

POPULATION AND ECONOMY
MOUNT AIRY, NORTH CAROLINA

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ABSTRACT

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ABSTRACT This report analyzes changes in Mount Airy's population
and economy which have occurred since publication of the
1962 report, and recommends possible actions to maximize
assets and minimize liabilities.

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SUMMARY

- Mount Airy is becoming very urbanized; yet, the residents are living a suburban type life.

- Mount Airy's 1970 population is expected to increase to 8,161 by 1980. However, there is a possibility that this projection may not materialize if major annexation programs do not occur during the forthcoming decade.

- The total planning area is expected to increase fifteen per cent (15%) by 1980, to 24,176. This projection is realistic since most of the present and foreseeable growth is occurring in the fringe area.

- The high outmigration rate and the "0" population increase has the potential of lowering the labor force in the area. This trend is expected to abate.

- Mount Airy has a high median age, thirty (30) years for males and thirty-seven (37) years for females, which indicates that Mount Airy has a large number of senior citizens.

- Mount Airy's drop-out rate among high school students is 13.2%. The drop-out rate among seniors is even higher, 17.1%.

- High School graduates in the labor force have an unemployment rate of less than 1%, whereas, the non-graduate unemployment rate is 17.8%.

- 75% of the primary individuals as denoted by the 1970 census was female in the Town of Mount Airy.

- Mount Airy's median family income is \$7,812, mean income \$8,992, and the per capita income is \$2,777.

- The family income distribution was higher in 1970 than 1960. For example, in 1960 28% of the population had incomes less than \$3,000, whereas, in 1970 only 10% have incomes less than \$3,000.

- The fringe area needs immediate attention in the area of code enforcement.

- There should be some attempt made by Congress to preserve public housing for low income people.

- Mount Airy is very industrialized, employing over 9,000 people.

- Total retail sales surpass \$80,000,000 and account for 50% of the county's total retail sales.

- The following table compares Mount Airy with towns of equal size.

Table i. Selected Comparison of Similar Towns

	Total Population		25 Yrs + Median School Year	4 Years +	Unemploy- ment	% In Manu- facturing and Industries
	1960	1970				
Mount Airy	7,055	7,325	10.6	42.5	5.3	42.7
Clinton	7,641	7,157	11.3	43.5	5.1	18.4
Forest City	6,556	7,159	10.5	36.8	3.2	44.
Newton	6,658	7,857	10.6	36.5	2.6	59.8
Oxford	6,978	7,182	10.9	39.2	5.0	31.8

	Median Income	Less Than Poverty Level	\$15,000 or More
Mount Airy	\$7,812	9.9	9.7
Clinton	6,698	24.9	12.3
Forest City	7,366	13.4	11.7
Newton	8,807	8.5	14.1
Oxford	7,216	19.2	10.9

Source: Census of Population, 1970

INTRODUCTION

The present contract (fiscal year 1973-74) between the Town of Mount Airy and the North Carolina Department of Natural and Economic Resources, Division of Community Services, states that a separate report, or section of a report, updating the 1962 population and economic data for Mt. Airy shall be prepared. This study will include:

1. Analysis of age, income, race, employment skills, education and other characteristics of the population.
2. Past, present and future population of the Town.
3. An analysis of trends in employment, retail sales, wholesales, and the value added by manufacture.
4. Recommendations designed to strengthen the economy.

The statistical profile of the Town offered by the Population and Economy Study can have a variety of practical applications. It can, for example, be used to determine the future classroom needs of the local school district; or it can be used to anticipate and prepare for an increasing number of elderly citizens. Local businessmen may want to use the data to determine the potential market strength for any commodity or to perceive shortcomings in overall retail growth and economic viability. Industrialists may use the data for analysis of the laborshed, regional wage structure, and skills available among local workers. A wide variety of other uses of the data is possible, all of which may not have been foreseen. For this reason, some data are presented and not immediately used in the ensuing analyses. However, the purpose of another researcher at another time may be served by the data presented but not used herein.

Since the 1962 Population and Economy was completed, many factors have contributed to dynamic changes within the demographic and economic sectors of the Town. To remain abreast of change occurring within the Town and to provide Mt. Airy's citizens with the most up-to-date information about their town, this present study was undertaken.

METHODOLOGY AND QUALIFICATIONS

Certain data used in this report come from various public agencies whose job it is to collect, compile, and publish data on almost all aspects of human life and endeavor, while protecting the identity of the individual. Certain qualifications must be stated concerning this type of information:

1. All statistics contain a certain degree of error which cannot be avoided but which can usually be compensated for mathematically.
2. No single individual or family will fit all the "average" "normal" or Median" definitions used in statistical reports. These terms are used only for comparisons with other areas and groups; i.e., in using a term such as "median family income" it must be remembered that many families earn much more and many earn much less than the median figure.
3. Estimates of future population growth and the area's economic situation are merely educated projections based on past and current information and trends. To arrive at the best possible predictions of population change, several different mathematical projection methods are used in combination with common sense observations of prevailing conditions in the city, county, state and nation.

The most carefully made projections can be nullified (and occasionally are) by the unexpected major expansion of an industry, a radical change in annexation policies, or by a severe epidemic, depression or natural disaster. Therefore, all projections must assume that growth (or decline) will continue at a rather steady rate similar to past years, and that none of the above occurrences will come to pass.

4. The farther projections are made into the future, the less reliable they are. A five-year projection has a much better chance of being accurate than a twenty-year guess; therefore, projections will be made only to 1980.

Despite the failibility of projection techniques, it is still necessary to make estimates of future population in order to plan for the services and facilities which will be required. In many cases, the Town can realize substantial savings by anticipating these requirements and scheduling its capital expenditures to take advantage of early acquisition of land in a spiraling economy, and to regulate town growth to minimize future problems and maximize the efficiency of the town's services.

POPULATION

Population Trends

Mount Airy's population growth is indeed a paradox. From 1910 to 1970 the population increased by 3,481 persons. Of this growth, 95% occurred between 1910 and 1960; yet, few towns of this size can compare with the industrialization that exists. The end product resulted in Mount Airy becoming industrialized without becoming a "large" city. The people declined to move to town and be "fenced in," but continued to live, play, and in some instances work in the familiar country setting, while commuting and getting the benefit of a steady income from public work. As a consequence, statistics of Mount Airy show more people employed there than residing (indicated in Table 1).

