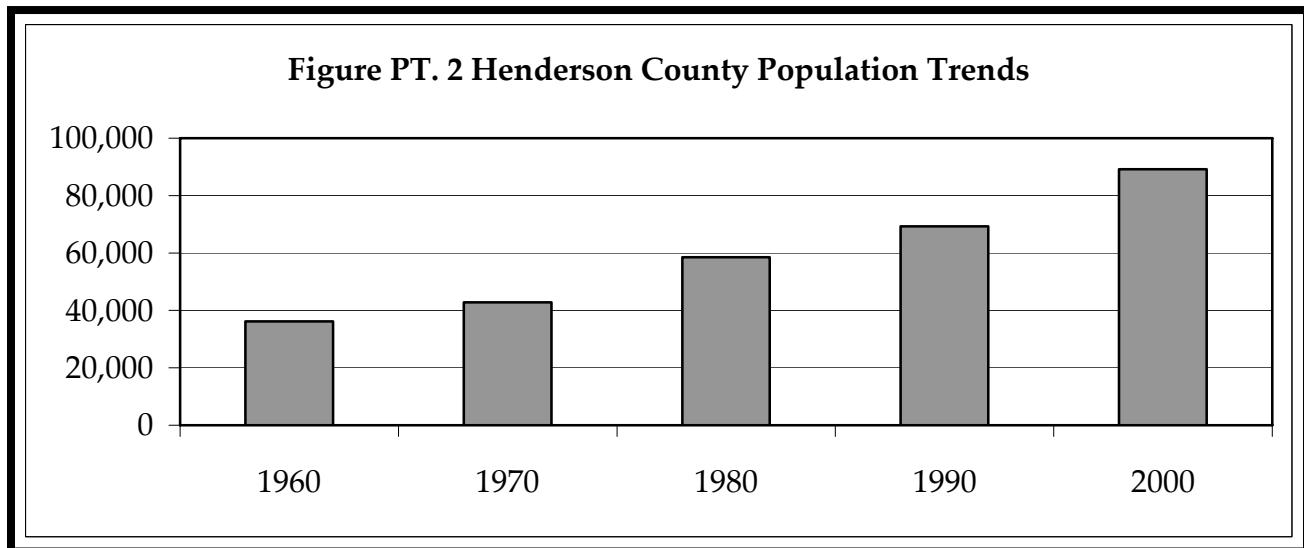


## **POPULATION TRENDS**

Henderson County’s population is growing. In 2000, the U.S. Census counted 89,173 persons in the county. This is an additional 19,888 persons or a 28.7% increase since 1990 (Figure PT.1). Interestingly, this equates to an average of 5.4 persons moving into the county each day for that ten-year period. Further, and even more dramatic, this increase represents an additional 46,369 persons or a 108.3% increase since 1970.

<b>Figure PT.1 Henderson County Population 1970-2000</b>			
<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
42,804	58,580	69,285	89,173
Source: U.S. Census Bureau			

Henderson County’s population has more than doubled during the thirty-year period between 1970 and 2000. In absolute persons, the majority of this growth was seen in the period between 1990 and 2000, with an additional 19,888 persons being added to the county census and an average annual growth rate of 2.23%. This significant rise in populace is also depicted in Figure PT.2, which also demonstrates that growth has been constant.



Source: Based on U.S. Census Bureau data

By comparison, population growth in Henderson County is faster than in neighboring counties. Polk County was the closest to Henderson in percentage growth with an increase of 26.7% from 1990 to 2000. The growth rate for the State of North Carolina was 21.4% for this same period. This data is shown in Figure PT.3.

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Percentage Increase</b>
<b>Henderson County</b>	28.7%
<b>Polk County</b>	26.7%
<b>Buncombe County</b>	18.3%
<b>McDowell County</b>	18.1%
<b>Haywood County</b>	15.1%
<b>Transylvania County</b>	14.9%
<b>Rutherford County</b>	10.4%
<b>State of North Carolina</b>	21.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### *Migration*

The 2000 U.S. Census (Figure PT.4) indicates that there were more deaths than births in Henderson County between April 1990 and April 2000. This fact is important because it means that *all of Henderson County's recent population growth* is attributable to the migration of new residents into the county. Further, the county's net migration percentage for the period topped all of the counties in the Region B Planning Area (Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania) at 29%. This percentage was also higher than the net migration for the State of North Carolina (15.1%) during the same period. These facts are of critical importance in terms of future planning because it indicates that new residents are still drawn to Henderson County. If the public input is any indicator of the source of this attraction, it is Henderson County's high quality of life, as well as its central location to regional employment centers.

