

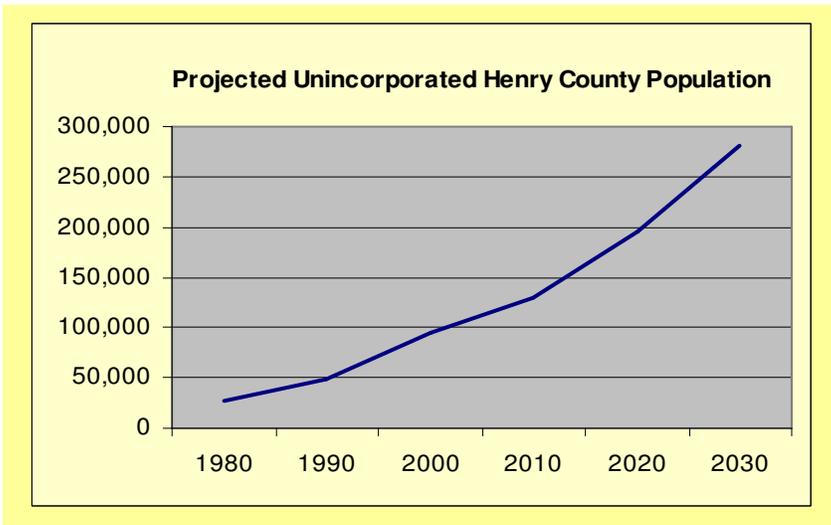
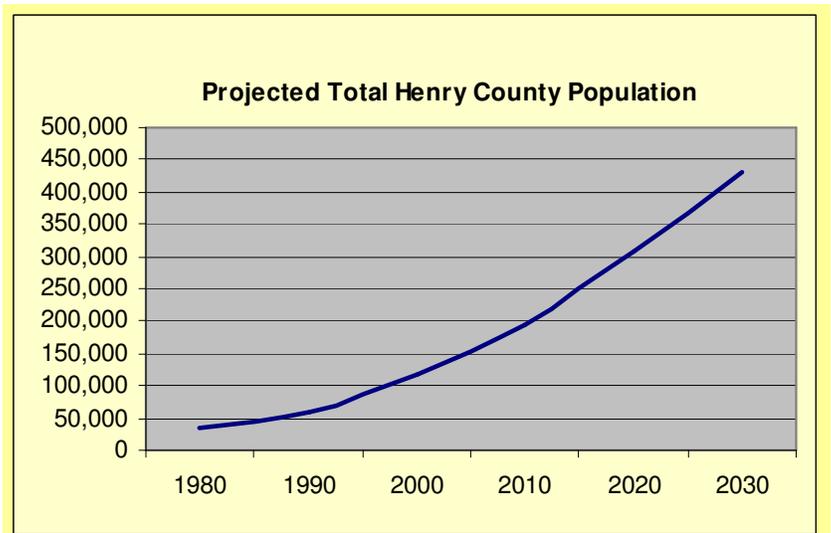
2. CONTEXT OF CHANGE

2.1 Introduction

Henry County is a rapidly changing and growing community. The County has witnessed tremendous growth over the past 25 years and is projected to continue this trend until 2030. To properly plan for the future careful estimates of population, employment, and housing trends must be made. These estimates provide projections of what to expect and plan for until 2030.