Table 1. Population vs. Employment

Town's Population		Number of People Employed	
1970	7,325	1973	9,747

Source: U.S. Census of Population and Local Chamber of Commerce.

The population growth between 1960 and 1970, 270 people, indicates that this pattern of development will be continued and Mount Airy may become more and more industrialized without going through the pangs of urban congestion. However, the present energy crisis has the potential of forcing county residents to live within or near the town limits.

The following table illustrates the population changes experienced in the townships and the town from 1910 through 1970 according to the U.S. Census, and the projected population figures for 1980 and 1990.

Table 2. Population Trends, Mount Airy, N.C.

Year	Mount Airy City	Mount Airy Township
1910	3,844	8,395
1920	4,752	10,347
1930	6,045	15,445
1940	6,286	16,269
1950	7,192	19,383
1960	7,055	20,704
1970	7,325	20,963
1980*	8,161	24,176
1990*	8,799	26,984

*Division of Community Services

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1970.

From 1962-1970 Mount Airy doubled its land acreage; yet, the 1960-70 population change represents only a 3.8% increase. If the 1969 annexation program had not occurred, the 1970 population would have been virtually the same as the 1960 figure.

Based on the low 3.8% increase between 1960-70, the most logical response would be the reduction of the 1980 and 1990 population projections for the Town of Mount Airy; however, this action would be based on merely a ten (10) year period whereas the 1980 and 1990 projections were based on a sixty (60) year statistical analysis. Also, there are other natural factors that must be considered in these projections--such as the product of the energy crisis, radical change in annexation policies, the town becoming even more industrialized, and a substantial increase in employment figures. Therefore, it is necessary that we assume that Mount Airy will continue to grow at a faster rate than the last decade.

The 1980 and 1990 projections were arrived at by finding the average of three mathematical projections done by computer process in the Department of Natural and Economic Resources offices in Raleigh. The arithmetic projections, geometric projection, and the "least squares" method were used to find the average.

Mount Airy's population is expected to increase 11% by 1980, and the planning area is expected to increase 15%. This assertion is basically made on the growth experienced between 1910 and 1960.

Table 3. Population by Age Groups

Age Group	1960 No. of Persons	1970 No. of Persons	Numerical Change
0-4	644	579	- 65
5-9	673	619	- 54
10-14	671	662	- 9
15-19	535	602	+ 67
20-24	460	472	+ 12
25-29	536	445	+ 9
30-34	530	391	-131
35-39	485	411	- 74
40-44	509	483	- 26
45-49	470	508	+ 38
50-54	388	500	+112
55-59	342	449	+107
60-64	274	344	+ 70
65-69	237	308	+ 71
70-74	178	249	+ 71
75+	223	303	+ 80

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1970

The Population by Age Group Table indicates that Mount Airy is losing the young educated population. Both 1960 and 1970 census information indicate a substantial decrease in the 30-44 white age group, and 20-34 black age group. To balance the outmigration of young people, there is a considerable increase in the 40-75 age group. Based on the population trends, Mount Airy's future efforts should be directed toward programming activities and facilities to reduce outmigration, improve upon existing school facilities (after present plans to consolidate and build have been implemented), provide additional services for the increasing number of senior citizens, and continue to implement recreational plans.

Table 4. Age Group by Sex

Age Group	Males			Females			
	1960	1970	Change	1960	1970	Change	
0-4	307	322	+ 15	337	257	+ 20	
5-9	329	310	- 19	244	309	+ 65	
10-14	320	346	+ 26	351	316	- 35	
15-19	239	287	+ 48	296	315	+ 19	
20-24	210	214	+ 4	250	258	+ 8	
25-29	209	207	- 2	227	238	+ 11	
30-34	241	188	- 53	289	203	- 86	
35-39	226	198	- 28	259	213	- 46	
40-44	238	212	- 26	271	271	--	
45-49	204	233	+ 29)	266	275	+ 9)	Increases
50-54	185	219	+ 34)	203	281	+ 79)	
55-59	152	181	+ 29)	190	268	+ 78)	
60-64	103	158	+ 55)	171	186	+ 15)	
65+	259	295	+ 36)	379	565	+186)	
Total	3,222	3,370		3,833	3,955		
Median Age		30.0			36.9		
% of Total Population	45.5	46.5		54.6	53.5		

Source: U.S. Census of Population

Table 4 is a further breakdown of the age group by sex. The brackets emphasize the increases in both male and female fifty (50) years and older. In evaluating the younger age group, it must be assumed there is a high degree of outmigration or some other factor contributing to the low/no increases in the population growth. Also, it is interesting to note the very high median age. (30 years for males--37 years for females)

Several factors could be causing this trend of very low population increase. More affluent white families are probably moving into the new fringe area subdivisions, leaving less affluent white families in the city.

The increasing number of low cost public housing units may also be bringing in and retaining less affluent families. These and other possibilities will be explored more fully in subsequent sections dealing with family income and housing.

Now that it has been established that Mount Airy's population is leaving, the questions why did the people leave and where did they go must be answered.

Some mere speculations would be the migration to the fringe area based on the increasing number of subdivisions as stated above; no four year colleges located within the county; very few opportunities for white collar jobs; and very little social life presents itself to the majority of the population.

Tables 5 and 6 give some indication of the low percentage of blacks in the corporate limits of Mount Airy (5.3%), Mount Airy Planning Area (6.1%), and Surry County (5%). These low percentages may be attributed to poor economic opportunities for blacks within the Town of Mount Airy since the Town has basically been characterized as a very diversified manufacturing town. The agricultural lands located within the fringe area and county could account for the higher concentration of blacks in these areas. (See number of blacks rather than percentage in Tables 5 and 6). Also, the low increase between 1960 and 1970 indicates a strong outmigration trend as explained immediately following Table 3 and in the next topic.

