

SECTION VI WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT AND AVAILABILITY CAMDEN COUNTY

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 10/13/2004

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

A review of the recent demographic data relevant to the workforce of Camden County was done for the purpose of providing background for use by those considering location decisions in the county. The population of the five-county area around and including Camden County is about 135,000. The employed workforce in the county is approximately 17,349, of which about 85% reside here. Population growth has increased in the 80's and 90's but may be slowing to about the same annual rate as that of the state, projected to be 3.1%. The predominant sectors of the industrial base of the county are Services, Government, and Retail. Compared to the statewide averages, mean wages are about \$130.00 less than the statewide average, and the rate of wage growth is slower. Average age is younger, unemployment is less, and the percentage of Camden County residents that have completed high school, when compared to statewide averages, is superior. These summary statements are amplified in the sections that follow.

POPULATION

The population of Camden County was 13,371 in 1980, according to the US Census, increasing to 30,167 in 1990, a jump primarily attributed to the establishment of NSBKB in the 1980's, to 43,664 in 2000 (3), 44,702 in 2002 (2), and to 45,407 in 2003 (8). The rate of annual population increase during that 20+-year period was 3.2%, compared to the statewide annual rate of 1.5% (3). Growth in Camden county is projected to average 3.1% from 2003 to 2008, with population in 2008 projected to be 54,824 (5). The US Census Bureau published a list of 560 towns in 2003 that carry a new designation, that of Micropolitan Statistical Area (9). St. Marys (and by inclusion, Camden County) was included on that list, which identified urban clusters having at least 10,000, but fewer than 50,000 residents (9). According to the Bureau, 86% of the US population lives in metropolitan areas, while 10% live in the newly designated Micropolitan areas.

Total population within the county increased 2.37%, from 43,664 to 44,702, in the period 2000 to 2002, or 1.8% annualized, based upon data derived from Census2000 and updated figures from administrative records from the individual areas (7). The increase was not uniform, as may be seen in Table 1. Note that St. Marys had the greatest population increase while Woodbine and the unincorporated area of the county declined.

Location	2000	2002	% change
Unincorporated	18,179	17,430	-4.12
Kingsland	10,506	10,990	+4.61
St. Marys	13,761	15,103	+9.75
Woodbine	1,218	1,179	-3.20 (7)

Population Change Table 1

The southeast Georgia coast experienced an increase in total population during the 2000 - 2002 timeframe, led by Glynn County, going from 67,568 to 69,036 (2.1%), followed closely by the city of St. Marys which increased from 13,761 to 15,103 (9.75%) (7).

LABOR FORCE DIMENSIONS

The following sections describe the characteristics of that population that are employed or employable, and of those that travel into Camden County to work , in an attempt to depict an empirical description of the labor force in Camden County.

Commuters

The employed civilian labor force in Camden County in 2000 totaled 19,928, of which 16,357 resided in the county, The remainder of the workforce, 3,571, commuted from surrounding counties, particularly from Nassau and Duval counties in Florida, with a contribution of 9.2%, and from Charlton and Glynn counties in Georgia (4.3%) (2). Slightly more Camden residents, 4082, or 24%, commuted to jobs outside the county in 2000. It is expected that these trends remain approximately stable today. The size of the population in the surrounding counties from which Camden County might draw upon for its workforce was 136,143 in 2000, and estimated to be 139,331 in 2002, a 2.4% increase in that period, about the same as that for Camden County in those two years, at 2.3% (2).

Gender, Age, and Race

Composition of the civilian workforce of Camden County in 2000, with an estimated population of 16,495 (1), and expressed by race and gender, contained 41% white males, 38% white females, 10.5% black females, and 8.5% black males, with the Hispanic proportion unspecified. In 2002, 68.5% of Camden County residents were 18 years of age or older and 5.5% were age 65 or older (3). Assumptions that the workforce in Camden County is somewhat younger than that throughout Georgia are supported. The proportion of residents age 18 or below in 2000 (4), the pool from which future members of the workforce might come, was 31.7%, a bit younger than the statewide average of 26.5%. The 2000 statewide average rate was 9.6% for those ages 65 or older (4).