2.2 Population

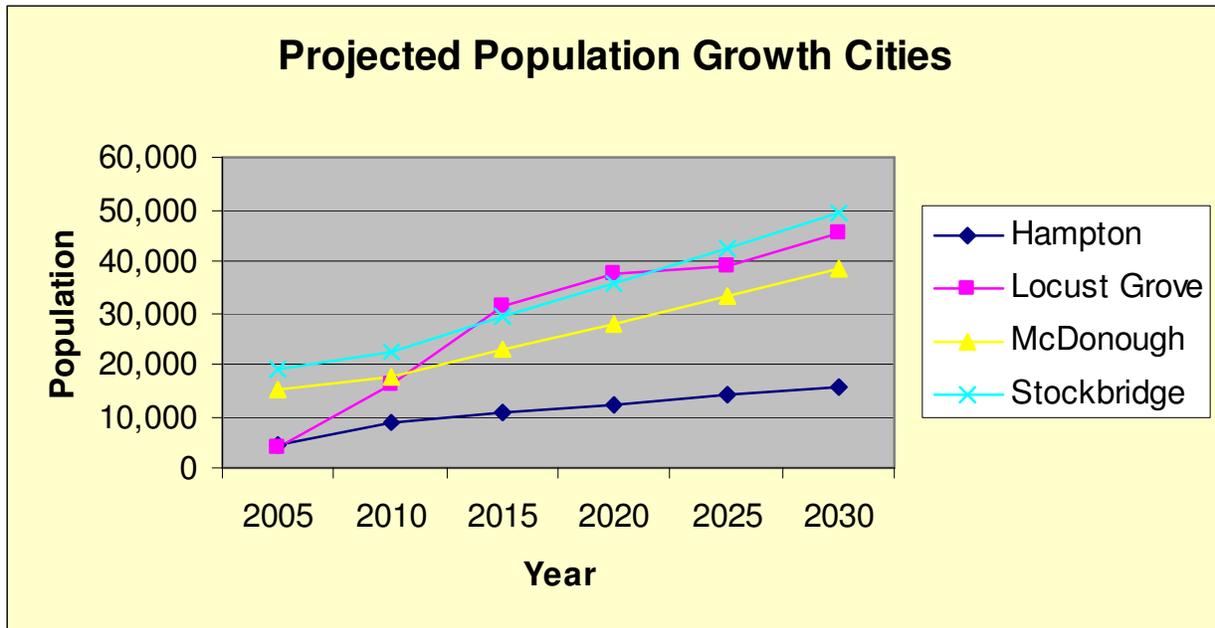
Henry County as a whole has witnessed exceptional population growth over the past five years, at approximately 8 percent per year. From 2000 to 2005, according to the US Census Bureau, the County was the 7th fastest growing County in the nation and 2nd fastest in Georgia. High levels of growth are expected to continue until the year 2030. The projections used in this plan for Henry County are based on an “Adjusted ARC” population projection for the County. This projection is considered to be the most accurate because it applies widely accepted ARC growth rates to very recent population estimates. Using the most recent ARC estimates, the population is expected to grow from 176,900 in 2006 to 429,360 in 2030. The County is projected to add roughly 10,494 new residents every year. This equates to approximately 4,460 new housing units per year. The unincorporated portion of the County and its cities are expected to grow at similarly high rates.



The cities of Hampton and Locust Grove had relatively small populations in 2006, of 5,120 and 4,256 respectively, compared to



McDonough and Stockbridge with populations of 16,445 and 20,130 respectively. While Locust Grove is expected to have its growth rate steeply increase over the next 25 years, Hampton is expected to experience a slight peak between 2005 and 2010 with the growth rate becoming comparatively moderate for the remainder of the planning period. Hampton's population is projected to increase to just fewer than 15,500 by 2030. Locust Grove, on the other hands, is expected to grow tenfold in the same timeframe. These differences in long-term trends reflect variations in the Cities' plans to accept or limit further growth via such policy strategies as annexation and zoning.

