The Planning Partnership is a collaborative initiative of the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission. The Partnership – open to all political jurisdictions in the county and to affiliate members in the public, private and civic sectors – is an advisory board that works to harness the collective energy and vision of its members to effectively plan for the future of our county. Rather than engaging in the Planning Commission’s short-range functions such as zoning reviews, the Planning Partnership takes a long-range, comprehensive approach to planning, working to build a community that works for families, for businesses and for the region. The Partnership firmly believes that collaboration is the key to a positive, competitive and successful future for Hamilton County.

Visit planningpartnership.org and communitycompass.org for more information.

Community COMPASS (Hamilton County’s Comprehensive Master Plan and Strategies) is a long-range plan that seeks to address mutual goals related to physical, economic, and social issues among the 49 communities within Hamilton County. Through a collective shared vision for the future based on the wishes and dreams of thousands of citizens, Hamilton County now has direction to chart its course into the 21st century.

In developing a broad vision with broad support, Community COMPASS will help ensure that trends are anticipated, challenges are addressed, priorities are focused, and our collective future is planned and achieved strategically over the next 20 to 30 years. Through an in-depth analysis of all aspects of the County, the multi-year process will result in a comprehensive plan.

Abstract

Title: Population Community COMPASS Report No. 15-1

Subject: Population and Demographic Study of Hamilton County

Date: November 2004

Synopsis: This report presents existing conditions and trends related to Hamilton County's changing demographics including age-sex structure, race, ethnicity, migration, and other socio-economic characteristics. The report identifies six important findings as well as the importance of trends associated with each finding, and provides key indicators or measures that help us understand the constantly changing characteristics of our population.

Source of Copies: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission 138 East Court Street Room 807 Cincinnati, OH 45202 513-946-4500 www.hamilton-co.org/hcrpc

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Context

COMMUNITY COMPASS COMPONENTS

|   | 1 | Vision (What do we want?) |
|   | 2 | Initiatives (What strategies should we consider?) |
|   | 3 | Indicators (What should we measure?) |
|   | 4 | Trends (Where have we been?) |
|   | 5 | Projections (Where are we headed?) |
|   | 6 | Research (What's the story behind the trend?) |
|   | 7 | Partners (Who can help?) |
|   | 8 | Strategic Plans (What can we do that works?) |
|   | 9 | Action Plans (How do we make it happen?) |
|   | 10 | Performance Measures (Are actions making a difference?) |

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FINDING 1
Like many other metropolitan areas, the Cincinnati metropolitan region is experiencing population growth in the region as a whole, but losing population in the central county.

- The Cincinnati metropolitan region is experiencing population growth in the region as a whole, but losing population in the central county (Hamilton County). Central counties of many metropolitan regions in the Midwest like St. Louis, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh have also observed population losses, while a few others such as Indianapolis, Columbus, and Louisville have gained population from 1990 to 2000.

FINDING 2
Hamilton County’s population losses are attributable to a decline in the total number of births and to high out-migration coupled with lower in-migration.

- Although Hamilton County is experiencing a decline in birth rates and has higher death rates in older age groups (cohorts), out-migration of residents is the key factor in population loss. The major destination counties for people relocating in the region from Hamilton County are Butler, Clermont, and Warren Counties in Ohio. In 1970, Hamilton County had 56 percent of the total CMSA population, which decreased to 43 percent in 2000.

FINDING 3
Hamilton County including the Cincinnati metropolitan region is not a population magnet.

- The Cincinnati region does not attract a large number of persons from other states or countries like in Atlanta, Dallas, or Las Vegas, nor large numbers of inter-regional migrants as in Boston, Chicago, Columbus, New York, or Washington DC. Hamilton County’s share of total in-migrants in the CMSA decreased from 29 percent in 1995 to 25 percent in 2002, while the share in suburban counties (Butler, Clermont, and Warren) has increased from 41 percent to 44 percent. Hamilton County remains the single largest destination for in-migrants into the region. However, its share is decreasing as more immigrants are opting for suburban counties.

FINDING 4
Hamilton County’s population is getting older.

- Hamilton County's population is aging in place and getting older. Since 1980, the proportion of Hamilton County's population aged 60 years and over was around 17 percent. With the aging of the Baby Boom generation, the proportion of senior citizens will increase by more than 20 percent by 2020, requiring more social services and facilities for the elderly population.
FINDING 5
Hamilton County's population is becoming more racially diverse.

• As the proportion of Blacks, Latinos, and Asians has increased, White population has decreased. However, geographically Hamilton County remains a racially segregated county - communities where different races have equal presence are rare. A significant disparity in income and educational attainment exists between Black, White, and Hispanic. Median income in 2000 of Black households at $25,074 per annum was about half of the median income of White households, and two-thirds of the median income of Hispanic households.

FINDING 6
A reversal of Hamilton County's population decline is expected after 2014.

• Population projections by the Ohio Department of Development and Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission have traditionally used the cohort component method, which shows a continuing loss in population up to 2030. Based on past trends of declining populations this method is not capable of forecasting any future population increase. However, a state of the art economic forecasting model known as Regional Economic Model Inc., or REMI, shows an increase in Hamilton County's population following 2014. According to REMI, the County's 2030 anticipated population of 862,531 will exceed the 2000 population by 17,288 persons. Strategic actions are still obviously needed to mitigate Hamilton County's continuing population loss over the next ten years. At the same time, however, we should also plan for growth in the second half of the next decade.
INTRODUCTION

This report presents existing conditions and trends related to Hamilton County's changing demographics including age-sex structure, race, ethnicity, migration, and other socio-economic characteristics. The report identifies six important findings as well as the importance of trends associated with each finding, and provides key indicators or measures that help us understand the constantly changing characteristics of our population.