Table 5. Groups by Race

<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>			
<u>Whites</u>	<u>Blacks</u>	<u>Whites</u>	<u>Blacks</u>	<u>Whites</u>	<u>Blacks</u>
<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>
3,222	3,196	159	169	3,833	3,741
				188	210

Source: Census of Population, 1960-1970

Table 6. Racial Percentage

<u>Mount Airy</u>	<u>Blacks</u>	<u>Whites</u>
7,325	379	6,937
% of Total Population	5.3	94.7
<u>Mount Airy Township</u>	<u>Blacks</u>	<u>Whites</u>
20,963	1,422	19,526
% of Total Population	6.1	93.9
<u>Surry County</u>	<u>Blacks</u>	<u>Whites</u>
51,415	2,570	48,845
% of Total Population	5.0	95.0

Source: Census of Population, 1970

Migration Trends

Migration of persons from any location to another is normally prompted either by economic or educational reasons. That is, most migrants move to seek real or perceived financial gains or to pursue some form of higher education. In certain cohorts, the migration may be initiated by need of fulfilling a military obligation and for others by a move to a prestigious suburban development. If the natural population increases are ignored, Mount Airy's population would have recorded significant losses considering only the migration trends. Since the preceding population projections anticipate a population increase during the next decade, this trend is obviously expected to abate. What factors led to such an assumption? First, economic opportunity for blue collar workers continues to be excellent; however, there is a need for improvement in the white collar profession. While the national average of unemployment has ranged between 5% and 6%, Mount Airy's rate has been consistently under 3%. There is seasonal work in Mount Airy which at times creates a higher unemployment rate. Secondly, the need for students to migrate to centers of higher education has been significantly lowered as Surry County Community College can offer similar courses of study. Third, the elimination of the military draft will reduce the migration losses in affected cohorts. Fourth, many blacks no longer look to northern states as the only region offering racial equality and the possibility of economic gains. Finally, the overall quality of life in a smaller city is generally perceived to be greater than that offered in some congested, polluted metropolitan areas. The small town atmosphere of Mount Airy thus assumes a greater attractiveness. These factors, operating in concert, should significantly reduce the future outmigration of Mount Airy's residents. The exact extent of this abatement or the impact of unforeseen economic influences is problematical. For this reason, a range of tentative populations have been projected stressing the pitfalls inherent in such predications. With careful use, however, the projections can provide a realistic appraisal of future population patterns which in turn can be related to pressing educational, social and physical needs.

Growth policies officially adopted by the town can influence the extent and duration of outmigration. In fact, the mitigation of outmigration can be one of the areas wherein rational policies can be a prominent factor. Among the policies and activities which might be considered to promote in-city development are:

- A renter referral service operated by the Chamber of Commerce could facilitate and simplify the search for rental housing. Realtors could provide a weekly list of vacancies to this clearinghouse. A person seeking rental housing need make only one call to the Chamber to be made aware of all available housing. The Chamber of Commerce would receive a small percentage of rental fees to cover costs incurred.
- General Revenue Sharing money could be used to upgrade or rehabilitate housing within the city. This may include partial funding of the Mount Airy Housing Authority's total housing commitment.

- Training programs jointly sponsored by the Town of Mount Airy, Surry County Community College, and local industries could upgrade the educational and professional level of local industrial employees. The education section of this chapter examines the need for such programs.
- Changes in the adopted land use controls, i.e., Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, could facilitate in-city development. Specifically, consideration could be given to amending the Subdivision Regulations to incorporate the Planned Unit Development concept. The Zoning Ordinance could be amended to permit single mobile homes in high density residential districts. Either amendment could provide a means of achieving optimal residential use of in-city land.
- Surry County should be impressed with the need for land use controls in selected areas of the county. By adopting and enforcing such regulations, the differential in residential preference may be erased.

LIFE STYLE

This section deals with those aspects of Mount Airy's inhabitants which bears directly on the "style of life" in the community. Education, income and housing data all reflect information about the population.

Education

Table 7. Adult Educational Status 1970

Male, 25 years old and over	Total	Less than High School Degree
	1,891	
No school years completed	39	
Elementary - 1-4 years	128	
5-6 years	266	
7 years	234	
8 years	153	1,138
High School- 1-3 years	318	or
4 years	384	60%
College - 1-3 years	169	
4 years	144	
5 years or more	61	
<hr/>		
Female, 25 years old and over	2,500	
No school years completed	58	
Elementary - 1-4 years	248	
5-6 years	258	
7 years	241	
8 years	199	1,397
High School- 1-3 years	393	or
4 years	634	55%
College - 1-3 years	269	
4 years	179	
5 years or more	32	

Source: Census of Population, 1970

The educational level for adults over 25 years (as shown in Table 7) is a function of a past era, and educational opportunities should be provided at the county level through an adult education program. Both technical and formal education programs should be encouraged. Of more concern is an analysis of the more recent school trends, especially school enrollments, drop-out rates, and some evaluation of the status of high

school graduates and their drop-out counterparts in the labor market. Nevertheless Table 7 does give an indication of the educational status of the town's major work force (25 years +).

Table 8. Summary of Enrollment and Grade-to-Grade Movement
Mount Airy City Schools

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Sp.Ed.	Total
1966	280	279	269	297	246	282	274	294	270	237	249	233	47	3,257
1967	281	260	276	250	255	240	244	242	254	229	177	195	40	2,943
1968	269	248	269	265	228	244	220	232	225	247	205	169	34	2,855
1969	259	235	246	246	271	217	247	214	223	207	214	181	63	2,823
1970	250	237	250	231	231	250	206	236	208	200	191	190	60	2,740

Source: Mount Airy City Schools

A more accurate measure of the current school enrollment as presented in Table 8 evaluates the actual student membership or attendance. The yearly decrease (1966-1970) must be dealt with by the Mount Airy School Board. Questions to consider are why is the school enrollment decreasing yearly; where are the students going; and how will this decrease affect Mount Airy's future school plans?

Table 9. Beginning and Ending Enrollments

Year	1st School Month		9th School Month		Changes during school term	
	Mt.Airy	Surry Co.	Mt.Airy	Surry Co.	Mt.Airy	Surry Co.
1968-69	2,685	8,010	2,797	7,823	+ 112	- 187
1969-70	2,644	8,016	2,699	7,832	+ 55	- 184
1970-71	2,499	8,115	2,639	7,990	+ 140	- 125
1971-72	2,470	8,196	2,639	8,027	+ 169	- 169
1972-73	2,452	8,162	2,577	8,037	+ 125	- 125

Year	Changes during summer vacation		1st and 9th	
	Mt.Airy	Surry Co.	Mt.Airy	Surry Co.
1969-70	- 41	+ 6	- 98	+ 10
1970-71	-145	+ 99	- 60	+158
1971-72	- 29	+ 81	0	+ 37
1972-73	- 18	- 34	- 62	+ 10

Source: Mt. Airy City Schools.

Table 9 shows an increase for the Town of Mount Airy from the first school month through the ninth school month, but shows a loss of students averaging fifty-eight (58) students per year based on the first month enrollment and fifty-five (55) students per year based on the ninth month

school enrollment. The county registered opposite trends such as high first month enrollment and substantial loss during the ninth school month enrollment.