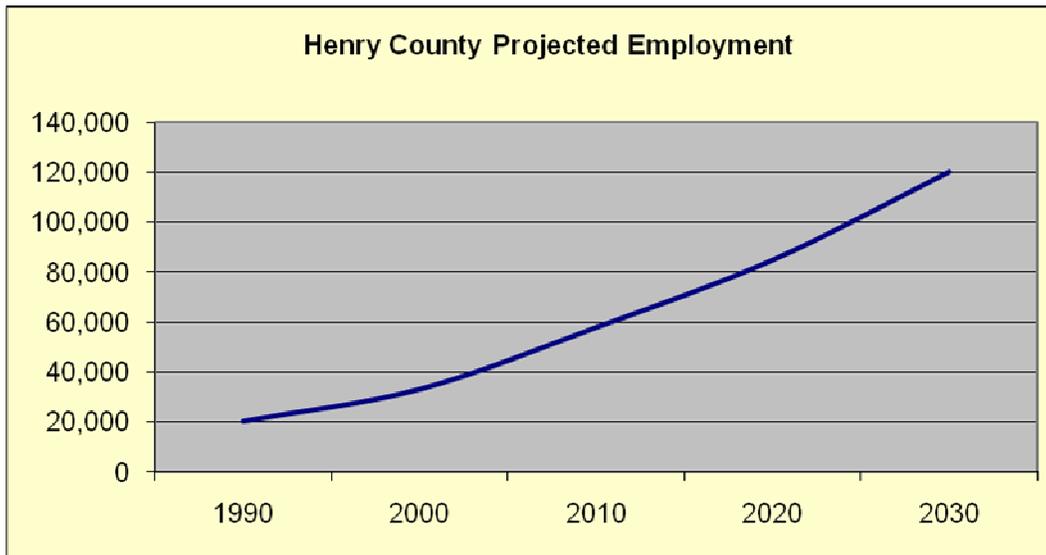


The Cities of McDonough and Stockbridge are also projected to grow at high rates, although they differ from Hampton and Locust Grove in that their substantial growth began in the 1990s. McDonough and Stockbridge are projected to add 23,612 and 30,164 new residents respectively by 2030. This approximates 927 new residents a year for McDonough and 1,207 new residents for Stockbridge.

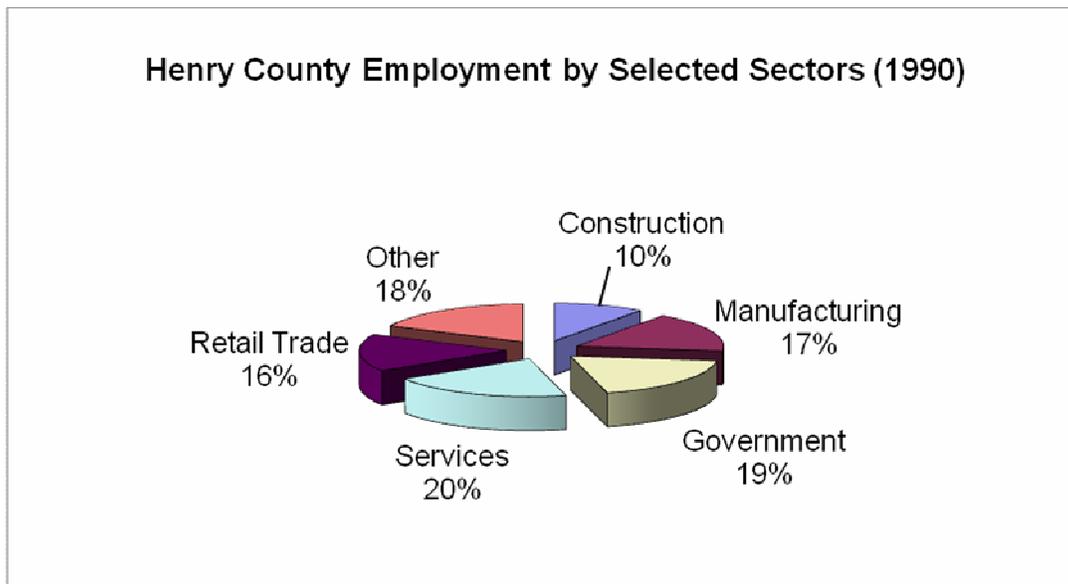
2.3 Employment

Employment is projected to rise along with population in the County. The ARC estimates that county employment will climb from 48,018 in 2005 to 120,369 in 2030. This is an approximate increase of 2,894 jobs a year. According to the Georgia Department of Labor the unemployment rate is low in the County, only being 4 percent in 2004.