The demographic structure of the population plays a crucial role in determining the future of cities, counties, regions, states, and nations. The number, age and gender of residents, along with their skills, abilities and culture are essential in determining the prosperity or decline of places. Over the last half century, a national trend has been central city (and more recently central county) residents and jobs moving outwards to the suburbs and exurbs in metropolitan regions. Cincinnati and Hamilton County have experienced this outward movement of population.

Established in 1790, Hamilton County was the second county carved out of the Northwest Territory and preceded Ohio statehood by over 12 years. The total land area of the County is 414 square miles. Within Hamilton County today there are 49 political jurisdictions – 37 municipalities and 12 townships – each with their own governing structure.

Figure 1 charts the population growth patterns for the City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County excluding Cincinnati¹, Hamilton County with Cincinnati, and the Cincinnati CMSA². Another way to view population changes is by the percentage of that change by decade as shown in Figure 2. The population growth rates show an erratic pattern of increase in some decades followed by a decrease in the subsequent decades. The City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County have experienced negative growth rates or decreasing population in the past few decades.

---

CMSA
Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area for Cincinnati includes counties of: Butler, Brown, Clermont, Hamilton, and Warren in Ohio; Boone, Campbell, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton, and Pendleton in Kentucky; and Dearborn and Ohio in Indiana.

---

Figure 1
POPULATION GROWTH, 1900-2000

Source: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, U.S. Census Bureau
The City of Cincinnati steadily gained population through the beginning of the 20th Century, reaching its height of 503,998 persons in the 1950 U.S. Census. The City then saw population loss of three-tenths of one percent in the 1960 U.S. Census, a prelude to suburbanization. Population loss has been significant since then with an average of nine percent per decade. In the 2000 U.S. Census, Cincinnati’s population was 331,285. Hamilton County’s population growth since 1900, when the City of Cincinnati contained 80 percent of the County’s 409,479 people, has been mainly outside of Cincinnati. The County’s highest population was recorded in the 1970 U.S. Census with nearly one million residents. Since then, the County has lost population at an average rate of three percent per decade. In 2000, Hamilton County’s population fell to 845,303. If the City of Cincinnati’s population is removed from Hamilton County’s numbers, the

Figure 2
PERCENT POPULATION CHANGE, 1910-2000

Cincinnati Metropolitan Region
Hamilton County
Cincinnati

Source: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 3
POPULATION CHANGE IN THE CINCINNATI METROPOLITAN REGION, 1990-2000

Greater than 25%
5% to 24.9%
-4.9% to 4.9%
-24.9% to -5%
Less than -25%

Note: Population change by census tracts is classified into five intervals using the "Quantile" method. The numbers are rounded off to get -4.9 percent to 4.9 percent as the middle range, 5 percent to 24.9 percent, and greater than 25 percent as the upper two ranges. The lower two ranges are the same as the upper two ranges and bear negative numbers. The middle range from -4.9 percent to 4.9 percent shows census tracts experiencing minimal changes (loss or gain) in the population.

Source: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, U.S. Census Bureau
remainder of the County experienced a population growth of 2.5 percent (12,343 persons) between 1990 and 2000.

While the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County are experiencing a loss of population, the CMSA over the last three decades has seen a 19 percent increase in population. Much of the region’s growth has been through movement of Cincinnati and Hamilton County residents into neighboring counties (see Figure 3).

Although Hamilton County has been losing population since 1970, housing demand and jobs have been increasing. Following a national trend, more households are being formed due to declines in average household size and more single-person households. This leads to higher demand for housing units without necessarily an increase in population.

As seen in Figures 4 and 5, jobs have been created at a faster rate than households have been formed or dwelling units have been built. As presented in State of the County Report: Economy and Labor Market,3 jobs in Hamilton County far outpace the resident labor force. The County serves as a job magnet, drawing in workers from the region to fill the increasing number of jobs. According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s recent population estimates, the loss of population in Hamilton County has worsened since 2000. In the last three years, the County’s population loss of 21,831 is greater than the population loss of 20,925 from 1990 to 2000. The 13 county Cincinnati metropolitan region however, experienced a 161,633 population gain. The latest population estimates available at the municipal and township levels (2001) reveal for the first time that the remainder of Hamilton County - excluding the City of Cincinnati - is losing population. Only eight out of 49 jurisdictions in the County gained population in 2001: Crosby Township, Harrison Township, Miami Township, Whitewater Township, Milford City, the Village of Indian Hill, North Bend Village, and Amberly Village.

Hamilton County and particularly the City of Cincinnati are important employment centers as large numbers of people commute into them each day for jobs. The daytime populations for each are greater than the resident populations. Based on U.S. Census data, daytime population in Hamilton County is 1,054,765 and in Cincinnati is 420,467.

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, REIS (Regional Economic Information System)
FINDING 1
LIKE MANY OTHER METROPOLITAN AREAS, THE CINCINNATI METROPOLITAN REGION IS EXPERIENCING POPULATION GROWTH IN THE REGION AS A WHOLE, BUT LOSING POPULATION IN THE CENTRAL COUNTY.