Table 10. Drop-Out Rates for High School Students, 1970

	<u>Mount Airy</u>	<u>Surry County</u>
All persons 14-17 years	528	4,080
Persons 14-17 enrolled in school	457	3,599
Persons 14-17 not enrolled in school	71 or 13.2%	481 or 11.3%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1970

Table 11. Drop-Out Rates for Seniors in High School, 1970

	<u>Mount Airy</u>	<u>Surry County</u>
All persons 16-17 years	234	1,891
Persons 16-17 enrolled in school	193	1,504
Persons 16-17 not enrolled in school	41 or 17.1%	389 or 20%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1970

Table 12. High School Graduate--Non-Graduate Labor Force Status, 1970

<u>Male 16-21 years not in school</u>	<u>Mount Airy</u>	<u>Surry County</u>
Employed or in Armed Forces-		
High School Graduate	20	366
Non-High School Graduate	45	468
Unemployed or is not in labor force-		
High School Graduate	12	83
Non-High School Graduate	25	188
	<u>103</u>	<u>1,105</u>
<u>Female 16-21 years not in school</u>		
Employed or in Armed Forces-		
High School Graduate	82	526
Non-High School Graduate	31	280
Unemployed or is not in labor force-		
High School Graduate	20	153
Non-High School Graduate	39	416
	<u>172</u>	<u>1,375</u>

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1970

Examination of Mount Airy's and the county's drop-out rate among the currently enrolled high school group revealed that 13.2% (Mount Airy) and 11.3% (Surry County) had terminated their education. This figure was derived from a comparison of the proportion of the children 14 to 17 years currently living in the town (528) and county (4,080) to the number of the same age students enrolled in high school, town (457) and county (3,599).

Since completion of the senior year is the crucial determinant of high school graduation, a comparative check of the senior ages, 16-17 years, to the total population aged 16-17 years should give some indication of the drop-out rate during this final year. Table 11 records this information on the county and town levels, which resulted in the town's senior drop-out rate being 17.1% of the class and the county showed a 20% drop out rate.

Finally, what happens to these people as they entered the labor market with or without a high school diploma is of special concern since the county has invested large sums in educating its human resources. Table 12 gives some indication of the status of individuals aged 16 to 21 who have entered the labor force rather than continuing their education. This table does not consider persons who were engaged in any form of educational activity. Of the 1,208 males reported in this table, 39.9% were high school graduates, and these graduates had low unemployment rate of less than 1%. Non-graduates, accounting 62% of the employed males, has an unemployment rate of 17.8%.

Female employment trends for the same age group are found also in Table 12. About 50.6% of the total females reported have graduated from high school. The female unemployment figures are somewhat misleading in that these values also include females who are housewives and not considered in the labor market.

Household Structure and Family Composition

The Census of Population has divided households into two components, primary individuals and families. Primary individuals are persons living alone or living with unrelated individuals. Families are considered to be persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption who live together as a single housekeeping unit. Table 13 relates the components of household structures; it investigates the town, township (including the planning area) and county levels the number of households, household heads, primary individuals and household size.

It is interesting to note that of the number of persons considered primary individuals by the 1970 Census of Population 75% were female in Mount Airy, 76% Mount Airy Township, and 72% in Surry County. By reviewing Table 4, the assumption that the majority of these primary female individuals exceeds the age of 65 would be correct.

Table 13. Household Relationship

	Mount Airy	Mount Airy Township		Surry County
		White	Black	
Total Number of Households:	2,526	6,746	379	16,332
Population in Households	7,325	20,768	1,423	51,415
Persons/households	2.87	3.08	3.75	3.13
Household leadership:				
Male family head	1,681	5,137		13,068
Female family head	339	701		1,350
Male primary individual	133	243		574
Female primary individual	404	764		1,519

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1970

Another major component in household composition is the head of the household. Despite the sociological implications of a matriarchal versus a patriarchal family structure, there are economic factors associated with which sex head the family is as will be illustrated later in this report.

Several indicators are considered in the following tables. However, many of the statistical measures, such as means, median and per capita values should be used with caution since they may not accurately represent actual economic levels. A better representation of actual income levels is the distribution of income; this is found in Tables 15 and 16.

Table 14. Income Indicators

	Family	Unrelated Individuals	Family w/ female head	All families/related individuals	Per Capita Income
Mount Airy (Urban)					\$2,777
Median	\$7,812	\$1,949		\$6,557	
Mean	\$8,992	\$3,246	\$5,325	\$7,671	
County (Blacks)					\$1,318
Median	\$5,195	\$1,426		\$4,572	
Mean	\$5,366	\$1,532	\$3,385	\$4,767	
County					\$1,562
Median	\$7,134	\$1,683		\$6,323	
Mean	\$7,825	\$2,669	\$4,691	\$7,078	
Rural Nonfarm					\$2,220
Median	\$7,209	\$1,447		\$6,399	
Mean	\$7,657	\$2,185	\$4,204	\$6,936	
Rural Farm					\$2,055
Median	\$5,887	\$1,860		\$5,550	
Mean	\$6,920	\$2,757	\$4,751	\$6,525	

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1970

Mean Income Values

The mean income value is a statistical measure which should be an indicator of the average income received by the average wage earner. The total amount of yearly personal income earned when divided by the number of wage earners yields the mean income value. Two mean income values are of special concern--the family mean income and a mean value for families and unrelated individuals.

The most accurate mean income value for Mount Airy is that which considers all income earning segments of the economy. For 1970, this mean value was \$7,671. It was derived by combining incomes earned by families and unrelated individuals. As Table 14 records, the incomes earned by unrelated individuals are extremely low. The people who make up this unrelated group are the elderly, widows, widowers, unmarried individuals and college students.

The most frequently quoted mean value which is flagrantly used to represent (or misrepresent) Mount Airy average income is the family mean income value of \$8,992. Further, this value may actually overestimate the family sector of the economy, since nearly 58% of the families have incomes less than \$9,000 and nearly 63% have incomes less than \$10,000. This over-estimation could easily occur since a few families with large incomes will tend to raise the value significantly.

Median Income Values

The median income value is the middle value of the actual income distribution; that is, one-half of the wage earners have incomes larger than this value and one-half receive less. In a statistical sense, the median is the least effective measure. However, its value gives some indication of the representativeness of the mean value since in a statistical normal distribution the two values should be relatively close. The family median income value of \$7,812 probably better represents the average income value than statistical family mean of \$8,992.