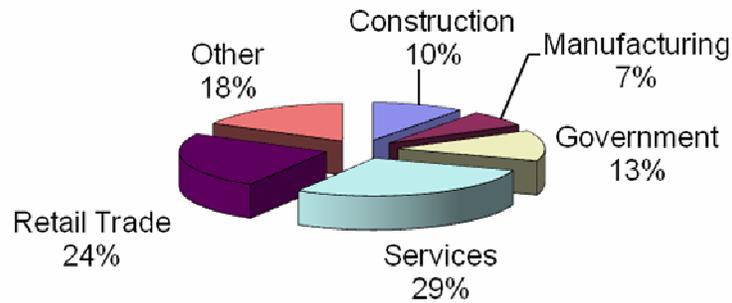




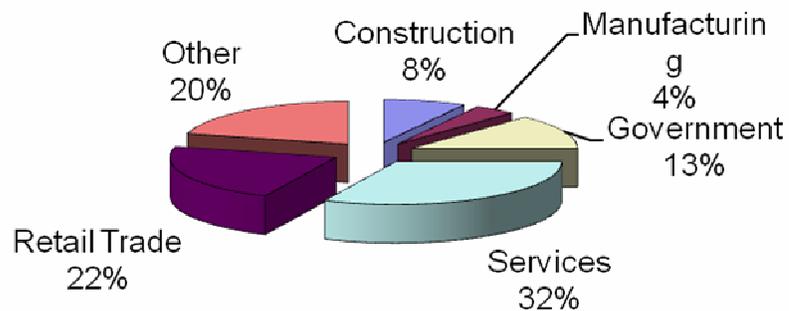
The sheer size as well as the composition of employment is predicted to change by 2030. As illustrated in following pie charts, certain employment sectors are projected to shrink or grow. The construction sector which comprised 10% of total employment in 1990 and 2000 is expected to shrink to 8 percent. The manufacturing industry which saw a drastic 10 percent shrinkage, from 17 percent to 7 percent, between 1990 and 2000, will continue to decrease its share to 4 percent in 2030. Government employment will remain steady from 2000 to 2030 at 13 percent. Retail trade will shrink from 24 percent to 22 percent. The Services sector will increase from 29 percent to 32 percent. The 2 percent increase in other sectors results from increases in TCU (transportation, communications and utilities) and wholesale trade. The economic restructuring the County is predicted to experience should be carefully planned for. Steps should be taken to ensure residents in the shrinking manufacturing, retail trade and construction sectors have the skills necessary to transition into the growing services, TCU and wholesale trade sectors.



Henry County Employment by Selected Sectors (2000)



Henry County Employment by Selected Sectors (2030)