Population decentralization is a common occurrence in most American metropolitan regions. Several driving forces fuel this trend, especially federal and state policies related to transportation, housing, energy, and taxation. National programs that perpetuated this trend include the Federal Housing Administration’s post World War II mortgage finance program and the 1956 Interstate Highway Act, both of which encouraged and enabled new residential construction on the metropolitan fringes.\(^5\)

As the process of suburbanization continues and even accelerates, the population of the Cincinnati metropolitan region is becoming more decentralized. In the early part of the 20\(^{th}\) Century, nearly 60 percent of the region’s population was located in Hamilton County. Today only about 40 percent reside there. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in the year 2000, the Midwest\(^6\) had the second-lowest population increase of the four statistical regions surveyed, and the Northeast region had the lowest increase (Figure 6).

Many experts attribute the Midwest and Northeast’s slow population growth to the decline in manufacturing industries.\(^7\) The relocation of manufacturing to the “Sun Belt” states and foreign countries to take advantage of lower labor costs, less governmental regulation, and other reasons prompted many persons employed in these sectors to go elsewhere for work. Moreover, foreign competition in heavy industries like automobile and steel manufacturing contributed to corporate restructuring and large numbers of layoffs in the 1970s and 1980s.
As shown in Figure 7, compared with similar metropolitan regions in the Midwest, the Cincinnati region experienced the third largest overall metropolitan growth from 1990 to 2000. However, Hamilton County, the central county in the Cincinnati region saw the second highest population loss compared to the other regions. It would appear there has been considerable population redistribution in Hamilton County and its metropolitan region. The Pittsburgh metropolitan region and its central county were the only comparison regions to both show losses during this timeframe.8

All of these “peer” metropolitan regions, however, are growing only slowly. Two metropolitan regions of comparable size to Cincinnati — Indianapolis and Columbus — increased their populations, on average, about 1.5 percent a year during the 1990s. The Cincinnati metropolitan region grew at 0.9 percent per year, while Louisville grew at about 0.8 percent per year. St. Louis and Cleveland metropolitan regions grew at less than 0.5 percent per year.

While the Indianapolis region has had the highest average annual growth rate of mid-sized metropolitan areas in the Midwest, it is still much lower than America’s fastest-growing metropolitan area -- Las Vegas, in the Western census region, which had an average annual growth rate of 11 percent per year between 1990 and 2000.

All of these metropolitan regions are similar, however, in that their growth is predominately at the urban fringes. Despite increases in some central counties in the Midwest, rates of metropolitan population growth are still higher in counties adjacent to the central county, with the exception of the Columbus region.

**Why Is This Important?**

Decentralization contributes to greater separation of those with wealth and access to jobs from those without. It is contributing to economic polarization in the region, as the wealthy move to suburbs, while poor and middle-income groups remain in the central city and county. The impacts of decentralization are many, extending from economy of the region to environment, and land use to traffic patterns.

Decentralization of population and businesses are creating new centers of population and employment in the metropolitan region. Longer commutes and increased automobile traffic resulting from dispersion of population are in turn contributing to economic losses due to wasted time and fuel. Commuting patterns for jobs, shopping, and entertainment have changed causing dependency on automobiles, increased congestion and air pollution, and other costs such as traffic accidents.

Decentralization decreases population densities, thereby increasing costs of services and utilities, as infrastructure serves a population distributed over a larger developed area. Public services — such as wastewater treatment, road maintenance, schools, and garbage collection — need to be extended over greater and greater areas, often making provision of those services more expensive.

**Key Indicator:**

- Percent population change in metropolitan area and central county (Figure 7)
Population change is the result of two factors: natural increase (the number of births minus deaths) and net migration (number of in-migrants minus out-migrants). Although Hamilton County is experiencing a decline in birth rates and has higher death rates in older age groups (cohorts), out-migration of residents is the key factor in population loss. Hamilton County has experienced a decline in crude birth rates. In 1950, there were 23 births per 1,000 persons while in 2000 the number dropped to 14 births per 1,000 persons. The crude death rate, on the other hand, has remained fairly steady at the county level at 11 deaths per 1,000 persons in 1950 and 10 deaths per 1,000 persons in 2000 (see Figure 8).

The movement of population has been from the City of Cincinnati outward into Hamilton County, but more recently to neighboring counties. According to the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission’s 1999 report, Spreading Out: The March to the Suburbs, more people are moving out of the County than are moving in. The analysis shows a significant decline in population through migration, with trend lines showing a continuing decline even though the regional economy is strong.

The population decrease in the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County are fundamentally connected with the increasing “suburbanization” of the Cincinnati Metropolitan Region. Figure 9 shows the cumulative population losses between Hamilton County and the other counties of the Cincinnati metropolitan region between 1984 and 2002.

Not surprisingly, the most popular “destination” counties have been Butler, Clermont and Warren, the Ohio metropolitan counties immediately adjacent to Hamilton County. This pattern strongly suggests...
increasing suburbanization along with an increase in commuting to jobs among these counties and Hamilton County.

Figures 10 and 11 show, respectively, the percentage of CMSA residents living in Hamilton County and the percentage of Hamilton County residents living in the City of Cincinnati. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 39 percent of Hamilton County’s residents lived in the City of Cincinnati, compared with just under 80 percent in 1910.

The Cincinnati metropolitan region has also lost population to Southern and Western “Sun Belt” states, particularly Florida and Georgia. According to HCRPC’s 1999 research report Spreading Out: The March to the Suburbs, Hamilton County lost more than 22,000 people to those two states between 1984 and 1997. Many of these migrants moved to other metropolitan areas, such as Atlanta, Miami, and Tampa.

Why Is This Important?

