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Community Analysis

A COMMUNITY ANALYSIS OF FAYETTEVILLE, GEORGIA

INTRODUCTION:

Fayetteville, Georgia was established in 1823 as the county seat of Fayette County. Both the city and county were named for the Marquis de Lafayette. The total size of the city is 9.98 square miles.¹ The surrounding area is officially considered unincorporated Fayette County, but some statistics may list unincorporated areas as part of Fayetteville.

The old Fayette County Courthouse, located in the center of the town square, is the oldest courthouse in Georgia.² Most of the buildings surrounding the courthouse date back to the 1890s and early 1900s.³ Fayetteville residents are proud of their history and traditions, and the city has made a push in recent years to revitalize the downtown area. Additions have included murals, renovation of historic houses and buildings, and the creation of a welcome center. In 1996, the city was named a Georgia Main Street City. Interesting geographical features of the community are limited to several lakes within the city limits. Two tiny parks can be found within the city and three full size parks with sporting fields are located just outside the city limits.

Because Fayetteville is the county seat, many of Fayette County's government offices and services are located within the city. The downtown area houses a large government complex which is home to important departments and services, including the county health department, extension service, and parks and recreation department.

¹ City of Fayetteville. <http://fayetteville.georgia.gov>

² The New Georgia Encyclopedia: Fayetteville. <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org>

³ City of Fayetteville History. <http://www.fayetteville-ga.gov>

FAYETTEVILLE POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS:

General Population:

The 2000 census gives the population of the city of Fayetteville as 11,148.⁴ Fayetteville's operating budget for FY 2010 listed the population as 15,126.⁵ In 2000, the Fayetteville Comprehensive Plan calculated population projections using an annual 6% population increase. This would give a population of 26,718 by 2015. The projection for 2010, however, was 19,965, which is significantly higher than the actual (2009) population indicated in the FY 2010 operating budget.⁶ In fact, the most current comprehensive plan, updated in 2006, states "The previously rapid population growth has diminished over the last 10 years, and is likely to be slower over the next decade."⁷ Projections from this plan include an increase in the number of adults over the age of 45 as well as a decrease in average household size due to "empty nesters," single adults, and childless couples."⁷ The median age of Fayetteville citizens is 36.1 years.⁴ 70.3% of the population is at least 21 years old, and 13.2% of the total population is 65 years or older.⁴ Complete population breakdown by age from the 2000 census is listed below in Table 1.⁴

Table 1

Age	Number	Percent
Under 5 years	746	6.7
5 to 9 years	858	7.7
10 to 14 years	861	7.7
15 to 19 years	733	6.6
20 to 24 years	582	5.2
25 to 34 years	1,595	14.3
35 to 44 years	1,941	17.4
45 to 54 years	1,516	13.6
55 to 59 years	484	4.3
60 to 64 years	355	3.2
65 to 74 years	654	5.9
75 to 84 years	585	5.2
85 years and over	238	2.1

⁴ 2000 census data for Fayetteville. <http://factfinder.census.gov>

⁵ FY 2010 Budget. <http://www.fayetteville-ga.gov>

⁶ Fayette County Comprehensive Plan. http://www.fayettecountygga.gov/planning_and_zoning

⁷ Comprehensive Plan. <http://www.fayetteville-ga.gov>

Households:⁸

In 2000, there were 4,338 households in the city of Fayetteville, and the average household size was 2.48 persons. Of these households, 1,148 included children under the age of 18. Nineteen percent of households with children (315 total) were single-parent households, and 71.2% (1,179 total) were married-couple households. Only 24 grandparents were listed as being responsible for their grandchildren under the age of 18. The majority of housing units (70.3%) were owner occupied. The city population is fairly stable and is not subject to seasonal fluctuations.