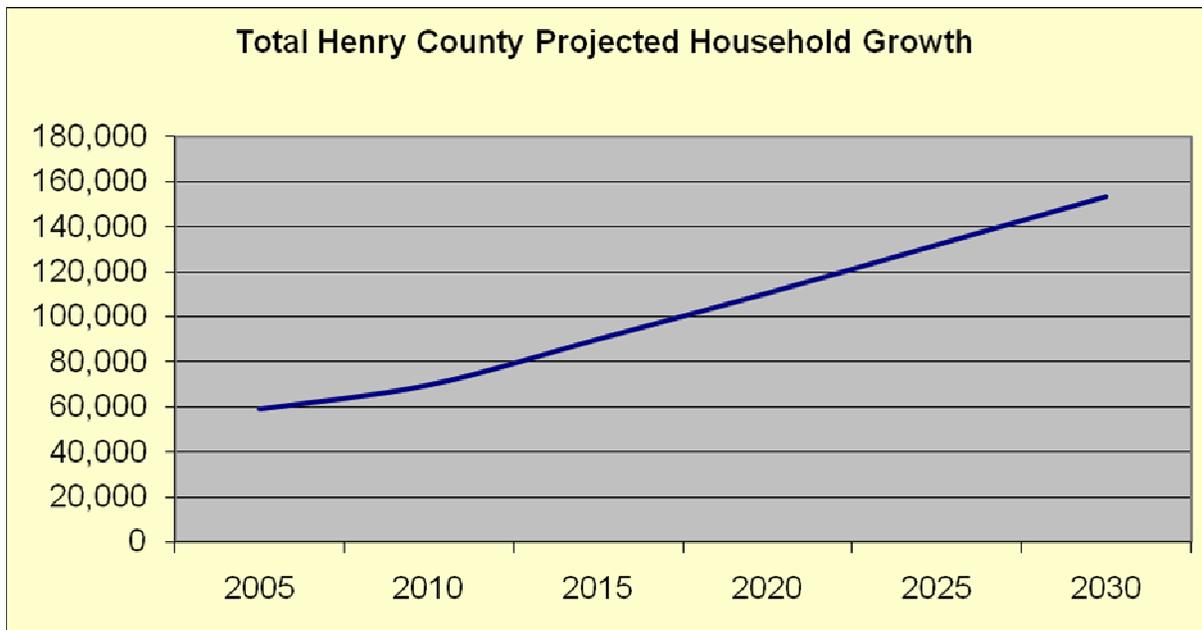
2.4 Households

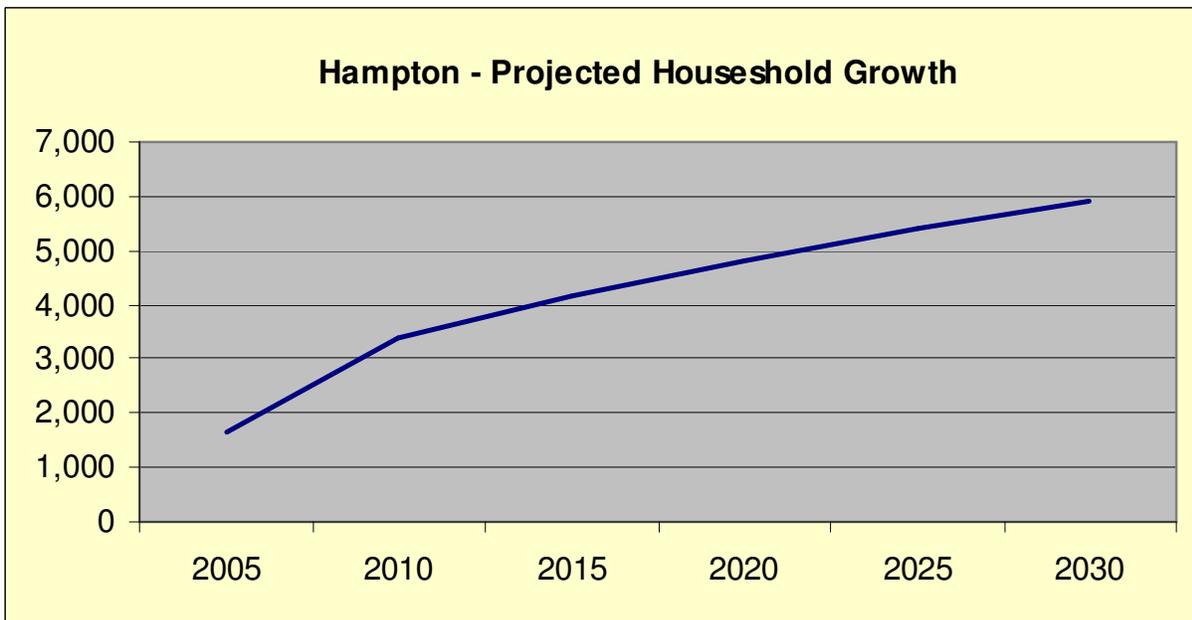
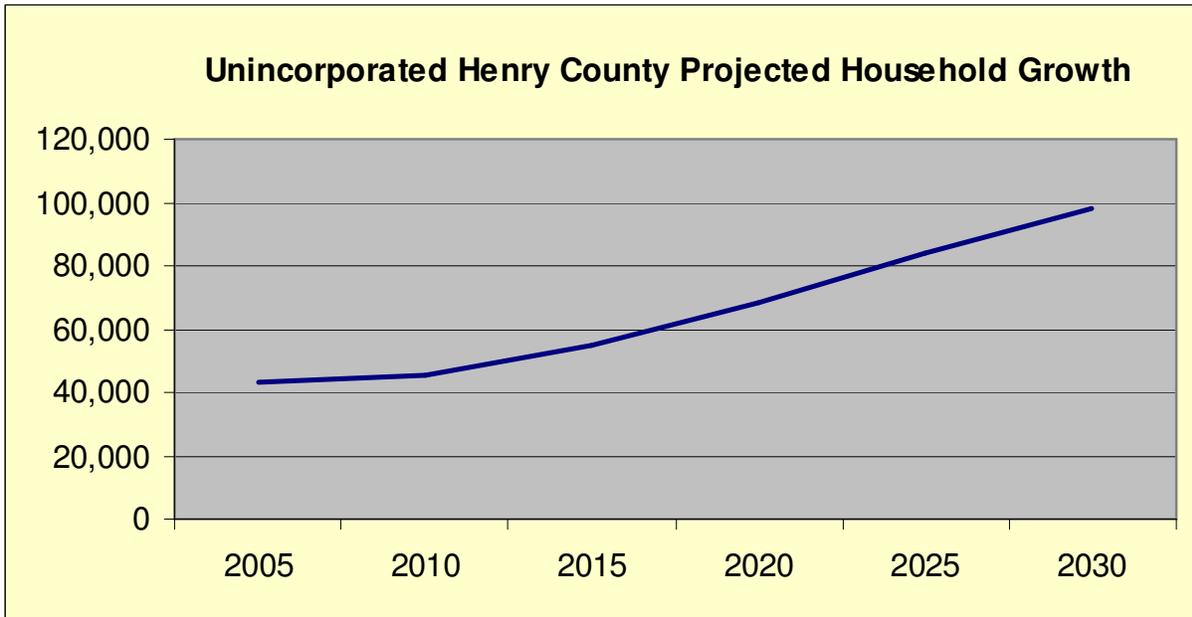
Total households are the primary indicator for housing demand. Household projections are particularly important to look at in areas where household size is shrinking. Total households in the County are predicted to increase at a fairly constant rate of 3,765 per year. In 2006 there were 67,973 households and in 2030 there will be an estimated 153,343 households.