In today’s global economy, where regions compete fiercely to maintain a competitive edge, the size, structure and quality of the resident labor force is held to be a principal factor in growing and retaining economic vitality and quality of life. With a decrease in birth rates along with migration loss, there will be fewer workers in the future to support the dependent population if present trends continue.

Additionally, the expense of providing services to people that are more distant is compounded when persons with higher incomes locate further and further away from the central city or central county. Typically, persons moving to suburbia have the financial wherewithal to do so, and when they move, they take their property earnings tax dollars with them. As fewer tax dollars are allocated to the provision of public services within the central city or county, the quality of the service for those who remain declines or the service is eliminated. Such decline in investment makes redevelopment in the area less likely.

Key Indicator:

- Percent of CMSA residents living in Hamilton County (Figure 10)

![Figure 10: PERCENTAGE OF CMSA RESIDENTS LIVING IN HAMILTON COUNTY, 1910-2000](source)

![Figure 11: PERCENTAGE OF HAMILTON COUNTY RESIDENTS LIVING IN CITY OF CINCINNATI, 1910-2000](source)
Today, many large metropolitan regions in the Western and Southern United States are attracting large numbers of inter-regional migrants from outside their metropolitan regions as well as international migrants from other nations. Areas like Atlanta, Charlotte, Dallas, Denver, Las Vegas, Miami, Portland, and San Francisco attract high percentages of persons who are not native to those areas.

Some Midwestern and Northeastern metropolitan areas also have significant numbers of inter-regional migrants. Examples include Boston, Chicago, Columbus, New York City, and Washington, DC. With the exception of Columbus, these cities are also “Gateway” cities for international migrants, who have long acted as a source of replacement population in central cities.

Hamilton County, and indeed the entire Cincinnati metropolitan region, does not tend to attract a significant percentage of migrants from outside its region. In 1995, Hamilton County attracted 15,285 in-migrants from outside the Cincinnati metropolitan region, which decreased to 14,083 in-migrants in 2002. The suburban counties of Butler, Clermont, and Warren observed a marginal decrease from 19,773 to 19,461 at the same time. Similarly, Hamilton County’s share in total in-migration into CMSA decreased from 29 percent in 1995 to 25 percent in 2002, whereas share of suburban counties increased from 41 percent in 1995 to 44 percent in 2002. Individually, Hamilton County remains the single largest attractor of in-migrants into the region. However, its share is decreasing as more in-migrants are opting for suburban counties.

For people migrating out of Hamilton County, suburban counties remain their favorite destinations. Typically, residents of Hamilton County have stayed here for many years. When they move from Hamilton County, they tend to settle in one of the surrounding counties. Some explanations as to why Hamilton County residents consider moving can be seen in Figure 12 from a survey conducted by HCRPC in 2001. It shows reasons people gave for moving or contemplating moving out of Hamilton County.

Figure 13 shows the trends in net population loss or gain to Hamilton County through both intra-regional migration and inter-regional migration as measured by the annual Internal Revenue Service (IRS) County-to-County migration flow data sets. Most strikingly, Hamilton County’s net loss of population to the surrounding metropolitan counties...
is large, and apparently getting larger every year. While net losses of population to other U.S. counties are much lower, and less predictable, they are still losses.

Hamilton County also does not have a high degree of “churning” — with large numbers of people moving into and around the metropolitan area, and fewer people moving out of it. This “churning” can be measured by the “throughput index.” According to Dowell Myers and Lee Menifee11, “throughput” is “the number of people who passed through [an area] by migration, birth, and death.”12 The “throughput index” essentially measures turnover. When the index is above 100, there is a high degree of churning — that is, lots of migration and/or births and deaths. When it is below 100, the population is more stable and aging in place.

In 2000, the County had a throughput index of 98.8, indicating stabilization of throughput during the 1990s. This decrease is largely attributed to a leveling-off of births and deaths, with migration out of the County outpacing migration into it. The proportion of different age-cohorts (age groups) in the total population also remained the same during 1990 and 2000 indicating stability of the population. However, there was a decrease in every age-cohort during the 1990s, mainly due to migration out of the County (Figure 14).13

According to the place of residence data from Census 2000, between 1995 and 2000 more than 80 percent of out-migrants were Whites. Blacks made up 11.5 percent of the out-migrants. In terms of educational attainment, high school graduates, persons with some college but no degree, and persons with a bachelor’s degree each made up 20 percent or more of the total out-migrants. Persons with graduate and professional degrees comprised 16 percent of total out-migrants, whereas persons educated up to twelfth grade and without a diploma made up about 10 percent of the total out-migrants. This indicates that educated and skilled persons form the largest group of out-migrants from Hamilton County.

**Why Is This Important?**

Persons between the ages of 22 and 34 are commonly referred to as members of the “entrepreneurial co-
hort.” These age cohorts are considered very important in contributing to the economic prosperity of places and regions. It is thought that of all age groups, members of this group are most likely to take risks and start new ventures. Additionally, this group will contain most of the newly graduated “talent” and “knowledge” workers in an area – those whose recent training is on the cutting edge of new technology and science skills and practices.

From 1990 to 2000, Hamilton County lost about half of that talent pool. Similarly, within the CMSA Counties, Hamilton County experienced maximum loss of the entrepreneurial age group during the 1990s (Figure 15). This trend is likely to continue in the future, as Hamilton County is projected to experience a decline of some 20,000 persons who are currently aged 10-19 years over the next two decades (Figure 16).

This decreasing trend is observed in populations, who are young and are of working age. Since many “new economy” businesses and their talent pools can locate practically anywhere and operate efficiently, the regions that are attracting younger in-migrants are marketing themselves, much like products. Places that do not offer anything unique are often overlooked, and it can be problematic for such places to overcome such an image when attempting to attract in-migrants.

