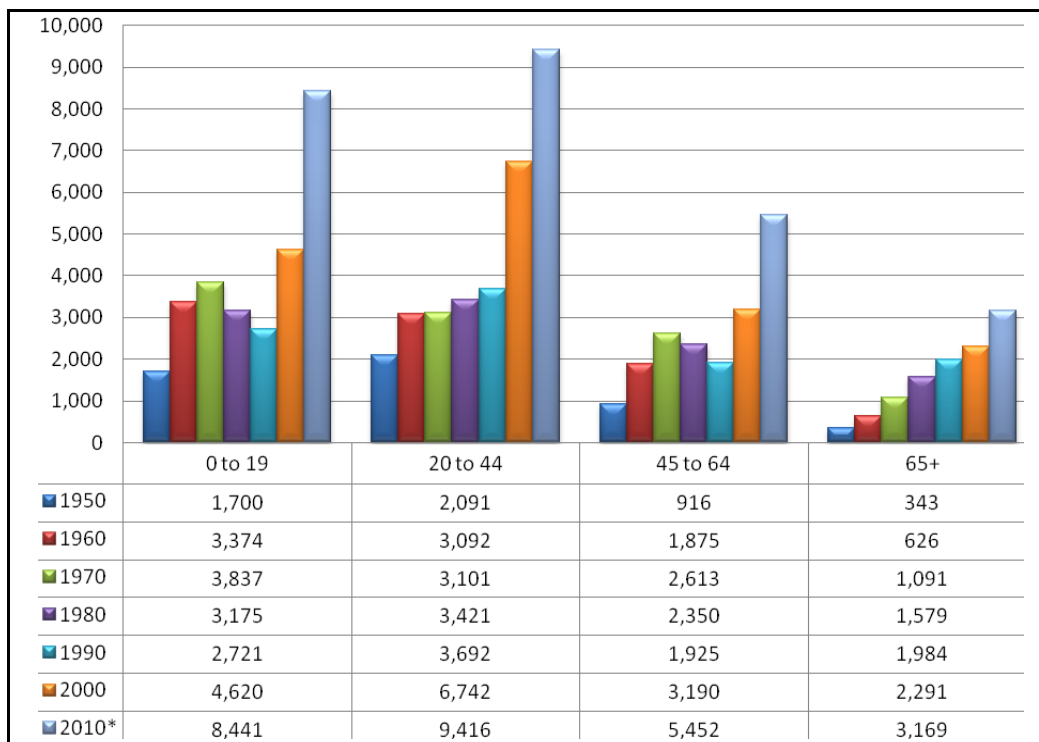
For planning purposes, age composition is vitally important because it has a bearing on land use issues. The age of the population or the number of people in different age groups translate into different types and demands for services at both the public and private sector levels. For example, the 21 to 44 age group represents the segment of the population likely to buy a house

or move if employment opportunities are unsatisfactory. The 21 to 44 and the 45 to 64 age groups represent the potential labor force. The 0 to 19 reflects needs for child care and primary education facilities. The 65+ age group has higher demand for health and elderly care services.

From 1990 to 2000, the primary groups for growth were people in the workforce and those with families. At the same time, the city still experienced gains in the 65+ age group. Figure 1-3 shows the trends of city age demographics since 1950.

The median age increased from 29.9 in 1970 to 34.9 in 1990. However, the median age had decreased to 33.7 by 2000. While the 65+ age group continued to increase, the rate of increase in the other age groups greatly outpaced that demographic, especially in the 20 to 44 age group. From 1970 to 1990, the 0 to 19 age group experienced steady decline. The exponential increase in the 20 to 44 age group between 1990 and 2000 led to a corresponding increase in the 0 to 19 age group, a dependent age group. Total working age population (20 to 64) increased from 5,617 in 1990 to 9,932 in 2000 with the majority of workers in the 20 to 44 age group. The estimated figures for 2010 show these trends should have continued since 2000.

**Figure 1-3
Population by Age Group**



*Estimated (City of Greer)

U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder

Households

While the total increase in population and its age group distribution both impact demands for services, it is also important to consider how the population is distributed by household type. Table 1-4 shows the makeup of households from 1980 to 2000.

From 1980 to 1990 the city gained 254 total households for a 6.4% increase. During this time, the makeup of total households changed with a 6.9% shift toward non-family households and a 1% decrease in family households with children. While married couple households decreased by 10.3% and those with children decreased by 5.1%, single-head households increased by 3.5% and those with children increased by 4.1%. As a result, the total Persons per Household decreased from 2.6 to 2.4 and Persons per Family from 3.2 to 3.0.

