

State of the Region and Dacula

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Introduction:

The Atlanta Regional Commission's October 2012 snapshot of the region for 2012 includes many interesting facts and discusses various demographic changes from 2000 to 2010. The complete report is found at this link:

http://www.atlantaregional.com/File%20Library/Info%20Center/SORB/RS_Oct_2012_SORB.pdf

I have attempted to distill some of the most important facts contained in this report for the area near Dacula. While much of the information is more general than just Dacula and the surrounding area, I think we may use the information for future planning purposes.

Even with the melt-down which really took hold in 2007-2008 and continues today, Metro Atlanta remains in the top 10 of the fastest-growing regions in the nation.

Population Changes:

As the report rightly notes, most of the growth in the last decade went to Gwinnett County and much of it found its way to Northeastern Gwinnett. For the area near and around Dacula, population change per square mile increased from 387 to 7,871.

Age Shifts:

Between 2000 and 2010, Metro Atlanta had one of the fastest growth rates of its aging population. However, those changes have been much less in the areas near Dacula. For 2010, the percent of those age 65 and older we are in the range of 6% to less than 8% as compared to the most aged population near the Buckhead area where almost 27% of the population was 65 or older. The report also noted that those in the 2010 population age group of 18 to 29 in the Dacula area was between 4% to 12%. This means that about 80% of our population falls somewhere outside those stated groups, and possibly means that our general population is made up of younger family groups.

Diversity:

While Metro Atlanta remains a destination for black population, the explosion of the Hispanic population was one of the defining characteristics of the 2000s. Gwinnett and Hall Counties had the highest concentrations of Hispanic populations in 2010. The area near Dacula had a 2010 Hispanic population of between 8 to 15 per cent.

Housing Stock:

During the population and construction boom of the 2000s, most of the housing units were being built everywhere across Metro Atlanta. Between 30% and 80% of the housing units in the Dacula area were built after 2000. While the housing boom affected Dacula greatly, we still have a housing stock of older homes as well as those constructed after 2000.

The report shows that the value of housing units have declined about 30% in value since 2006, but it also reports that between 28% to 54% of housing units near Dacula are currently valued at \$250,000 or more.

Jobs and Unemployment:

Metro Atlanta lost about 5.7% of its job base since 2007. The report says this isn't too bad (unless you are one without a job) compared with other regions across America. The report tries to look out from 2010 to 2040 when the area around Dacula is expected to add between 3,500 to 21,000 jobs. The report highlights that between 7% to 10% of Dacula-area sixteen year old and older people are not employed.

For the "new economy" jobs like the information sectors, the Dacula area only had 14 to 65 jobs in the information sector in 2010.

Education:

At least a Bachelor's Degree—24% to 33% in the Dacula area.

At least a Graduate Degree—11% to 18% in the Dacula area.

Connectivity:

Access to broadband is critical in today's world. While metro-Atlanta's broadband adoption rate is relatively low, over 80% of Dacula-area households have 2010 broadband access.

Implications for Dacula:

Dacula is poised for growth—intelligent/productive growth. We have an educated, youthful population which is family oriented. We have the potential to tele-work or work in local employment centers near home. Our community provides homes and potential for diverse groups. It means that as we start to modify our comprehensive plans that we take advantage of the opportunities to leverage our demographics, our excellent K-12 educational facilities, with post-secondary educational colleges and universities to take the best advantage of the existing and coming changes in our home town.

As Dacula continues to revise and update its Comprehensive Plan, emphasis should be given to those areas of the plan that support the population and growth that is to be expected in the next several years. Now is the time for all of us to work together to grow the story of our home town.