Hamilton County’s inability to retain these upwardly mobile workers and to market itself as unique could pose a serious problem in the years ahead. As more and more people move away, and as persons who remain “age in place,” the County may have to provide an increasing number of social services with decreasing revenues.

**Key Indicators:**

- *Throughput indices and age group changes (Figure 14)*
- *Population change in “entrepreneurial cohort” (Figure 15)*
- *Education levels of workers (U.S. Census Bureau)*

---

**Figure 15**

**POPULATION CHANGE IN 22-34 YEARS AGE COHORT IN CMSA COUNTIES, 1990-2000**

Source: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, U.S. Census Bureau

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**Figure 16**

**PROJECTED POPULATION OF HAMILTON COUNTY RESIDENTS BY AGE, 2010-2020**

Note: The table should be read in stepped fashion rather than straight across; teens in 2000 will become twenties in 2010.

Source: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, U.S. Census Bureau
With advances in medical care and technology, Americans are living longer than at any time in this country’s history. According to the Census Bureau, once an American reaches the age of retirement at 65, he or she can expect to live, on average, another 17 years.\(^\text{15}\)

Since 1980, the proportion of Hamilton County residents aged 60 years and over has hovered around 17 percent. Starting around 2010, however, the number of older persons in the County will begin climbing sharply. This coming spike is due to the aging of the “Baby Boom” generation - that group of people born from 1946-1964, following World War II. By 2020, the proportion of older aged persons will increase, and population aged 60 years and over will make up more than 20 percent of the total population.

As shown in the “population pyramid” in Figure 17, 40 to 45 year-olds comprise the largest percentage of population in Hamilton County in 2000, and by 2020, many will start entering retirement age. As this age group continues to increase, there will be more demand on workers to fund important social programs used by seniors, such as Social Security. One way to measure this is with a “dependency ratio” that measures number of dependent persons per 100 persons of working age.\(^\text{16}\)

For Hamilton County, the dependency ratio for 2000 was 53.6, compared to 51.9 in the 1980s. By this measure, the number of dependents has increased per 100 working age population. Currently, Hamilton County retains about two-thirds of its inhabitants who move into the “Senior Citizen” age group (that is, including and above age 65). Research finds that most retirees choose to stay where they are, or “age in place.” Those who do not, and who choose to move to a different state, tend to have “few attachments or ‘moorings’” to the place where they currently live, and tend to possess greater economic resources.\(^\text{17}\)
The median age of Hamilton County’s population increased from 30 years in 1980 to 35.5 years in 2000, showing a shift towards an aging population (Figure 18). In 2000, median age in suburban counties in CMSA has remained around 33 to 35 years, with a maximum median age of 38.4 years in Ohio County, Indiana.

**Why Is This Important?**

As the percentage of senior citizens increases in the coming decades, changes will appear in many different areas including real estate, industry, and other economic sectors. Likewise, political and social priorities will have to be shifted. Increasing need for social and medical services, residential facilities, and recreational activities geared to older Americans will affect our society. Already there is considerable debate occurring on the future of Medicare and Social Security — two programs that predominately serve people over the age of 65. As Americans continue to live longer lives, and as fewer numbers of 20 to 64 year-olds enter the workforce due to declining birthrates, these two social programs are projected to be unsustainable in their current form.

These national trends are not lost on Hamilton County. Currently, there are a variety of local agencies that connect older residents — particularly those who are poorer — with housing, food services, medical care, employment, home repair, and other social services. As it is likely that a large percentage of our population will age in place, local agencies will have to respond to the surge in service demand. The extent to which state and local agencies will be able to help institutions like Job and Family Services, the Council on Aging, and Senior advocacy groups in providing these services will depend — at least in part — on actions taken at the federal level on Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security. Other related impacts may follow such as an increased need for nursing homes and health facilities.

**Key Indicators:**

- **Dependency ratios**  
  (see page 11)
- **Median age**  
  (Figure 18)
- **Percent of population over age 65**  
  (U.S. Census Bureau)

---

**Figure 18**

POPULATION MEDIAN AGE IN HAMILTON COUNTY, 1980-2000

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<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
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<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>35.5</td>
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</table>

Source: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, U.S. Census Bureau
FINDING 5
HAMILTON COUNTY’S POPULATION IS BECOMING MORE RACIALLY DIVERSE.

While other racial and ethnic groups have been increasing their numbers in Hamilton County over the past three decades, the White population continues to decrease. As in many central cities throughout the U.S., Whites began leaving the City of Cincinnati in large numbers during the 1950s, and began leaving the County in the 1970s. This phenomenon has become known as “White Flight,” and continues even into the first decade of the 21st Century.

As Whites moved out, the Black population increased. Since 1980, Blacks have increased their percentage of Hamilton County’s population on average of one percent per year. Though the County has also witnessed population increases in American Indian, Latino, and Asian groups, the bulk of Hamilton County’s population is either White or Black (Figure 19). U.S. Census Bureau identifies White, Black or African-American, Asian, American-Indian or Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander as races with people having origins to different parts of the world. Hispanic or Latino is identified as an ethnicity, which is a broader concept.

Figure 19
PERCENT POPULATION BY RACE IN HAMILTON COUNTY, 1980-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>471</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>275</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 20
SEGREGATION INDEX, 2000

- 0.00 - 0.2 Very Low
- 0.21 - 0.4 Low
- 0.41 - 0.6 Medium
- 0.61 - 0.8 High
- 0.81 - 1.0 Very High

Note: Level of geography is census blocks.