The makeup of households changed however from 1990 to 2000 when the city gained 2,502 total households for a 59.4% increase. During this time there was a 0.3% shift toward family households and a 3% increase in those with children. Married couple households increased by 1.8% and those with children increased by 3.4% while single-head households decreased by 1.5% and those with children decreased by 0.4%. As a result, the total Persons per Household increased from 2.4 to 2.5 with total Persons per Family holding steady at 3.0.

Table 1-4
Households by Family Type

	1980	% of Total	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	2007*	% of Total
Total Households	3,958		4,212		6,714		9,051	
Family Households	2,921	73.8	2,818	66.9	4,510	67.2	5,275	58.2
With related children under 18	1,330	33.6	1,375	32.6	2,387	35.6	2,430	26.8
Family, Married Couple	2,201	55.6	1907	45.3	3,159	47.1	3,847	42.5
With related children under 18	963	24.3	809	19.2	1,515	22.6	1,585	17.5
Family, Single-head	720	18.1	911	21.6	1,351	20.1	1,428	15.8
With related children under 18	367	9.3	566	13.4	872	13.0	845	9.3
Non-Family	1,037	26.2	1,394	33.1	2,204	32.8	3,776	41.7

*Estimated

U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder

As a percentage of total households, from 1980 to 1990, the city was losing family households and the limited amount of growth that did occur was in non-family households (those who live alone, unmarried couples, house mates, etc.) However, from 1990 to 2000 this trend changed with two of every three households *added* being family households. Also, approximately 54% of

total family households *did not* have children present in both 1980 and 1990. But by 2000, 53% of total family households did.

It should be noted the 2007 estimate is about 1,390 fewer than the total number of households inventoried through the Local Update of Census Addresses completed by the city in 2009 in preparation for the 2010 Census Bureau. With no current data available that identifies the particular makeup of these households or occupancy rates it is impossible to accurately analyze the existing household demographics until after the 2010 Census data has been released.

Education

Table 1-5 presents information on the educational attainment level of the population age 25 years and older. The data shows that the population is becoming more educated, as there has been an increase in the number and percentages of the populace that have graduated from high school and attended college. Conversely, the number of persons with less than a high school diploma has decreased. These changes were gradual from 1980 to 1990 but more pronounced from 1990 to 2000. From 1990 to 2000, as a percent of persons age 25 or over, the number of people without a high school diploma decreased from 52.4% to 30.7% and those with some college or higher increased from 22.3% to 41.9%.

This shift toward a more educated populace is very evident in the 20-year period from 1980 until 2000. In 1980, approximately six out of every 10 persons age 25 or older had no high school diploma—a figure that dropped to three out of 10 by 2000. In 1980, fewer than two out of every 10 persons age 25 or older had at least some college or higher, increasing to more than four out of 10 by 2000. Estimates for 2007 indicate that a trend toward a more educated populace has continued and should be reflected in the 2010 Census data.

Table 1-5
Years of School Completed
Persons Age 25+

	1980	% of Total	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	2007*	% of Total
Persons Age 25+	6,431		6,887		11,093		14,529	
Less than 9 th Grade	2,223	34.6	1,856	27.0	1,533	13.8	1,194	8.2
High School, No Diploma	1,759	27.3	1,752	25.4	1,874	16.9	2,096	14.4
High School, Diploma	1,407	21.9	1,740	25.3	3,041	27.4	4,559	31.4
College, 1 – 3 years	570	8.9	904	13.1	2,585	23.3	3,758	25.9
College, 4+ years	472	7.3	634	9.2	2,060	18.6	2,922	20.1

