

Demographic Analysis

It is difficult to plan for a community's future needs without a clear understanding of the population characteristics that currently exist and the projections for growth trends over the life of the plan. The demographic analysis provides a barometer for gauging where the population growth will occur in the next decade and the composite nature of the growth. Without a good road map, you will not arrive at your destination in the most efficient way.

Blount County encompasses a total of 559 square miles, ranking 23rd of the 95 Tennessee counties. The 2000 U. S. Census records a total county population of 105,823, the 11th most populated county in the state, and a population density of 189.5 persons per square mile, ranking 14th in the state. This density may need to be adjusted if comparisons are to be made with other counties of similar size due to the significant acreage in the south of the county that is part of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Projected Growth Rates

The most current U. S. Census 2000 figures show Alcoa with a population of 7,734, Maryville with a population of 23,119 (of which 1,300 are students, faculty and staff at Maryville College), and the combined population of Blount County with a population of 105,823. Alcoa, Maryville and Blount County are experiencing a growth rate that exceeds that of the United States as a whole as well as that of the state of Tennessee. For the purposes of this section of the report, Blount County figures and comments will refer just to the county, excluding Maryville and Alcoa. MAB will refer to the combined demographics of the entire county. During the period between 1990 and 2000 Alcoa had a 20.8% population increase; Maryville had a 15.5% increase; Blount County had a 28.3% increase; and the MAB had a 23.10% increase. With the exception of the City of Maryville, the county increase far exceeded the national growth rate of 13.2% and the Tennessee rate of 16.7%. Estimates for 2004 and projections for 2014 continue with growth rates of almost twice that of the State of Tennessee. It is important to note that the City of Alcoa's annexation of additional land accounted for some of the 1990 – 2000 growth.

Population Growth Rate Comparisons

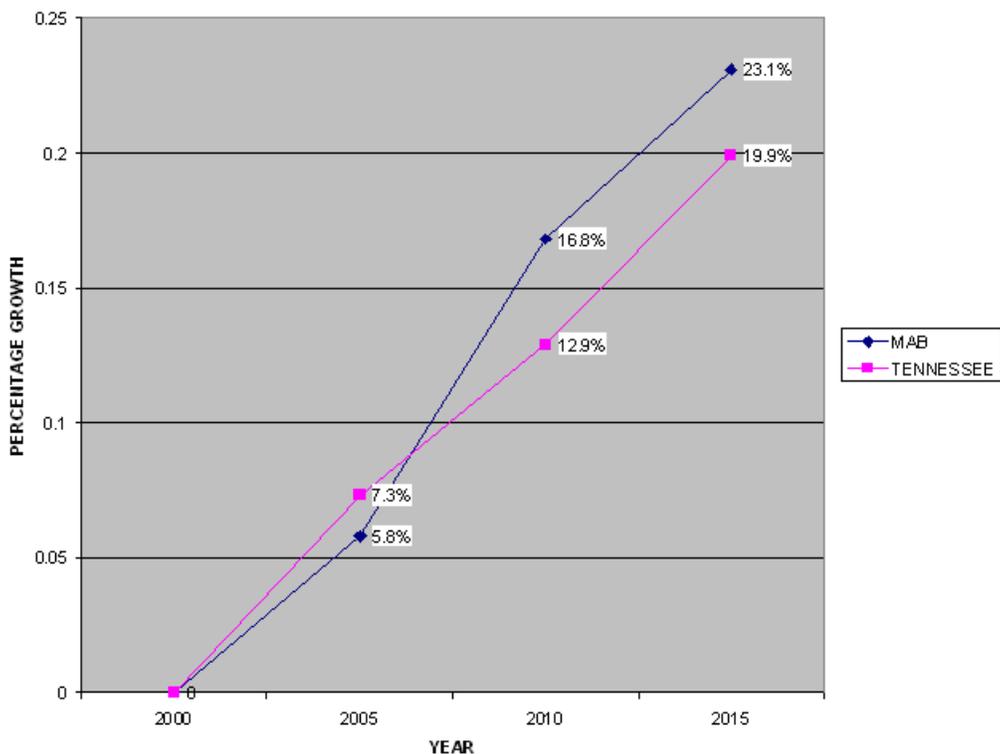
	1990 Total Population	2000 total Population	Percent Change	2004 Estimate	2000-2004 % Change	2014 Projection	2004-2014 % Change
United States	248,710,012	281,421,906	13.20%	294,800,913	4.75%	323,565,799	9.76%
Tennessee	4,877,187	5,689,283	16.70%	5,897,294	3.66%	6,344,501	7.58%
Alcoa*	6,400	7,734	20.80%	8,162	5.53%	9,134	11.91%
Blount County (only)	59,547	74,970	28.30%	80,876	7.88%	93,541	15.66%
Maryville	20,022	23,119	15.50%	24,540	6.15%	27,569	12.34%
MAB	85,969	105,823	23.10%	113,578	7.33%	130,244	14.67%

*City of Alcoa increase from 1990 to 2000 due in part to annexation.