Source: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, U.S. Census Bureau
encompassing culture, arts, language, food, clothing, religion, and other characteristics.

Whites and Blacks in Hamilton County are largely geographically separated. Communities within the County, where Whites and Blacks reside in equal numbers are rare. According to U.S. Census Data, Hamilton County’s population is highly segregated. As demonstrated in Figure 20, the “Segregation Index” calculates how racially diverse an area is. If an area is populated with persons who all identify with the same racial or ethnic group, the area scores a 1. If there are equal representations of various ethnic groups living in a place, the area scores zero. The higher the score, the more racially or ethically homogeneous a place is.

The Cincinnati metropolitan region is among the most segregated of the largest American metropolitan areas according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Using data from the 1980, 1990, and 2000 Censuses, the Bureau found that between Whites and Blacks, Greater Cincinnati experienced the ninth lowest change in the Dissimilarity Index during 1980-2000. In other words, residential segregation between Blacks and Whites has marginally improved during 1980 to 2000. Figure 21 shows ranking of peer metropolitan areas in terms of change in the Dissimilarity Index during 1980 to 2000.

The Bureau of Census has forecast that by 2020, Blacks will comprise 28 percent of Hamilton County’s population, and Whites will comprise 65 percent. If wealth and resources continue to be disproportionately concentrated in areas with predominately White populations, the promise of economic mobility may be even more difficult for Blacks and other ethnic minorities to attain.

The decreasing number of Whites and the increasing number of Blacks does not necessarily mean that the County will see increased segregation, however. Indeed, today the very notion of “race” is changing from its traditionally static categories. In the 2000 Census, the Census Bureau allowed persons to select one or more races to identify themselves. Though many in the country identified themselves as “White” or “Black,” 2.4 percent of Americans — some 6.8 million people — identified themselves as being of two or more races (Figure 22). Persons who identify themselves as a member of two or more racial groups make up a little more than one percent of Hamilton County’s total population.

Hamilton County’s Asian and Hispanic populations are also increasing. From 1990 to 2000, the Asian population grew 34 percent. Most Hamilton County residents in this racial group trace their roots to India and China. The County’s Hispanic population doubled in size, though it is still little more than one percent of the total population. Today, more than half of the persons who identified themselves as Hispanic in Hamilton County trace their roots to

**Figure 21**

**RANKING OF METROPOLITAN AREAS BY PERCENT CHANGE IN DISSIMILARITY INDEX FOR WHITE AND BLACK AMERICANS, 1980-2000**

Note: Metropolitan Area experiencing lowest change receives the highest rank.

Source: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, U.S. Census Bureau

**Figure 22**

**RACIAL COUNT, U.S. AND HAMILTON COUNTY, 2000**

Source: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, U.S. Census Bureau

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>United States Number</th>
<th>United States Percent</th>
<th>Hamilton County Number</th>
<th>Hamilton County Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One race</td>
<td>274,595,678</td>
<td>97.6</td>
<td>834,174</td>
<td>98.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>211,460,626</td>
<td>75.1</td>
<td>616,487</td>
<td>72.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>34,658,190</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>198,061</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>10,242,998</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>13,602</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and Alaska Native</td>
<td>2,475,956</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1,481</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander</td>
<td>389,835</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some other race</td>
<td>15,359,073</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>4,301</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>6,826,228</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>11,129</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mexico (Figure 23).

Although most of America’s Hispanic population is concentrated in the Southwestern United States, their numbers are increasing all over the country. Hispanics are the largest ethnic minority group in the United States and are the fastest growing. By the Year 2050, the Census Bureau projects there will be some 80 million Hispanics in the country.20

Why Is This Important?

Racial and ethnic diversity does much to change the physical and cultural landscape of cities. Political and economic systems often change as people from different backgrounds live within proximity to each other. The number and character of cultural events, educational programs, and even building styles also are likely to change.

Moreover, Blacks and Hispanics tend to be poorer and tend to have larger families than their White counterparts. Increasing numbers of Blacks and Hispanics are graduating from high school, though far fewer go on to earn a college degree than Whites.

According to the March 2000 Current Population Survey of the U.S. issued by the Census Bureau, 10.6 percent of Hispanics of any race over the age of 25, and 16.6 percent of non-Hispanic Blacks in the same age group earned a Bachelor’s degree or more. Among non-Hispanic Whites over the age of 25, 28.1 percent earned a Bachelor’s degree or more, while 43.9 percent of Asian-Americans did so (Figure 24).21 An examination of education rates is important in that such rates are useful indicators of a region’s future economic success.

The household median income by race varies to a considerable degree in Hamilton County. According to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau, median household annual income in 1999 dollars for White households was $46,871. For Hispanic households it was $34,733. For Black households it was $25,074. In Hamilton County, the median income of White households is more than the median income of $42,835 at the State level. However, median income of Black households in Hamilton County is less than the Black household median income of $26,619 at the State level. In household income, White households in Hamilton County are generally faring better than the state average, whereas Black households are doing less well.