	<b>1990 Pop.</b>	<b>2000 Pop.</b>	<b>Growth*</b>	<b>% Growth</b>	<b>Births</b>	<b>Deaths</b>	<b>Natural** Growth</b>	<b>Net*** Migration</b>
<b>Henderson</b>	<b>69,747</b>	<b>89,173</b>	<b>19,426</b>	<b>27.9%</b>	<b>8,816</b>	<b>9,604</b>	<b>-788</b>	<b>20,214</b>
<b>Buncombe</b>	174,357	206,330	31,973	18.3%	23,473	20,219	3,254	28,719
<b>Madison</b>	16,953	19,635	2,682	15.8%	2,075	2,014	61	2,621
<b>Transylvania</b>	25,520	29,334	3,814	14.9%	2,863	2,926	-63	3,877
<b>Region B</b>	286,577	344,472	57,895	20.2%	37,227	34,763	2,464	55,431
<b>North Carolina</b>	6,632,448	8,049,313	1,416,865	21.4%	1,054,045	638,171	415,874	1,000,991

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000  
 \*2000 Population minus 1990 Population=Growth  
 \*\* The difference in birth and deaths=Natural Growth  
 \*\*\*Growth plus Natural Growth = Net Migration

### Municipality Populations

Looking at total county population, it is also important to take into consideration the population changes for the county’s municipalities. Figure PT.5 identifies the growth within these municipalities from 1970 to 2000.

Municipality	1970	1980	1990	2000
Village of Flat Rock	Data not available			2,565
Town of Fletcher		2,233	2,787	4,185
City of Hendersonville	6,443	6,862	7,284	10,420
Town of Laurel Park	581	764	1,322	2,017
City of Saluda*	Data not available			4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000  
 \*Only a small portion of the City of Saluda is located within Henderson County.

As shown in Figure PT.5, Hendersonville, the county's largest municipality in population and also the County seat, experienced the most growth in absolute persons between 1990 and 2000 with an additional 3,136 being added to the City's population and an average annual growth rate of

4.31%. An explanation for this growth has been Hendersonville’s annexations during the study period. The second-fastest growing municipality in the county was Fletcher, with 1,398 persons and an average annual average growth rate of 5.02% from 1990 to 2000. Laurel Park also experienced significant growth during the period with a 5.26% average annual growth rate.

Although the population analysis for the Village of Flat Rock is incomplete due to its 1995 incorporation, one can reasonably assume from the overall growth within the county that it, too, has grown significantly. The Town of Mills River was not incorporated until 2003 and is therefore not included in Figure PT.5.

### Township Populations

County township demographics play an important role in planning for the county, because the U.S. Census tracks population by Township. Figure PT.6 and Appendix I, Map 01: *Township Growth 1990-2000* indicates the recent and historical growth rates of each of the county’s townships.

The county’s largest township, Hendersonville, experienced the largest amount of population growth during the 1990-2000 time period, while the Clear Creek, Blue Ridge and Crab Creek townships experienced the greatest percent change in population during the same time period.

Township	1970	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	Total Population Growth 1990-2000	% Total Population Growth 1990-2000
Hendersonville	25,018	31,525	36,312	43,697	20.3%	7,385	37.13%
Mills River	4,063	6,274	8,177	10,868	32.9%	2,691	13.53%
Blue Ridge	3,398	5,238	5,805	8,487	46.2%	2,682	13.49%
Hoopers Creek	3,815	6,154	7,509	9,994	33.1%	2,485	12.49%
Clear Creek	1,726	2,711	3,093	4,616	49.2%	1,523	7.66%
Crab Creek	1,096	1,771	2,830	4,109	45.2%	1,279	6.43%
Edneyville	1,811	2,158	2,422	3,454	42.6%	1,032	5.19%
Green River	1,877	2,749	3,137	3,948	25.9%	811	4.08%
<b>County Total</b>	<b>42,804</b>	<b>58,580</b>	<b>69,285</b>	<b>89,173</b>	<b>28.7%</b>	<b>19,888</b>	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