Per Capita Income

Per capita income is value allocated to each individual living in the town; it is derived by dividing the total personal income by the total town population. Per capita income figures are found in Table 14.

Caution should also be used with the per capita values. They are somewhat idealistic figures since in their computation non-wage earners are considered, and further, they are often mistakenly interpreted as an actual income amount available to each individual.

Actual Distribution of Incomes

The distribution of incomes for families is found in Table 15. Approximately 75% of the town and county residents have incomes less than \$10,000.

Table 15. Distribution of Income, Families

	<u>Surry County</u>	<u>Mount Airy Township</u>	<u>Mount Airy</u>
Less than \$1,000	434	144	24
\$1,000 - \$1,999	919	300	70
2,000 - 2,999	817	323	109
3,000 - 3,999	1,060	405	152
4,000 - 4,999	1,191	458	161
5,000 - 5,999	1,419	563	141
6,000 - 6,999	1,203	492	206
7,000 - 7,999	1,241	531	181
8,000 - 8,999	1,246	567	224
9,000 - 9,999	1,252	481	145
10,000 - 11,999	1,410	567	182
12,000 - 14,999	1,268	586	229
15,000 - 24,999	746	298	110
25,000 - 49,999	171	93	82
50,000 and over	41	26	4
	<u>14,490</u>	<u>5,834</u>	<u>2,020</u>

Family Income Distribution by Per Cent

Less than \$5,000	31%	28%	26%
\$5,000 - \$9,999	44%	45%	44%
10,000 - 15,000	18%	20%	20%
15,000 and over	6%	7%	10%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1970

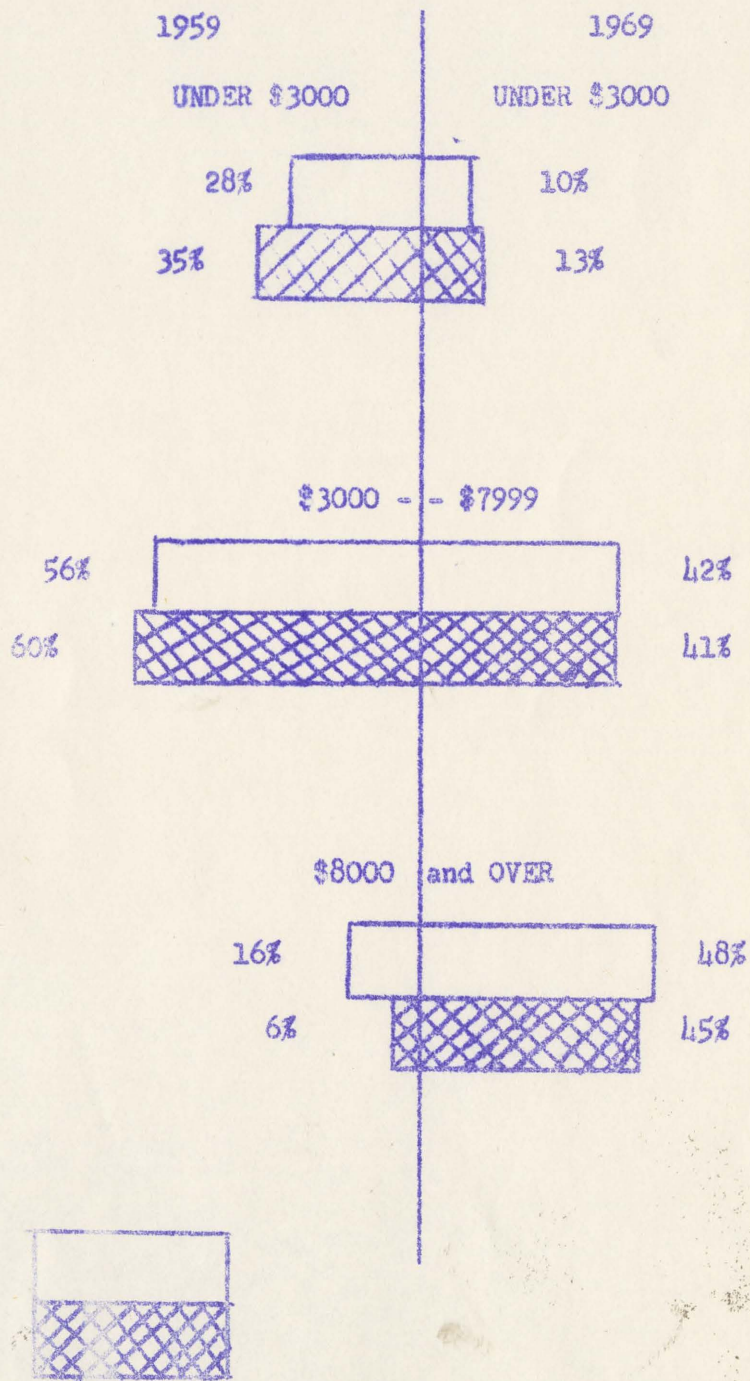
Several important observations can be made from Figure 1. First, the distribution of income throughout the resident population is becoming higher based on dollar values compared to the 1962 Population and Economic Report; however, if the increase in cost of living is considered, the distribution of income increases may not seem as great--shown in Table 15. The 1962 Report showed approximately 28% of Mount Airy's families had incomes less than \$3,000 whereas in 1970 28% or 516 of Mount Airy's families have incomes less than \$5,000. There was a substantial increase in \$8,000+ incomes compared to the 1962 Report.

Housing

In May, 1972, the Division of Community Services made a survey of each housing structure in the Mount Airy Planning Area. Separate standards were listed in classifying houses in the town and one-mile

Figure I

FAMILY INCOME DISTRIBUTION COMPARISON



SOURCE: 1960 Population & Economy Report
 1970 U.S. Population of Census

area. Based on the town's concentrated code enforcement program, the residences inside the corporate limits were classified according to plumbing conditions, interior conditions and exterior conditions. The fringe area residences were classified on only exterior conditions such as apparent structural conditions, maintenance and environment. Houses were rated as sound, deteriorating and dilapidated.