Not only do many minority households earn less than the state average income, poor households are also geographically concentrated in the core area of Hamilton County. Census block groups, which are 25 percent above the County average22 in below-poverty-level households, are predominantly located in the City of Cincinnati and a few communities in Hamilton County (Figure 25).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race (25 Years and Over)</th>
<th>Bachelor’s Degree or Higher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic of any Race</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Hispanic Blacks</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Hispanic Whites</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Americans/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Hamilton County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>281,421,906</td>
<td>845,303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hispanic or Latino (of any race)</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Hamilton County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>35,305,818</td>
<td>9,514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mexican</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Hamilton County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>20,640,711</td>
<td>5,944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Puerto Rican</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Hamilton County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>3,406,178</td>
<td>1,304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cuban</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Hamilton County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>1,241,685</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Hamilton County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>10,017,244</td>
<td>3,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Hispanic or Latino</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>Hamilton County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>246,116,088</td>
<td>835,789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>98.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, U.S. Census Bureau

Source: Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, U.S. Census Bureau
The distribution of population below the poverty level by census block groups indicates that jurisdictions in Hamilton County have some level of poverty, with part of some of the first suburbs having poverty levels 6 percent and above (Figure 26). There are few areas in the inner city which have poverty levels of 40 percent and more. Experts have identified those areas as extreme poverty areas. Similarly, areas having poverty levels between 20 percent and 40 percent are transitional areas, which could convert to extreme poverty areas if not supported.

Despite these disparities in education and income, Hamilton County’s increasing racial and ethnic diversity will be helpful in
positioning the County for future economic vitality, as persons in younger age cohorts are often attracted to areas with diverse populations.24

However, issues of socio-economic class — not just skin color and cultural heritage — play an important role in an area’s economic success. Despite the increasing racial diversity that could be celebrated, racial, ethnic and economic segregation remains — as well as the crime, blight, and depression that often accompany them.

An entrenched socio-economic separation is not a foregone conclusion, however. As the economy continues to grow and change, there is little doubt that Blacks and Hispanics will continue to make educational and economic strides. However — as its inhabitants becomes increasingly diverse — Hamilton County will have to find new ways of accommodating its population po-

Key Indicators

- Segregation index (Figure 20)
- Percentage of mixed-race persons (Figure 22)
- Percentage of ethnic minorities (Figure 23)
- Educational attainment by race, age, and sex (Figure 24)
Accurate projection of future population changes enables communities to successfully plan for schools, housing, transportation, and other community services. A variety of methods can be used to estimate future population change. One of the most prevalently used is the cohort-component method, which has been the basis for projections made by the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) for each of the Ohio counties and by HCRPC for Hamilton County. OKI uses the ODOD projections as their official projections for the Ohio portions of the region. Another method recently used by HCRPC for assessing population trends uses a state of the art econometric model called REMI – Regional Economic Model, Inc.

The traditional cohort-component method divides the existing population into age and sex cohorts (groups) and based on cohort-specific birth and death rates as well as migration, projects each cohort population to the next decade. Specific factors unique to each cohort are considered in the model. For example, projections for females in the 15-49 age cohorts are treated differently for each five or ten year segment with regard to varying fertility rates. Despite estimations of births, deaths, and migration for every cohort, the cohort-component method relies on historic patterns and trends rather than current and evolving cause and effect relationships. Hence, if an area loses population as Hamilton County has done since 1970, the cohort-based forecast shows a continuation of the historical decrease in the population.

A more sophisticated alternative method of population forecasting is possible with the REMI model, which is a dynamic model based on the concepts of econometrics, economic geography, and input-output analysis. Using forecasts and data available from organizations such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and the U.S. Census Bureau, REMI has a solid basis for accurate projections. The model is based on extensive research on cause and effect as well as interrelationships among sectors of the economy, labor market, migration, population, exports, imports, and fiscal variables. Comprised of hundreds of mathematical equations, the REMI model prepares a yearly economic profile including population up to the year 2035 by using thousands of economic variables. As a dynamic model, REMI uses forecasts of economic variables and population for one year as inputs for forecasting the next year. This makes REMI different than static economic models in which forecasting is limited to only one year and cannot be used as an input for the next year. REMI is also a structural model in that it accounts for all the industrial sectors and components of economy while arriving at a forecast. Many organizations in the United States, including state governments, regional planning commissions, regional planning councils, research organizations, and universities, as well as the European Union, now are using this model.

A comparison of the population projections from the three methods is shown in Figures 27 and 28. The difference in the HCRPC and ODOD projections is due in part to slightly different methodologies for the cohort-component analysis. Compared to ODOD, HCRPC projected age and sex cohorts separately for Whites, Blacks, and other races. Moreover,
projections by HCRPC are for ten-year cohorts rather than the five-year cohorts used by ODOD. Projections using the cohort-component method and the REMI model all show Hamilton County continuing its population loss through 2010. From a population of 845,303 in 2000, it is estimated that the County will lose anywhere from 33,755 to nearly 70,000 persons by 2010. The cohort-component methods continue the population losses through 2020 and 2030.

Contrary to the cohort-component projection, though, the REMI forecast shows a stabilization in population loss after 2010, reversal by 2020 (2014 in particular), and a net increase in population of Hamilton County by 2030. According to economic forecasts by REMI, the competitive advantages of industries in Hamilton County relative to the U.S. will improve after the "bad years" have reduced the costs of production. Major factors anticipated by the REMI model to turn the population curve for Hamilton County are:

- Unique geographical location and different transportation modes that will increase access to labor supply and raw materials, further increasing productivity for traditionally stronger sectors such as fabricated metal, primary metal, motor vehicle components, textile, paper, printing, petrochemical etc. The County is forecast to perform well because of its industrial composition, which means the rates of growth in the local industrial sectors will exceed the national average.
- Reduced costs of production will make prices competitive relative to the nation, further improving wage rates. The County is forecast to have a higher average wage rate than the other suburban counties of the OKI Region.