Race, Ethnicity, and Language:

The major races identified in the 2000 census were White, with 8,967 individuals or 80.4% of the population, and Black or African American, with 1,557 individuals or 14% of the population.⁸ County data from 2000 and 2008 indicates that the percentage of African Americans in Fayette County has increased from 11.6% to 19.6%.⁹ It is very likely that the city of Fayetteville has experienced a comparable percentage increase. Additional races as reported from the census are listed below in Table 2.⁸ Census data also reported 310 Hispanic or Latino individuals in Fayetteville, for 2.8% of the population.⁸ This is nearly identical to the county percentage for the year 2000 (2.83%), so we may assume that the 2007 county percentage of 4.0% Hispanic or Latino is similar to the city percentage.⁹ The 2000 census reported that 732 individuals speak a language other than English at home. Of these, 289 spoke Spanish, 230 spoke Indo-European languages (other than Spanish), and 126 spoke Asian and Pacific-Island languages.⁸

⁸ 2000 census data for Fayetteville. <http://factfinder.census.gov>

⁹ Georgia Statistics System. <http://www.georgiastats.uga.edu>

Table 2

Race	Number	Percent
One race	11,027	98.9
White	8,967	80.4
Black or African American	1,557	14.0
American Indian and Alaska Native	25	0.2
Asian	371	3.3
Asian Indian	148	1.3
Chinese	59	0.5
Filipino	40	0.4
Japanese	19	0.2
Korean	47	0.4
Vietnamese	13	0.1
Other Asian	45	0.4
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	1	0.0
Some other race	106	1.0
Two or more races	121	1.1

Education:

Overall, the residents of Fayetteville have a fairly high level of education. Of adults 25 and older, 90.7% have graduated from high school or obtained a GED, and 38.7% have a college degree of some type (associate, bachelor's, graduate, or professional).¹⁰ Table 3 below lists educational attainment levels from the 2000 census.¹⁰

Table 3

Educational Attainment	Number	Percent
Population 25 years and over	7,666	100.0
Less than 9th grade	214	2.8
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	496	6.5
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	1,953	25.5
Some college, no degree	2,034	26.5
Associate degree	566	7.4
Bachelor's degree	1,496	19.5
Graduate or professional degree	907	11.8
Percent high school graduate or higher	90.7	(X)
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	31.3	(X)

Employment:

Many residents work outside of the city of Fayetteville. Some may work in nearby Peachtree City, but a majority of Fayette County residents work outside of the county. The city is

¹⁰ 2000 census data for Fayetteville. <http://factfinder.census.gov>

located approximately 22 miles from the center of Atlanta, and many residents commute to the city for work. In 2000, 62.5% of Fayette County residents worked outside of Fayette County, with 49.2% of residents working in Clayton, Coweta, or Fulton County.¹¹ Although these data are for Fayette County rather than the city of Fayetteville, we may assume that city data are similar, as the 2000 census indicated that the mean travel time to work for Fayetteville residents was 28.1 minutes.¹²

The major industries for Fayetteville residents are education, health, and social services, with 1,065 individuals, transportation and warehousing, and utilities, with 846 individuals, and retail trade, with 507 individuals.¹² The largest employers within the city are Fayette Piedmont Hospital, Fayette County Board of Education, and Fayette County Government. Major employers located outside of the city include Delta Air Lines and other major airlines at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport. The median family income for Fayetteville in 2000 was \$62,133, with only 2.4% of families living below the poverty level and 2.3% unemployed.¹² City data from 2009 lists the unemployment level as 3.5%.¹³ Unemployment and income statistics may have changed dramatically in the last year, however, as Georgia Department of Labor statistics indicate that Fayette County unemployment was 8.2% in May 2010.¹⁴

COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS:

Local Attractions and Entertainment:

Fayetteville's most popular tourist attraction is the annual Old Courthouse Art Show, which celebrated its 42nd year in 2010.¹⁵ Other annual events include the Main Street Festival,

¹¹ Fayette County Comprehensive Plan. http://www.fayettecountyga.gov/planning_and_zoning

¹² 2000 census data for Fayetteville. <http://factfinder.census.gov>

¹³ FY 2010 Budget. <http://www.fayetteville-ga.gov>

¹⁴ Georgia Labor Force Estimates. <http://www.dol.state.ga.us/pdf/pr/laborforce.pdf>

¹⁵ Fayetteville Main Street Events. <http://www.fayetteville-ga.gov>

the Fayette County Kiwanis Fair, the LaFayette Marching Classic, and Christmas in Fayetteville.¹⁶ Cultural attractions include the Holliday-Dorsey-Fife House Museum, an art gallery, and the Villages Amphitheater, which hosts movies, plays, and concerts.¹⁷ Fayetteville is also home to two movie theaters, a bowling alley, an amusement park, and the Fayette Pavilion, a large outdoor shopping complex. The city has two hotels to accommodate tourists and travelers.