The results of the survey indicated that 525 dwelling units in the planning area were substandard; i.e., 383 deteriorating and 142 dilapidated. Since, at that time, there were 5,344 units in use (4,819 of which were sound), the substandard (deteriorated and dilapidated) units accounted for 10% of the occupied housing. A further breakdown of the housing condition by percentage is as follows:

Table 16. Housing Conditions

		<u>Standard</u>		<u>Deteriorating</u>		<u>Dilapidated</u>
Mount Airy	97 %	2,593	2.3%	61	.7%	19
Fringe Area	83.4%	2,226	12 %	322	4.6%	123
Planning Area	90.3%	4,819	7.3%	383	2.4%	142

Source: 1972 field information, Division of Community Services

The above information gives an illustration of the housing problem of the planning area (Town limits and approximate one-mile area). The following discusses the town and fringe area's housing separately. Below is a list of other related housing problems.

- The Town of Mount Airy is not enforcing subdivision regulations, zoning ordinance, nor minimum housing codes in the one-mile perimeter area.
- The Town does not extend sewer lines beyond the corporate limits; yet, there are serious problems with septic tanks within the fringe area.
- There are almost no vacant standard houses in the planning area.
- Future annexations are going to add additional deteriorated units within the town (which has a small inspection staff).
- The Housing Authority presently operates with a different policy which is to "provide houses for people who can pay, rather than the needy." This policy was forced upon the authorities throughout the country in an attempt to remain solvent.

Mount Airy's future housing problems, stated above, could be lessened if the town would enlarge its inspection department; initiate a joint planning program with Surry County; (coordinating Surry's planning

program with Region 6's program) protect the prime annexation areas by enforcing codes in the approximate one-mile area and most of all, accept and use this text as a guideline for awareness and prevention to a certain degree.

ECONOMY

Source of Employment

Mount Airy is an industrial town. So far as industry is concerned, Mount Airy produces most of the diversification for which Surry County is noted. It has twelve (12) hosiery and nine (9) garment factories, but in addition produces granite, mirrors, paper boxes, cotton fabrics, plastics, feed, concrete blocks, lumber, electric toasters, thread, paint, etc. Altogether it has over fifty-seven (57) manufacturers, large and small. In 1970, 42.7% of all employed persons were engaged in some type of manufacturing jobs. A majority of the remainder are dependent--in one form or another--on the dollars brought into the economy by these manufacturing jobs.

These, with other enterprises, employed more people than the total population of the town in 1960. This as well as other trends continued through 1973 resulting in an employment of over 9,747 persons. This means that every morning, automobiles stream into the town from every direction; at night, flow is reversed. The workers come from throughout the county, from nearby Stokes County and from Virginia (which is just five miles north of the city limits). Table 17 lists the industries in which Surry County residents are employed.

Table 17. Employment by Residents

Employment by Industry	Mount Airy	Mount Airy Township	Surry County
Agriculture, forestry & Fisheries	17	156	1,423
Mining	20	133	218
Construction	193	747	1,930
Manufacturing:			
Furniture, lumber, wood products	109	403	714
Primary metal	4	4	30
Fabricated metal	0	21	75
Machinery, except electric	16	33	75
Electric machinery, equipment & supplies	79	295	763
Motor vehicles & other transp.	0	0	4
Other durable goods	51	165	283
Food/kinred products	15	55	277
Textile mill & other fabricated products	949	2,870	5,930
Printing, publishing & allied ind.	6	29	63
Chemical & allied products	13	18	29
Other non-durable goods	85	282	1,050

Table 17--Continued

Employment by Industry	Mount Airy	Mount Airy Township	Surry County
Communications:			
Railroad & railway express service	0	0	8
Trucking service & warehousing	48	166	458
Other Transportation	13	54	160
Communications	54	120	206
Utility & sanitary service	41	103	295
Commerce:			
Wholesale trade	92	229	443
Food, bakery & dairy stores	72	208	371
Eating/drinking establishments	86	209	331
General retail merchandise	114	221	350
Motor vehicles retail and service stations	111	280	550
Other retail trade	204	470	987
Banking/credit agencies	43	73	226
Insurance, real estate & other finance	40	94	231
Business services	15	24	64
Repair services	34	201	413
Personal Services:			
Private households	54	159	305
Other personal services	90	238	616
Entertainment & recreation service	10	57	88
Professional Services:			
Hospital	102	212	327
Medical & other health exc. hospital	35	66	166
Elementary, secondary, colleges, public - Government	142	318	875
Private	5	15	71
Other education & kindred services	15	19	41
Welfare, religious & non-profit organizations	19	91	177
Legal, engineering, & misc. professional services	23	48	202
Public Administration	86	158	482

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1970

Industrial growth for the town has averaged more than two million dollars per year over the past eight years. The industrial payroll is in excess of fifty million dollars and retail sales for the town are in excess of eighty-one million dollars annually.

Mount Airy had more prospects for new industries during the past year than ever before. The labor force increased by five hundred (500) and the payroll increased by two and one-half million dollars. The 1970 census listed Mount Airy as having an unemployment rate of 5.3% (which is very high). Based on the information given in this report, the high unemployment rate may be attributed to seasonal work which exists in the area. (harvesting of crops such as fruits and farm crops).

Table 18 gives a comparison of Mount Airy's gross retail sales with Surry County's gross retail sales.

Table 18. Gross Retail Sales
Trends in Mount Airy and Surry County

Year	Month	Town	County	% of County Sales
1972	January	\$7,455,269	\$14,381,754	52%
	February	4,966,299	10,105,104	49%
	March	5,656,976	10,645,131	53%
	April	6,224,269	11,960,880	52%
	May	6,288,467	11,957,920	53%
	June	6,420,115	12,264,282	52%
	July	7,009,672	12,791,056	55%
	August	6,622,965	12,629,399	52%
	September	6,214,396	12,422,923	50%
	October	7,021,437	12,816,908	55%
	November	7,395,857	13,598,947	54%
	December	6,547,397	12,401,591	53%
1973	January	8,134,038	14,924,662	55%
	February	5,878,114	11,559,180	51%
	March	5,815,032	11,192,250	52%
	April	6,142,073	11,964,256	51%
	May	7,305,379	13,628,691	54%

Source: North Carolina Department of Revenue, 1972-73

Mount Airy's retail sales account for 53% of the county's gross retail sales. Being one of fifteen (15) townships in the county, Mount Airy has a tax base of \$51,515,000 and an estimated assessed valuation, including corporate excess, of \$56,500,000. The gross income for the town is approximately \$176 million.

Municipal Finance

One of the most important "industries" in all cities is the one which provides those services that all other industries depend upon for their ability to operate in a profitable manner.