### Figure 27
**POPULATION CENSUS AND PROJECTIONS FOR HAMILTON COUNTY, 1900-2030**

Source: US Census Bureau, ODOD, Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, Regional Economic Model, Inc.

### Figure 28
**POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR HAMILTON COUNTY, 2010-2030**

Note: REMI uses census mid-year July 1 population instead of April 1 estimate to match the BLS and BEA data.

Source: ODOD, OKI 2030 Regional Transportation Plan, Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, Regional Economic Model, Inc.
Why is This Important?

Similar to many central counties in the U.S., Hamilton County has been losing population over the past decades. Loss of residents typically creates a reduction in the tax base, less than optimum usage of existing infrastructure, and abandoned properties. As population densities are reduced, public transportation becomes less economical and school enrollment declines. At the same time, increasing burdens of infrastructure costs and maintenance are passed along to the remaining residents.

Although the State (Ohio Department of Development), OKI, and HCRPC’s projections show continued decline of Hamilton County’s population, REMI’s differing view can be backed by the tremendous sophistication of this dynamic and widely-accepted model. The REMI forecast showing a reversal in population loss in Hamilton County by 2014 will have positive impacts on the County, as well as local and regional economies. According to REMI, the County’s 2030 anticipated population of 862,531 will exceed the 2000 population by 17,288 persons.

An increase in population causes an increase in the demand of goods and services, creating additional markets for local businesses and firms. In fact, local consumption of goods and services forms a large part of the economic base of any region. The increased local demand causes higher output in industries creating new jobs and workforce demand. Interestingly, an increase in population also expands the local labor force, fulfilling some part of that new employment.

Governments, as well as civic and private sector organizations, will benefit from advance planning for the impacts of population increases expected after 2014. Strategic actions are still obviously needed to mitigate Hamilton County’s continuing population loss over the next ten years. At the same time, however, we should also plan for growth in the second half of the next decade. Recognition of this unusual trend can position the County in a more advantageous position. Our County and region’s economy, transportation, infrastructure, education, housing, and a host of community systems and services can be strengthened by understanding and building on the key factors driving current population loss and the expected resurgence of growth.

Key Indicator:

- Hamilton County population estimates, projections, and forecasts (Figure 28)
1. Hamilton County excluding Cincinnati includes 48 jurisdictions comprised of townships and incorporated areas.

2. Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area for Cincinnati includes counties of: Butler, Brown, Clermont, Hamilton, and Warren in OH; Boone, Campbell, Gallatin, Grant, Kenton, and Pendleton in KY; and Dearborn and Ohio in IN.


4. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Accounts estimates total employment as full time plus part time employment by place of work.


6. The states of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin comprised the Census Bureau’s definition of “Midwest” in the 2000 Census.


8. Population loss in both central county and region-wide is still rather rare in the US.


10. These are commonly called “inter-regional” migrants, while those who move around within the metropolitan area are called “intra-regional migrants.”


12. Throughput is calculated as: \[((i+o+b+d)/P_x)*100, \] where \(i=\) in-migration, \(o=\) out-migration, \(b=\) births, \(d=\) deaths, and \(P_x=\) estimated average population for the decade “\(x\).” See Dowell and Menifee, p. 79, op. cit.

13. Figure shows change in absolute numbers when a younger cohort in 1990 aged in 2000.

14. See Dowell Myers and Lee Menifee’s article on Population Analysis in The Practice of Local Government Planning. This method is also known as Cohort Trajectory, showing absolute changes in an age cohort in a decade.


16. Total Dependency Ratio is a ratio between dependent population (less than 15 and greater than or equal to 65 years of age) to working age (between 15 and 65 years of age) population expressed as a percentage. Dependency Ratio = \((<15 + \geq 65) / (15 to < 65)\)*100.


18. U.S. Census Bureau defines Dissimilarity Index as the percentage of one group that would have to change residence in order to produce an even distribution.


22. OKI 2030 Regional Transportation Plan identifies 25 percent above the regional average as a threshold for population in poverty to assess community impacts.

23. Myron Orfield, Paul Jargowsky, Kasarda, and other experts have identified places having 40 percent or more population below poverty level as ghettos or areas of extreme poverty.

The following Community COMPASS reports are components of Hamilton County’s Comprehensive Master Plan and Strategies. The reports are available at the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission and can be downloaded at www.communitycompass.org.

2. The Community Values Survey (Jan. 2001)
3. Special Research Reports
   3-1. Inventory of Research (2002)
   3-2. Conflicting Views on Suburbanization (Sept. 1999)
   3-7. Census 2000 Community Profiles: Political Jurisdictions of Hamilton County
7. Hamilton County Data Book (Feb. 2002)
10. Steering Team Recommendations on The Vision for Hamilton County’s Future (Jan. 2002)
12. The Vision for Hamilton County’s Future (Brochure) (Feb. 2003)
13. Initiatives and Strategies
15. Population
   15-1 Summary Report (Nov. 2004)
16. State of the County Reports (Key trends, Issues, and Community Indicators) (Nov. 2004)
   16-1 Civic Engagement and Social Capital
   16-2 Community Services
   16-3 Culture and Recreation
   16-4 Economy and Labor Market
   16-5 Education
   16-6 Environment
   16-7 Environmental and Social Justice
   16-8 Governance
   16-9 Health and Human Services
   16-10 Housing
   16-11 Land Use and Development Framework
   16-12 Mobility
   16-13 Executive Summary
17. 2030 Plan and Implementation Framework (Nov. 2004)