The chart on the previous page shows that the greatest growth will occur in the county, outside the two major incorporated cities. The figures in the above chart are extrapolated from both the U. S. Census 2000 figures with projections and data from Demographics Now. In addition to these sources, the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations and The University of Tennessee Center for Business and Economic Research published “Population Projections for the State of Tennessee 2005 to 2025” in December 2003. Projected population numbers in this report are not significantly different from the numbers in the chart above, but they are somewhat lower. Some relative data in this report includes:

- Of the five largest cities in Tennessee (Memphis, Nashville, Knoxville, Chattanooga and Clarksville), Knoxville is projected to have the second highest growth rate at 26.9% from 2005 to 2025.
- Neighboring Sevier County is projected to have the second highest growth rate in the state for this period at 95%.
- Loudon County, the contingent county to the west, is one of only six counties in Tennessee, and the only county in East Tennessee, to fall into the second highest tier of growth projections (60 to 79 percent growth) at a projection of 64%.

Percentage Growth Rate Comparisons Between MAB and Tennessee - Base Year 2000 to Year 2015



Several significant assumptions can be made from this data. Blount County is projected to experience a 36% growth from 2005 to 2025. However, one may assume the potential to exceed that rate with the projected adjacent counties’ spillover growth. Sevier County’s growth has been concentrated in the tourist destinations of Pigeon Forge, Sevierville and Gatlinburg. A different type of growth is occurring in the Townsend area – not necessarily tourist-related, but retirees and seasonal second homes. These are people who appreciate the beauty and restfulness of the mountains and prefer to stay far away from commercial development.

The chart above is a visual representation of how the MAB growth rate is projected to surpass that of the state as a whole.

Growth Within Age Segments

In forecasting and planning recreation development, it is important to look at the demographic age segments and projections. The “Population by Age” chart below indicates that special consideration should be given to the large baby-boom population segment as it moves from the 45+ age group to the 65+ age group. Whereas the percentage of persons age 0 – 17 remains fairly constant over the report period, the young adult group between 18 and 44 shows a decrease. The boomers, ages 45 – 64, show a growth in percentage of population from 25.29% in 2000 to almost 30% by 2014. This is an energetic and generally participatory group in park and recreation activities as they tend to be empty-nesters with more time to spend than when they were raising families. Attention should be given to some of the activities most often utilized by this age group: tennis, swimming, golf, walking, hiking and running. Examining results of the survey taken in February 2004, this hypothesis was borne out by the number of respondents indicating current activity in these areas.

Population by Age

	Age 0-17	%	Age 18-44	%	Age 45-64	%	Age 65+	%
Alcoa 2000	1,673	21.63%	2,947	38.10%	1,829	23.65%	1,285	16.61%
Alcoa 2004 est	1,775	21.67%	2,940	35.89%	2,058	25.13%	1,418	17.31%
Alcoa 2014 proj	1,878	20.53%	3,018	32.99%	2,505	27.39%	1,746	19.09%
Percent Change	12%		2%		37%		36%	
Blount Co. 2000	17,224	22.90%	28,390	37.75%	19,876	26.43%	9,711	12.91%
Blount Co. 2004 est	18,161	22.57%	29,152	36.23%	22,843	28.39%	10,305	12.81%
Blount Co. 2014 proj	20,471	21.62%	30,613	32.33%	29,013	30.64%	14,583	15.40%
Percent Change	18.85%		7.83%		45.97%		50.17%	
Maryville 2000	5,233	22.48%	8,580	36.85%	5,157	22.15%	4,312	18.52%
Maryville 2004 est	5,602	23.08%	8,468	34.89%	5,804	23.91%	4,396	18.11%
Maryville 2014 proj	6,048	21.63%	8,618	30.82%	7,236	25.88%	6,057	21.66%
Percent Change	15.57%		0.44%		40.31%		40.47%	
MAB 2000	24,130	22.72%	39,917	37.58%	26,862	25.29%	15,308	14.41%
MAB 2004 est	25,538	22.62%	40,560	35.92%	30,705	27.19%	16,119	14.27%
MAB 2014 proj	28,397	21.55%	42,249	32.06%	38,754	29.41%	22,386	16.99%
Percent Change	17.68%		5.84%		44.27%		46.24%	

The largest percent change projected by 2014 is in the age group 65+ with predictions of a 46.24% increase. In the past, this age group was viewed as senior citizens with sedentary activity levels and interests. Today’s 70-year-old is generally far from that description. Many are retired with both disposable income and flexible time. With a unique awareness of the benefits of healthy exercise to the quality of their lives, many remain active in sports longer than prior generations. This group participates in the same activities as the 45 – 64 age group. Additionally, indications from the survey are that local concerts at parks would be highly attended as well as special events. Aquatic activity is especially beneficial to the older segment of seniors while also appealing to all ages. This 65+ age group is generally interested in daytime activity whereas the younger, working adults with families have nights and weekends free to participate in programs. This age group is also a wealthy pool of potential volunteers.