The local government not only provides utility, public safety and other governmental services to industries and businesses in its

jurisdiction, but it also provides jobs and income for some one-hundred (100) town employees. Some of the revenue sources that are instrumental in maintaining the stability of Mount Airy's budget follows:

Table 19. 1972-73 Budget

Ad Valorem Taxes	\$ 967,305	36%
Other Miscellaneous Licenses and Taxes	313,658	12%
Water and Sewer Rents	443,467	17%
Powell Bill	91,430	3%
Government Grants	623,991	23%
Other Revenue	213,376	8%
Transfer from other funds	1,693	1%
Total	<u>\$2,654,920</u>	<u>100%</u>

Source: 1972-73 Annual Report, Mount Airy, N.C.

The 1972-73 operating budget of \$2,654,920 is divided among several departments, administration, police, public works, etc. In order to maintain existing facilities and expand others, the revenue sources with the exception of government grants, should remain stable or increase yearly. A substantial decrease in any of these sources would have an adverse affect on the local government. Table 20 gives a one-year comparison of Mount Airy's financial statement of expenditures.

Table 20. Comparison of Expenditures

	<u>1971-72</u>	<u>1972-73</u>	
Administration, Governmental, Financial, City Hall, Planning and Legal	75,526	100,080	+24,554
Public Safety--Fire, Codes & Inspection, Police, & Traffic	276,791	323,059	+46,268
Public Works--Administration, Engineering, Street, Street Lighting, Sanitation, Ceme- teries, and Shop	374,743	420,837	+46,094
Other--Traffic Court, Jail & Board, Youth Guidance, Library, General Fund Miscellaneous and Contingency	115,020	131,227	+16,207
Water and Sewer	218,425	255,230	+36,805
Debt Service	338,034	328,650	- 9,384
Total	<u>\$1,398,539</u>	<u>\$1,559,083</u>	<u>\$160,544</u>

Source: Mount Airy's Annual Report 1971-72, 1972-73

Based on the proposed capital expenditures for Mount Airy, it is necessary that the annual operating budget continues to increase as shown in Table 20. The five-year Capital Budget was based on past trends that showed annual increases using numerous factors. Decreases at any time may delay needed projects and equipment (water and sewer extension, new garbage truck, etc.).

Recommendations

Mount Airy has entered a period of acreage growth rather than population growth. However, there are tremendous pressures for social and economic changes. The battle will consist of how to preserve the urban/industrial society that offers a rural type life. Other considerations will be the demand for municipal services and recreational facilities. In order to combat future problems, the town should review this report carefully and readjust their planning program considering the following recommendations.

1. It is at this point in time that Mount Airy and Surry County's local government consolidate efforts in an attempt to promote growth in an orderly and planned manner. This task may be accomplished by establishing a joint planning staff.
2. The fringe area, which is Mount Airy's future, should be protected or assisted in the future development through comprehensive planning and growth guidelines/controls.
3. The town should adopt and implement a Capital Improvements Program and update same annually.
4. Policy goals and objectives should be formulated by the town.
5. Housing Authority should be more responsive to actual housing needs of individuals in general.
6. Comprehensive planning efforts should be continued at current high level.
7. Industrial diversification efforts should be continued.
8. Outmigration should be reduced through provision of better job, socio-economic opportunities.
9. Citizen participation in local governments' activities should be encouraged.

FUTURE EXPECTATIONS OF THE ECONOMY

The Economy section of this report is rather "broad"; thus, many important questions have been asked without the important being known. Some rather interesting questions that should receive additional comments are as follows:

1. Will the increase in diversified industrialization continue?
2. Will the outmigration of employees continue?
3. Will the tax base continue to improve?
4. Is highway access and in-city street network conducive to getting to and from work?
5. Although incomes have increased, has actual purchasing power increased?
6. Are dropping areas adequate in terms of location, consumer needs/services?
7. What is the future recruitable work force for industrial expansion?

1. Mount Airy has the natural and physical resources to increase diversified industrialization for at least ten additional years. However, the diversification will be limited to similar manufacturing plants (Any plants/industries requiring skilled workers of a different nature than presently exist would have to import workers or initiate a training program at Surry Community College.). Examples of future industrial expansion are the Industrial Park which accommodates six industries with room for expansions and the new Bassett Furniture plant, \$7 million building.

The Chamber of Commerce's 1974 program of work includes attracting diversified new businesses and industries.

On the other hand, greater diversification for Mount Airy is almost a necessity to probate the outmigration of young college graduates and/or the white collar workers.

2. The outmigration of employees is expected to abate when conceiving of outmigration as moving out of the state to fulfill draft obligations, economical gains in the blue collar profession etc. However, when conceiving of outmigration as moving out of the town of Mount Airy, the trend will continue. The town is going to have to make several changes that may seem radical in nature for the younger population--both black and white. Social attainment is a necessity that must be fulfilled. Mount Airy is plagued with cars parading major streets, beer drinking, etc. If outlets for such "energy" are not provided (with the exception of the YMCA and private golf courses) larger cities will benefit from this "trade." Also, the seasonal work in Mount Airy contributes to the outmigration rate. Table 21 gives an example of fluctuating employment and unemployment rates by type of work within a given year, 1970.

Table 21.

WORK FORCE ESTIMATES

SURRY COUNTY

YEAR 1970

	<u>First Quarter</u>	<u>Second Quarter</u>	<u>Third Quarter</u>	<u>Fourth Quarter</u>	<u>Annual Average</u>
Civilian Work Force	28,400	29,200	30,240	28,240	29,020
Unemployment, Total	1,600	1,450	1,370	1,040	1,370
Rate of Unemployment	5.6	5.0	4.5	3.7	4.7
Employment, Total	26,800	27,750	28,870	27,200	27,650
Nonag. Wage and Salary	22,010	21,970	22,070	22,040	22,020
Manufacturing	12,650	12,520	12,520	12,380	12,520
Food	310	300	280	290	300
Textiles	7,590	7,660	7,730	7,670	7,660
Apparel	1,600	1,520	1,500	1,480	1,520
Furniture	870	840	890	920	880
Rubber	150	150	180	180	170
Stone, Clay, & Glass	480	460	480	440	460
Machinery	1,440	1,370	1,230	1,110	1,290
Other Manufacturing	210	220	230	290	240
Nonmanufacturing	9,360	9,450	9,550	9,660	9,500
Construction	2,070	2,200	2,240	2,010	2,130
Transp., Comm., & Pub. Util.	670	710	730	710	700
Trade	2,920	2,880	2,950	3,190	2,980
Fin., Ins., & Real Estate	410	380	380	370	390
Service, Except Domestic	1,180	1,190	1,200	1,220	1,200
Government	1,950	1,920	1,870	1,990	1,930
Other Nonmanufacturing	160	170	180	170	170
All Other Nonag. Employment	2,330	2,330	2,410	2,380	2,360
Agricultural Employment	2,460	3,450	4,390	2,780	3,270

Source: Employment Security Commission, 1971

The highest unemployment rate is shown in the first quarter, 5.6%. The weather conditions play an important role since the months being discussed are January, February, and March. Among farmers, these months are considered as the "slow period" of the year.