Education

From 1996 to 2000, the Camden County school system reported a dropout rate of 8.7% in grades 9 thru 12, compared to a statewide average of 6.8% for the same period (4). But that problem is improving. Of the 9465 children enrolled in the County education system in 2001-02 school year, 158, (5.7%), dropped out of grades 9-12, compared to the statewide rate of 5.8% (3). Based on the 2000 graduating class for the Camden County school system, 59.3% of the students were eligible for the HOPE scholarship program, compared to a statewide average of 57.7% (4). The HOPE program is lottery-funded and merit-based, available for eligible students to attend a post-secondary school in Georgia. In the fiscal year 2002, a total of \$1.22 million dollars was invested in 731 HOPE scholars from Camden County. Of this group, 625 currently attended universities, 60 attended technical schools, and 46 attended private colleges (3).

Of the 478 graduates during 2001 - 2002 from the Camden County public school system, 304 (63%) carried a college preparatory endorsement on their diplomas. Of those so qualified, 190 (42%) entered College, and 57 went on to Technical or Adult Education programs. (3), p.50. Several college satellite programs have recently come to Camden County, and serve both young adults, those seeking new careers, and the growing retiree population in Camden County. For more information and detailed descriptions of the educational opportunities in the county, the interested reader is directed to the *County-wide Educational Opportunities in section X of this Community Resource Studies report.*

Occupations / Industries

The predominant employment sectors within Camden County during 2000 were within the Services category, at 31.4%, followed by Government (22.6%) and retail trade (21.7%). At that time, government employment consisted of 2320 federal positions, 191 state, and 2116 local government positions, totaling 4627 employed by government (4).

Military employment, a separate category, contained 5200 persons of age 16 and older in 2000 (4).

Private sector employment in the county had fallen to 9,057 in 2002 (based on reporting by companies to the Georgia Department of Labor) principally due to the closure of a large mill run by a major employer. The firms providing goods and services in the private sector industrial mix of Camden County in 2002 (2) were primarily doing business in the following sectors: retail (133); hotel and food services (87); construction (82); and, professional (66) (2). The most identified occupational categories including government were, in order;

Management and professional	4,594
Sales and office occupations	4,062
Service occupations	3,231
Production and transportation	2,333
Construction and maintenance	2,233 (2)

It should be noted here that two new employers have situated in Camden County, Express Scripts, with up to 650 jobs, and Concrete Pole. Each will increase the active workforce of the county, and offers new employment opportunities. For more information pertaining to Express Scripts follow this link.
<http://www.hoovers.com/free/co/factsheet.xhtml?COID=15773>

Wages

In 2000, census data reported the average weekly wage for all employment sectors in Camden County was \$515.00, compared to a statewide average of \$622.00 (4). By 2002, wages had increased. Table 2 compares mean wages (\$) in Camden County, the Camden Area and Georgia, between two sectors of the industrial workforce:

	Camden County	Camden Area	Georgia
All Industry (\$)	\$557.	\$531.	\$687.
Private Industry	\$493	\$481.	-
Government	\$681.	\$689.	- (2)

**Mean Average Weekly Wages
Table 2**

Another expression of earned income describes the *per capita* personal income in Camden County. It was reported to be \$17,398 in 1998, from which it increased at an annual rate of 3.2% to \$20,366 in 2003, and is projected to increase at an annual rate of 2.6% to \$23,206 in 2008. By comparison, the annual rate of increase of the statewide *per capita* personal income was 4.0%, with an average of \$25,447 in 1998 to \$30,899 in 2003. Statewide *per capita* personal income from 2003 to 2008 is projected to increase annually at 4.3% (5). Glynn County *per capita* income is projected to increase at a rate of 4.7% over that same five year span.

Unemployment

Recent annual rates of unemployment as a function of workforce size within Camden County were 3.2% (1,012) in Census 2000; 3.6% in 2001 (3); 4.4% in 2002 (2) (an increase perhaps due largely to the closure of the Durango-Georgia mill); and 3.6% in 2003 (6). For the state of Georgia, the corresponding unemployment rates were 3.7%, 4.0%, and 5.1% for 2000 thru 2002 (3). Note that there were discrepancies in the available unemployment data, some of which were presented here.

References:

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7. Josh Rayburn, Coast is gaining people., The Brunswick News, date unknown, 2003.
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9. James Nix, Saint Marys has a new Designation., p.1, Tribune and Georgian, 14 July 2004.