News and Advertising

Fayetteville has two local newspapers, Fayette County News and The Citizen. Both papers promote community events through the printed news as well as an online calendar. In addition, the Atlanta Journal-Constitution includes a Fayette County section for local residents, and maintains a Fayette County news page. Other local publications include Fayette Woman and the Guide to Coweta-Fayette.

Churches, Organizations, and Social Services:

The 2010 Guide to Coweta-Fayette lists 88 churches with Fayetteville addresses, although a number of these may be located in unincorporated areas surrounding the city (Nelson 81-82). A number of civic organizations and clubs are also active, including Optimists International, Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club, Democratic Party, Republican Party, Master Gardeners, Toastmasters, Masonic Order, and the American Legion. Social service providers include Fayette Samaritans, Fayette Youth Protection Home, Fayette Council for Battered Women, Fayette Counseling Center, the YMCA, Fayette County NAACP, Fayette Senior Services, and the county DFCS office. Several local churches also offer Alcoholics Anonymous programs and other groups for addiction recovery. Fayette Senior Services is very active in the

¹⁶ The New Georgia Encyclopedia: Fayetteville. <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org>

¹⁷ Fayetteville Downtown Development Authority. <http://www.downtownfayetteville.org>

community, providing Meals on Wheels, transportation services, adult daycare, case management, and other services. In addition, they have a very active Life Enrichment Center with a café, gym, classes, day trips, and special events. As previously mentioned, many county government facilities are located within the city limits of Fayetteville. These include the county courthouse, the main office of the Fayette County Board of Education, the extension service, the county health department, the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, the parks and recreation department, and the sheriff's office. City government organizations and affiliates include the Downtown Development Authority, the Fayetteville Main Street Tourism Association, and police and fire departments.

Community Needs and Issues:

As mentioned in the Fayetteville Comprehensive Plan, the number of adults over the age of 45 is increasing, and the percentage of households with children is decreasing.¹⁸ Increased focus has been spent on this sector of the population in recognition of their growing numbers. The senior population is also increasing, and Fayetteville is home to four assisted living communities, an active senior center, and a number of nursing homes.

The current recession has affected the city as well as individuals. A number of retail locations are currently empty, and some businesses are struggling. Construction on planned subdivisions halted for several years, and some have been left with empty lots between occupied houses. At least one subdivision has recently resumed construction, however, so it is possible that the construction business may be experiencing a small upswing. A number of Fayetteville residents have recently experienced job losses or cuts in salary due to the recession, and may be seeking new employment. At the same time, the number of positions in the medical field has

¹⁸ Comprehensive Plan. <http://www.fayetteville-ga.gov>

increased as physician's offices and medical centers have relocated to be near Fayette Piedmont Hospital.

Libraries and Research Collections:

The Fayette County Library is located in downtown Fayetteville, near the county's government complex and the historic courthouse. The library is open Monday through Thursday, 9 am to 9 pm, and Friday through Saturday, 9 am to 6 pm. Library facilities include two meeting rooms and a computer learning lab featuring Microsoft Office and Rosetta Stone software.¹⁹ The library has partnered with groups such as the Master Gardeners, the Small Business Development Association, and Piedmont Fayette Hospital to present informational programs. They also sponsor several adult reading groups, film series, author visits, and other entertainment programs.

In addition to the public library, the city also has two smaller reference and research collections. The Fayette County Courthouse contains a law library. The Fayette County Historical Society, housed in downtown Fayetteville, has a research collection for public use.²⁰

It may be important to note that the only bookstores in Fayetteville are a small used book shop and a Christian bookstore. The city had been home to a Barnes & Noble store for nearly ten years when the store closed in May 2010. The nearest major bookstores are now approximately ten and thirteen miles away. It is possible that the loss of a bookstore to this community may result in increased use of the public library. The library may wish to expand their market to include former Barnes & Noble regulars.

¹⁹ Fayette County Public Library. http://www.fayettecountyga.gov/public_library

²⁰ Fayette County Historical Society. <http://www.fayettehistoricalsociety.com>

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