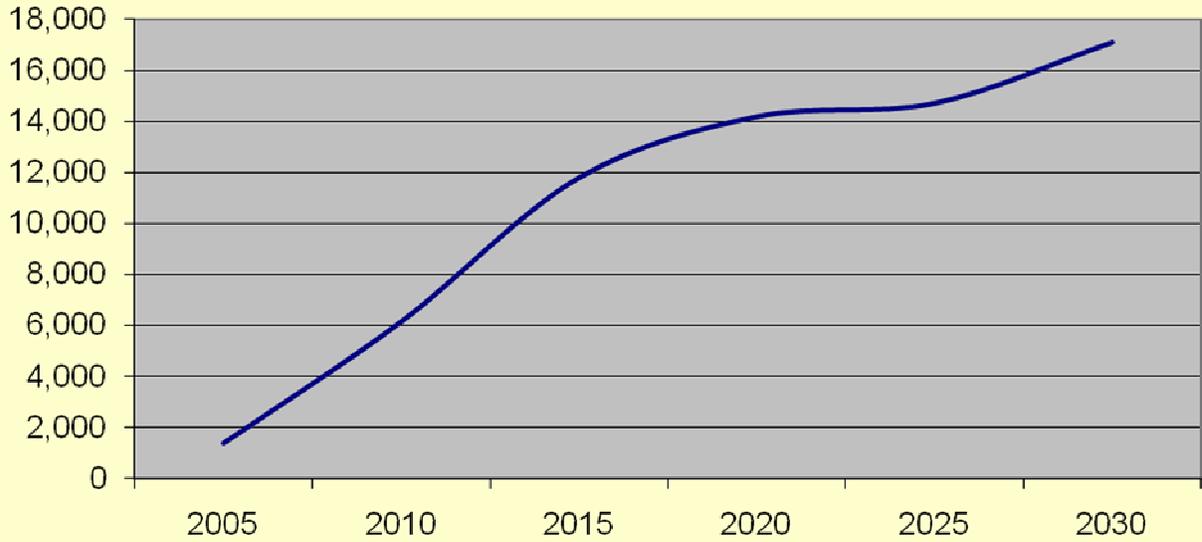
Households in the four cities are also projected to increase. As seen from the following graphs, the City of Hampton is expected to see a sharp increase from 2005 to 2010 and after that grow at a steady rate. Locust Grove is expected to grow at a steady rate until approximately 2017 to 2025 where it plateaus and then continues to grow steadily again. The Cities of McDonough and Stockbridge show a fairly constant growth rate over the time frame, like that of the County.

One measure closely tied to household numbers is jobs-housing balance. A balanced community strives to have at the very minimum one job for every household in its jurisdiction. A ratio of 1.5 jobs per household is considered ideal, since more than one person on average in any household works. Bedroom communities typically have low ratios, which require a large proportion of their residents to commute outside of the area for employment. Currently Henry County has a jobs-housing balance of 0.95, and given projected employment and household figures the ratio is predicted to worsen. With projected employment gains of 2,894 positions per year by 2030 and projected household gains of 3,765 per year, this adds a future growth ratio of 0.77. This additional discrepancy will lower the already low 0.95 jobs-housing ratio even further. It should be stressed, however, that this trend of a lowering jobs-housing ratio is not a goal of this plan. In fact, many community leaders have stressed that the community's future vision is one where the jobs-housing balance is improved and employment opportunities for local residents are consistent with their job skills. The projections described here, simply point out the need for active economic development to achieve the community's vision.