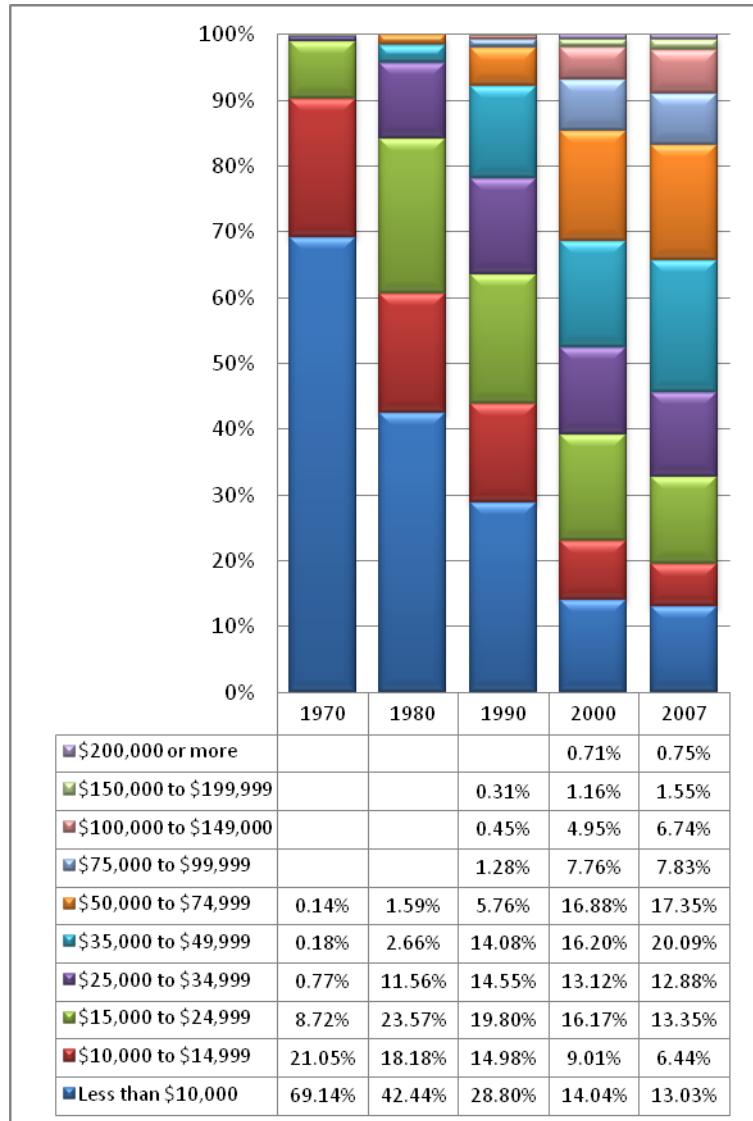
*Estimated

U. S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder

Income

**Figure 1-4.
Household Income 1970 – 2007**

Figure 1-4 compares household income distribution from 1970 to 2007 as a percent of total units. In 1970, 90.2% of all households earned less than \$15,000 annually with a median annual income of \$7,142. Income levels slowly increased over the next 20 years, reaching a median income level of \$18,049 in 1990 with 49.3% making between \$10,000 and \$35,000 annually. However, in just 10 years from 1990 to 2000, the median household income almost doubled to \$33,140 with 45.5% making between \$15,000 and \$50,000 annually. During this same period the percentage of households making more than \$50,000 increased from 7.8% to 31.5%. The U.S. Census Bureau’s 2007 estimates indicate a trend toward higher income levels continued with the median household income increasing to \$36,983. The estimates show that annually 32.9% of households make less than \$25,000, 33% make between \$25,000 and \$50,000 and 34.2% make over \$50,000.



**Estimated*

U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder

Table 1-6 details the number of persons living in poverty for which poverty status was determined. In 1970, 23.5% of those persons were living below the poverty level, decreasing to approximately 20% from 1980 to 1990, and further decreasing to 15.8% in 2000. In 1970, of the total persons living below the poverty level, at least 43.3% were children under 18 — decreasing to 37.1% in 1980 and 29.1% in 1990, but increasing slightly to 30.8% in 2000. In

1970, of the total persons living in poverty, 37.7% were between the ages of 18 and 64 years decreasing to 32.7% in 1980, increasing to 45% in 1990, and further increasing to 56.4% in 2000. In 1970, of the total persons living below the poverty level, 19% were over 65 years of age, increasing to 30.2% in 1980, decreasing to 25.9% in 1990, and further decreasing to 12.8% in 2000.

So from 1970 to 2000, as a percent of the total population, the city has improved in the number of persons living below the poverty level. In addition, fewer of those living in poverty are children and elderly. However, there has been a significant increase in the total persons between 18 and 64 living below the poverty level. No analysis based on the 2007 U.S. Census Bureau estimates regarding poverty has been made given the nature of the data provided in that survey. Poverty estimates are only presented as percentages without indication as to what total population estimates were used in its calculation. It is recommended this data be reviewed and updated once the 2010 Census data is officially released.