Although all Henderson County townships have experienced continued growth over the last thirty years, the most recent years are a primary point of analysis. During the ten-year period between 1990 and 2000, the Clear Creek township population increased most dramatically, with an additional 1,523 persons being added to the township's residents, providing for a 4.9% average annual growth rate. The Blue Ridge, Crab Creek, and Edneyville townships followed closely with average annual growth rates ranging from 4.3% to 4.6%. The Mills River and Hoopers Creek townships grew steadily as they each increased at an annual average rate of 3.3%. Although the Hendersonville Township showed the lowest growth rate during this period with a 20.3% change (2% average annual growth), it should be noted that it experienced the greatest increase in population with 7,385 additional residents.

### *Age Composition*

	1970	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000
Persons 0-4	3,373	3,503	3,821	5,007	31.0%
Persons 5-14	7,824	8,515	8,153	10,499	28.8%
Persons 15	775	1,063	876	1,006	14.8%
Persons 16-17	1,659	1,938	1,606	2,040	27.0%
Persons 18-20	1,590	2,398	2,375	2,468	3.9%
Persons 21-24	2,173	3,102	2,804	3,201	14.2%
Persons 25-54	15,414	21,109	26,775	35,309	31.9%
Persons 55-64	4,218	6,608	7,759	10,302	32.8%
Persons 65 +	5,778	10,344	15,116	19,341	28.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

The ages represented within a population can have significant impact on the needs and trends of a community. Nationally, the population is aging. This is no different in Henderson County. The distribution of the population by age in the county has historically

reflected an attraction to this area by retirees or those who are close to retirement age. However, this age group does not dominate the county's populace, as many would expect.

Figure PT. 7 and PT.8 indicate that a large portion of the county's population are retirees or of retirement age. Collectively, the "55-64" and the "65 & up" age categories accounted for 33.2% of the total county population in the 2000 census. These combined age categories grew by 29.6% from 1990 to 2000. However, the primary working age population (21-54 years of age) made up a larger 43.2% of the county's population. This latter age group grew by 30.2% during the ten-year period between 1990 and 2000. This growth could reasonably be correlated to the influx of Hispanics to Henderson County for work in agriculture and other vocations. The third category was school-aged children and youth between the ages of 0-20 years. This group comprised approximately 23.6% of the county's total population in the 2000 census and grew by 22.9% from 1990 to 2000. Map # 1 *Township Growth 1990 – 2000* in Appendix I indicates that each of these larger age categories remained unchanged in terms of their respective percentages of the overall county population.

Aggregate Age Categories	% Change 1990-2000	Percent of 1990 Population	Percent of 2000 Population
Persons 0-20	24.89%	24.29%	23.57%
Persons 21-54	30.19%	42.69%	43.19%
Persons 55 & Older	29.59%	33.02%	33.24%
<b>Total Population</b>		69,285	89,173

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

### Racial Composition

The Census Bureau uses the three categories of *white*, *black*, and *other* to classify race. According to 2000 Census information, the majority of the Henderson County population is white (92.5%). Blacks make up approximately 3.1% and those classified as *other* make up approximately 4.4% of the county population (Figure PT.9).

	1970	1980	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000
<b>Whites</b>	40,857	56,296	66,351	82,505	24.3%
<b>Blacks</b>	1,934	2,008	2,215	2,725	23.0%
<b>Other</b>	13	276	719	3,943	448.4%

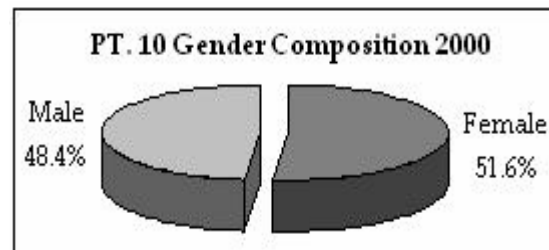
Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

The striking element within the racial composition of Henderson County is that the percentage of those classified as *other* in the 2000 Census has increased by approximately 448.4% from 1990 to 2000. Because Hispanics may

be of any race, the Census information includes them within the applicable race categories. However, because the 2000 Census information also lists 5.5% of Henderson County’s population as persons from Hispanic or Latino origin, one might assume that the *other* category most closely categorizes these persons. It is interesting to note that there may be a correlation between the dramatic increase in persons in the 25-54 age group (Figure PT.9) and the increase in those we assume to be Hispanic that are included in the *other* category. It is believed that Hispanics have been undercounted in the Census information.