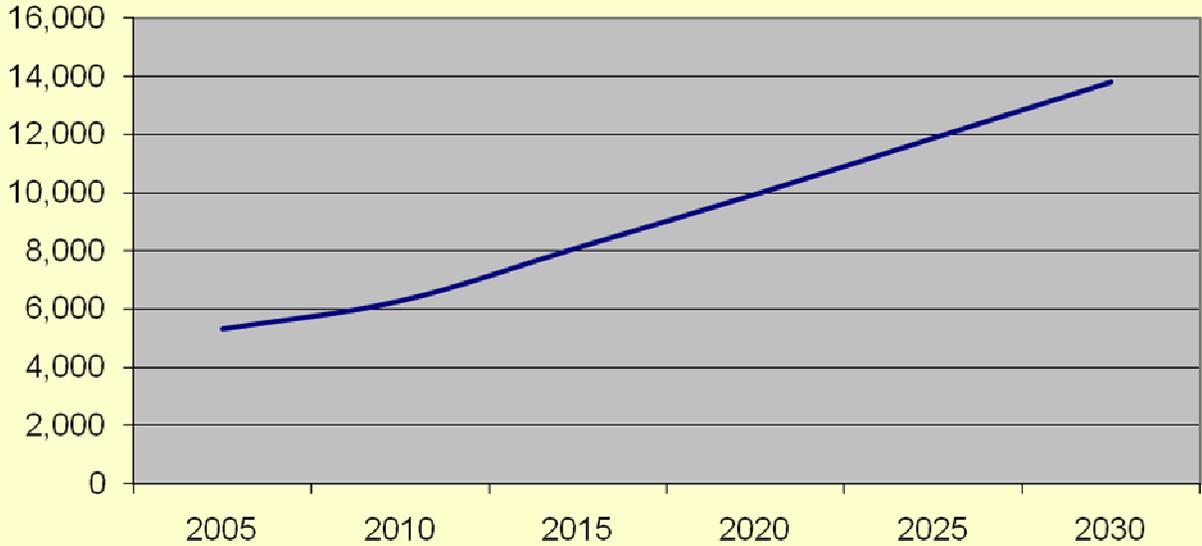


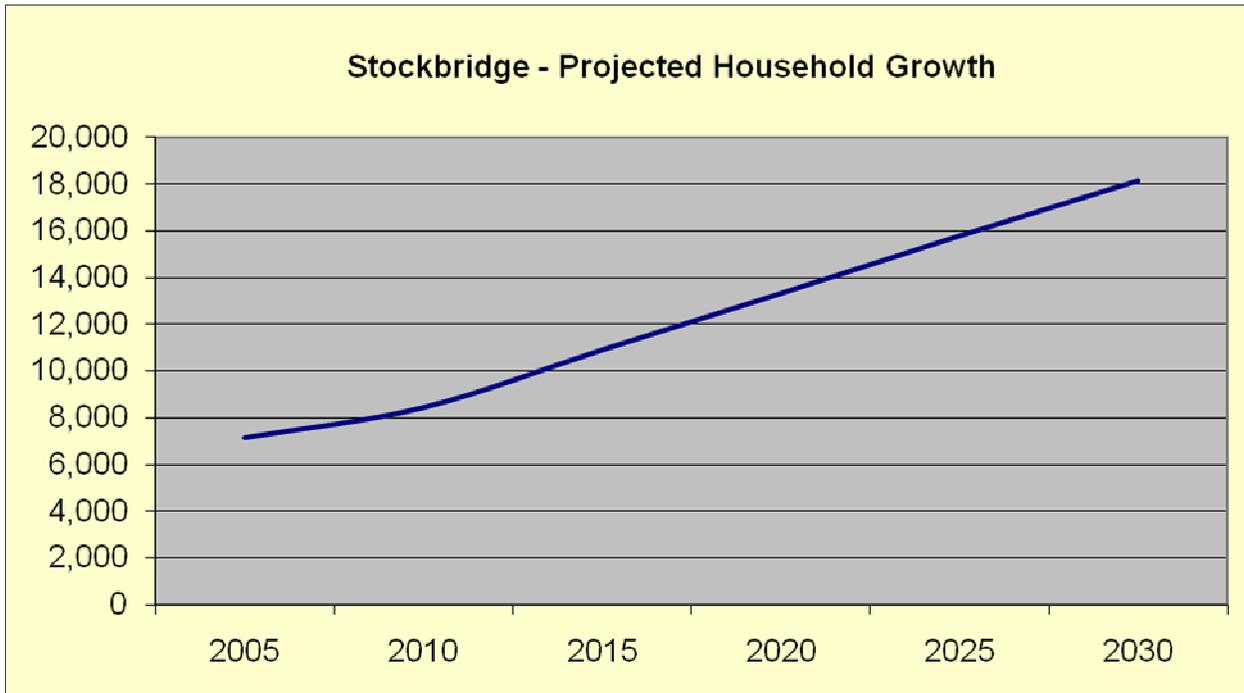


Locust Grove - Projected Household Growth



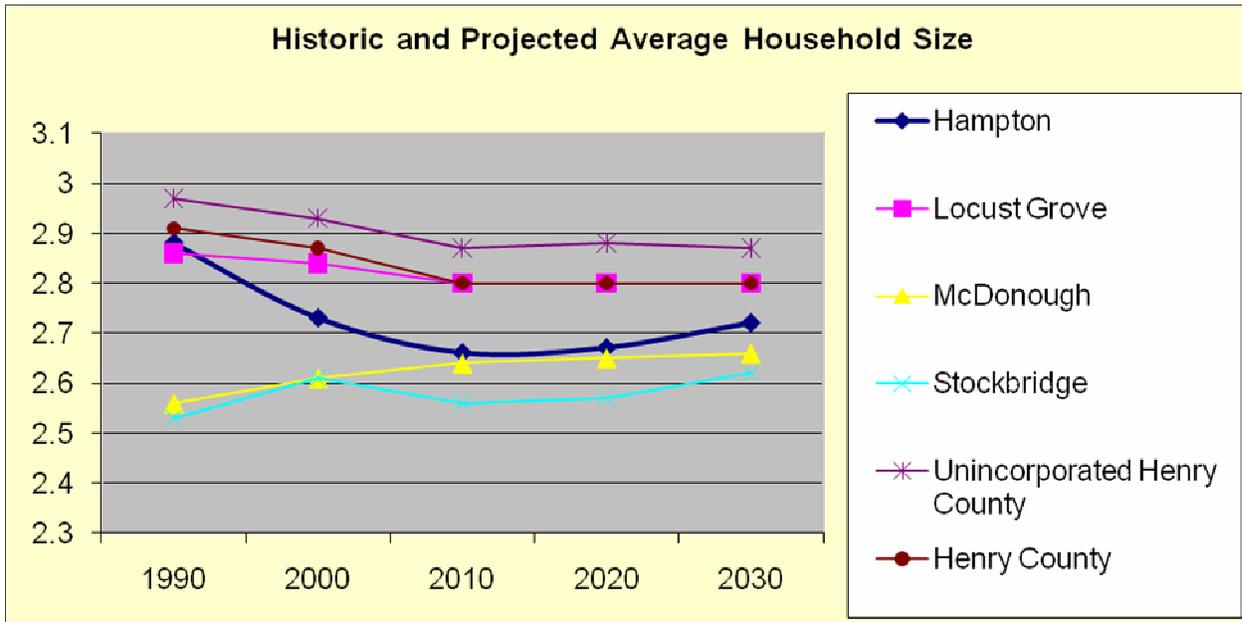
McDonough - Projected Household Growth





As seen in the following chart, the projected household size varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. The predominant trend over the past 25 years has been for household size to diminish. This represents the increasing amount of single or childless households in the County. This trend is expected to level off by 2030 for the majority of the County. This being the result of more singles moving into the County moderated by the echo boom generation's (children of the baby boomers) marrying and establishing families. The echo boom's influence will be felt more significantly in the cities of Hampton, McDonough, and Stockbridge who show their household sizes increasing after the year 2010. Overall, the County will remain fairly stable with an average household size of 2.87 in 2006 and decreasing slightly to 2.80 in 2030. (2006 ARC estimate)





2.5 Summary

These projections provide a foundation for effectively planning for the future of the county and cities. By preparing for anticipated outcomes the municipalities can help ensure there will be proper infrastructure in place to accommodate the needs of future residents. An important point of clarification to be made is that these projections are not inevitable. The degree of population, household, and employment growth is very much dependant on the future actions of community leaders. These estimates merely show the continuation of current and anticipated trends.



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