**Table 1-6
Poverty Status**

	1970	1980	1990	2000	2007*
Persons for whom poverty status is determined	10,376	10,259	10,115	16,323	
Persons below poverty level	2,438	2,038	2,008	2,584	16.2%
Related children under 18	1,056	756	584	795	19.7%
Persons between 18 and 64 years	919	667	904	1,458	15.4%
Persons over 65 years	463	615	520	331	13.9%
All Families	510	453	439	556	12.0%
Families with children under 18 years	330	344	300	450	20.4%

**Estimated*

U. S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder

Forecast

A population forecast is essential to comprehensive land use planning and to projecting future service levels of community facilities. A population forecast is a statement of the city's most likely future. It is a prediction utilizing assumptions that may happen based upon the analysis of the best information available. Given the most recent population growth activities, the assumptions used in this population forecast involve the city's physical development and growth potential, natural population increase and immigration, and local economic conditions. A 10-year period is generally selected as the forecast time period based upon the methodology used and the assumptions made. A 10-year period is far enough in the future to use for capital improvements planning, identification of future land use requirements, and for economic development purposes.

An aggressive annexation policy, extensive utility infrastructure development and improvement, best management practices in land use planning, and comprehensive economic development strategies are just some of the factors that should contribute to the City of Greer sustaining its population rate of growth into the foreseeable future. The population forecast assumptions for the next 10 years are:

1. The city's population will continue to increase due to the amount of vacant residentially zoned land that has, or will have, available infrastructure and will be developed.
2. The City of Greer will continue to strategically annex land over the next 10 years. The rate and amount of land annexed will not be as great as during the previous 10 years;
3. Due to changing demographics (younger families moving into new residential subdivisions), the rate of natural increase (birth rate versus death rate) will increase, and the current period of immigration should continue.
4. There will be a small, steady increase in population of those 65 years and older. The rate of this increase is dependent on the availability of affordable housing and medical care.
5. The population growth rate will likely continue its upward trend but at a much slower rate than previous years and will depend on the level of local economic growth and the availability of adequate public utility and community services.

Based upon these assumptions, the population forecast for the next 10 years is for a continuation of the population growth that occurred over the past 10 years. From 1999 to 2007, a significant amount of home building activity, annexation, and record economic development activity took place. Each of these areas slowed starting in mid-year 2008 as the result of a national economic recession which is predicted to continue until at least 2010. However, with signs of recovery already starting in late 2009, it is likely that the growth and development experienced in the past 10 to 15 years will again pick up, resulting in continued population growth and diversification.

A maximum build-out population analysis was performed as part of the forecast methodology in 1999. The build-out population provides the city with an idea of how many additional persons can be accommodated through available land for housing based on a specified density level. The 1999 forecast indicated a build-out population of 32,749 additional persons above the estimated population at the time of 16,658. The actual population in the 2000 census was 16,843. The city's current build-out population is 36,843 persons above the current population estimate for 2010 of 26,478. Compared with the population projections detailed in Table 1-7, this current build-out estimate is more than adequate to meet population and housing needs

over the next 10 to 20 years without taking into account future land annexations. Development activity trends should continue to be monitored and the forecast should be compared with the actual population as enumerated by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2010 and as it is estimated each year, with appropriate action taken as required.

**Table 1-7
City of Greer Population
2000 – 2030**

	Population
2000	16,843
2008	24,557*
2010	26,478**
2020	34,453**
2030	42,433**

* Estimated, U. S. Census Bureau

** Estimated, City of Greer

The population estimate for 2010 is based on the city’s efforts through the Local Update of Census Addresses in preparation for the 2010 Census. It indicated there are currently 10,591 housing units available in the city. Based on the actual persons per household modifier of 2.5 experienced by the city over the past 10 years, the estimated population for the 2010 Census is 26,478. Estimating the population increase beyond 2010 is based on growth trends attributed to factors such as surrounding land available for annexation, changing trends in housing density, and continuing effective economic development strategies. The resulting projected population increases are significant, but based upon these assumptions of sustained growth trends they are very likely to happen.

Goals

The following goals for population reflect the need to insure the demographic data for the city is timely. Demographic data references contained in this plan are based on estimated figures through 2008 with the last official Census data being published in 2000. It is forecasted that development activity and population trends for the next ten years will be similar to those over the past ten years. Once available, data estimates contained in the Population Section should be updated with actual data from 2010 Census to insure best management practices in growth and development planning for the next ten years.

The city should make sure resources are dedicated to partner with the U.S. Census Bureau and complete the Local Update of Census Addresses process to ensure an accurate census count in 2010.

Once the official population data is released by the U.S. Census Bureau in December 2010 the city should update the comprehensive plan and adjust the forecast as necessary.

The city should continue to be responsive to the needs and issues of its residents with policies that reflect the demographics of its population.