### Gender Composition

Census Bureau data shows that there were 46,002 females and 43,171 males in Henderson County in 2000 (Figure PT.10). This means that females comprised 51.6% of Henderson County's population in 2000, which coincides with state and national averages. There have been only minor variations in the gender composition of Henderson County within the thirty-year period between 1970 and 2000 (Figure PT.11). This female majority is most likely primarily due to the greater life expectancy of females.



**Figure PT. 11 Gender Comparisons 1970-2000**

	1970	% of Pop.	1980	% of Pop.	1990	% of Pop.	2000	% of Pop.	% Change 1990-2000
<b>Females</b>	22,319	52.1%	30,516	52.1%	36,116	52.1%	46,002	51.6%	24.9%
<b>Males</b>	20,485	47.9%	28,064	47.9%	33,169	47.9%	43,171	48.4%	30.2%

Source: U.S. 2000 Census Bureau

### Population Projections 2000 – 2020

Formulating population projections is complex and uncertain. Many factors that are not easily predicted can affect the outcome of these projections. However, with accurate data available, population projections can serve as an invaluable tool for planning purposes. Fortunately, the U.S. Census Bureau provides certified population data that is detailed and easily accessible. The North Carolina State Data Center also provides excellent information for recent population trends.

Estimates of population growth in each of the county’s townships over the next twenty years were made by exponential extrapolation of past population trends. This was

accomplished by using the average annual rate of growth for each township over the twenty-year period. These population projections provide an integral framework for estimating the degree of future impacts on a community.

Figure PT.12 shows the population projections for Henderson County by township through the year 2020. Using a formula whereby the population will continue to increase, but at a decreasing rate, Henderson County’s population is projected to grow to 111,400 by 2010 and 129,350 by 2020. This represents an average annual growth rate of 1.87%, an additional 40,177 persons between the period of 2000 and 2020.

<b>Figure PT. 12 Henderson County Population Projections 2000-2020</b>						
<b>Townships</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>% Increase 2000-2020</b>
<b>Blue Ridge</b>	8,487	10,350	12,500	14,050	15,800	86.2%
<b>Clear Creek</b>	4,616	5,450	6,600	7,300	8,200	77.6%
<b>Crab Creek</b>	4,109	4,850	5,950	6,450	7,100	72.8%
<b>Edneyville</b>	3,454	4,050	4,450	5,000	5,400	56.3%
<b>Green River</b>	3,948	4,350	4,750	5,100	5,300	34.3%
<b>Hendersonville</b>	43,697	47,550	49,000	52,200	54,150	23.9%
<b>Hoopers Creek</b>	9,994	11,550	12,850	14,350	15,650	56.6%
<b>Mills River</b>	10,868	12,750	14,400	16,150	17,750	63.3%
<b>County Total</b>	<b>89,173</b>	<b>100,900</b>	<b>110,510</b>	<b>120,600</b>	<b>129,350</b>	<b>45.1%</b>
Source: Martin - McGill Associates						

As was discussed previously in this section, several townships were noted as having grown significantly over others from the period of 1970 to 2000. This is again the case with future projections. The Blue Ridge, Clear Creek, and Crab Creek townships are projected to grow more quickly than the others. Of these, the Blue Ridge Township is expected to grow by 86.2% in the next twenty years. Clear Creek and Crab Creek townships are projected to grow by 77.6% and 72.8% respectively. However, close behind these figures are those for the Mills River Township, which is projected to increase in population by 63.3%. Though these areas are expected to have the greatest percent increase in population during this period, the Hendersonville Township is

projected to experience the greatest increase in population, 10,453 additional residents.

<b>Figure PT. 13 U.S. Census Projected Population for Henderson County</b>			
<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>
98,730	107,940	116,466	124,985
Source: U.S. Census			

Projected populations from the US Census Bureau can be seen in Figure PT.13.

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