Table 22 gives the commuting pattern for Surry County.

Table 22. Commuting Pattern - Surry County

County	1960		1970	
	Out Commuting	In Commuting	Out Commuting	In Commuting
Alleghany	--	27	33	47
Forsyth	736	96	1,736	137
(Winston Salem City)	(--)	(--)	(1,323)	(--)
Guilford	58	--	240	--
(Greensboro City)	(--)	(--)	(199)	(--)
Rockingham	0	0	7	0
Stokes	62	207	148	553
Wilkes	71	1,585	135	1,803
Yadkin	133	1,236	258	1,439
Carroll (Va.)	51	665	61	1,047
Floyd	0	0	7	--
Grayson	65	25	31	55
Henry	0	0	6	--
Patrick	21	394	31	10
Wythe	0	0	10	5
Elsewhere	218	627	296	695
Total	1,415	4,862	2,999	5,791
Live and Work in Surry County	17,220	17,220	18,034	18,034
Employed Residents	18,635		21,033	
Persons Working in Surry County		22,082		23,825
Net Commuting Gain (+) or Loss (-)		+3,447		+2,792

Source: Employment Security Commission

The commuting pattern in Table 22 showed a strong in-commuting trend. Seemingly, a lot of workers prefer to live in and around larger cities and commute to rural or less urban areas to work. Also, the dry county concept must be considered. Stokes, Surry, and Yadkin Counties are "dry" and provide a "lesser" social life than the more urban cities as stated previously in this report.

3. The tax base will certainly increase (disregarding a possible recession) in the future. Industries are expanding, the population is expected to increase, properties are appraised higher, and manufacturers have the potential of producing more products without expanding their facilities. Also, agricultural products will contribute to a higher tax base in future years. The major crops in Mount Airy and Surry County will be in greater demand in the very near future. The following table gives acreages of major crops and inventories of livestock in Surry County.

Table 23. Acreages of Major Crops and Inventories of Livestock, 1971

County	Corn for Grain	Soybeans for Beans	Wheat	Peanuts	Tobacco	Cotton
Surry	12,950	1,520	1,900	-	8,260	-
	All Cattles <u>January 1, 1972</u> 21,700		All Hogs <u>December 1, 1971</u> 4,700		All Chickens <u>December 1, 1971</u> 1,090,000	

Source: N.C. State Government Statistical Abstract, 1973

The shortage of grain, soybeans and wheat will encourage larger harvests in the future. Also, the Federal Government is encouraging larger allotments; thus, less money is being paid toward the "soil bank."

4. The Town of Mount Airy is served by U.S. 52 and 601, N.C. 89, 103, and 104. These highways are state supported and provide excellent highway access for Mount Airy's labor recruiting area--covering a radius of twenty-five (25) road miles or thirty-fourty (30-40) minutes driving time. The area includes portions of Alleghany, Forsyth, Stokes, Surry, Wilkes, and Yadkin Counties and a portion of Virginia. Most of the larger manufacturers are accessible by the major highways; also, the in-city street network has good mobility. There are some improvements that could eliminate traffic congestion in particular areas. West Lebanon Street from South Street to U.S. 52 Bypass, Independence Boulevard from Renfro Street to Riverside Drive, U.S. 601 from U.S. 52 Bypass to Renfro Street, are several of the streets needing improvements.

5. Figure 1, page 16, showed a \$2,000 increase in families with below poverty level incomes. When considering the inflationary process within the last two years (1972 & 73), it is obvious that those families' buying powers have not increased. As in every case, the cost of living increases affect certain income groups more so than others. The group being victimized is, as always, the low income. This assumption is based on the fact that increased occurred on necessities rather than luxuries.

6. Mount Airy's central business district suffered from poor downtown parking facilities and fast growing shopping centers. Presently, the town has one large and three small shopping centers located throughout

the town. As usual, shopping centers develop on or near bypasses which in the future produce a need to bypass the bypass, thereby destroying the major thoroughfare's primary purpose of conducting vehicular traffic efficiently and safely. The existing problem with Mount Airy's centers is Mayberry Mall's secondary access which directs traffic through residential neighborhoods. When considering the retail shopping area of Mount Airy and the width of the residential access to the shopping center, various adverse problems (traffic accidents and congestions, rewidening and paving of streets) may plague the town in the future.

7. Estimates prepared by local Employment Security Commission offices serving the defined area indicate that there are 1,000 persons who possess manufacturing job experience or who are deemed to be trainable for jobs in manufacturing. The following table gives a breakdown of the number of recruitable workers for North Carolina by distances and sex.

Table 24. Recruitable Production-Related Worker

Miles	Total	Type of Worker							
		Total Available Workers		Experienced Manufacturing Workers		All Other Experienced		Inexperienced but Referable & Trainable	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	1,000	400	600	90	230	235	205	75	165
0-15	430	170	260	40	110	110	100	20	50
15-20	230	95	135	20	50	55	45	20	40
20-25	340	135	205	30	70	70	60	35	75

Source: Employment Security Commission, 1973

The above table does not include all potential workers in the area--especially from Virginia. However, there are a number of production-related workers who would be qualified for or willing to accept work in a manufacturing industry. Another interesting figure is the 495 high school graduates who entered the labor force last year, 1973.

CONCLUSION

This Updated Population and Economy Report has examined trends and factual data evidenced since the first related examination in 1962. Periodic reviews of population and economy indices are necessary to effectively program remedial measures--if warranted. Upon determination of any adverse trends, it behooves action by both the public and private sectors to implement necessary corrective programs. A constant supply of trainable labor is prerequisite to supplement industrial growth. The labor must have access to decent housing, quality education, shopping and service facilities, etc. These are evident, in varying degrees of adequacy, in Mount Airy today; more will be needed in the future.