Average Household Income, Employment Profile and Education Attainment

	Average Household Income	Employed Blue Collar	Employed White Collar	High School Graduates	Education Beyond High School
United States 2000	\$56,675	39.30%	60.70%	29.20%	52.60%
Tennessee 2000	\$48,717	44.50%	55.50%	32.50%	45.10%
Alcoa 2000	\$40,666	44.10%	55.90%	33.20%	50.30%
Blount Co. 2000	\$50,939	53.50%	46.50%	43.20%	31.50%
Maryville 2000	\$51,426	40.40%	59.60%	28.90%	52.30%
MAB 2000	\$47,677	46.00%	54.00%	35.10%	44.70%

Education, income and employment category are all important indicators of the type of recreation opportunities a community should plan for in a parks and recreation master plan. The chart above indicates that the City of Maryville (\$51,426) and Blount County (\$50,939) residents have an average household income somewhat higher than the state average of \$48,717. Alcoa’s average household income is quite a bit lower at \$40,666.

The education statistics represent those residents, age 25 and older, and the top level of education attained. The “High School Graduates” column represents the percentage of adults over 25 who attained a high school degree but did not pursue further education. The percentages in the last column represent the citizens who went beyond high school. The two columns added together and subtracted from 100 will give you the percentage of adults who did not finish high school. Both Alcoa and Maryville have a population of greater than 50% who have an education level beyond high school. Well over 50% are employed in white-collar jobs – 55.9% in Alcoa and 59.6% in Maryville. Blount County residents have a lower level of beyond-high school education yet have a high level of high school graduates at 43.2%. Averages for blue-collar employment in the county (53.5%) vs. white collar (46.5%) is just the opposite from the two municipalities.

What does this tell us about the county as a whole? When you look at the growth rates for the municipalities and the county, then the MAB, projections would indicate that the percentages for income, education and employment would tend to level out as growth in the county increases at a faster pace than in the cities.

Racial/Ethnic Demographics

One other important demographic qualifier to look at is the racial/ethnic composition of the area. In many parts of the country, the Hispanic population increase has been so significant that parks and recreation departments have had to reorganize their program offerings to accommodate the particular interests of this segment. While the percentage increase of the Hispanic population in MAB looks large at 419%, the actual number projected for 2014 (1,910) represents only 1.6% of the total population compared to almost 14% nationally.

Population by Race/Ethnicity*

	White	%	Black	%	Hispanic	%
United States 1990	199,686,676	80.30%	29,986,018	12.10%	22,353,238	9.00%
United States 2000	211,460,626	75.10%	34,658,190	12.30%	35,305,818	12.50%
United States 2008 est	229,984,887	74.90%	37,673,097	12.30%	48,300,328	13.80%
Percent Change	15.2%		25.6%		116.1%	
Tennessee 1990	4,048,066	83.00%	778,034	16.00%	32,740	0.70%
Tennessee 2000	4,563,310	80.20%	932,809	16.40%	123,838	2.20%
Tennessee 2008 est	4,880,947	80.20%	997,739	16.40%	208,031	3.40%
Percent Change	20.6%		28.2%		535.4%	
Alcoa 1990	6,126	81.30%	1,356	18.00%	39	0.50%
Alcoa 2000	6,258	80.90%	1,273	16.50%	136	1.80%
Alcoa 2008 est	6,858	80.30%	1,463	17.10%	224	2.60%
Percent Change	11.9%		7.9%		474.4%	
Blount Co 1990	57,227	97.90%	803	0.01%	221	0.40%
Blount Co 2000	72,246	96.40%	1,137	0.02%	706	1.60%
Blount Co 2008 est	82,906	96.20%	1,459	0.02%	1,224	2.00%
Percent Change	44.9%		81.7%		453.8%	
Maryville 1990	19,149	95.60%	623	3.10%	108	0.50%
Maryville 2000	21,737	94.00%	667	2.90%	278	1.50%
Maryville 2008 est	24,242	93.90%	773	3.00%	462	1.80%
Percent Change	26.6%		24.1%		327.8%	
MAB 1990	82,502	96.00%	2,782	3.20%	368	0.40%
MAB 2000	100,241	94.70%	3,077	2.90%	1,120	1.10%
MAB 2008 est	114,006	94.50%	3,695	3.10%	1,910	1.60%
Percent Change	38.2%		32.8%		419.0%	

Source: Demographics Now

As with the Hispanic population, the Black population, typical of East Tennessee, is minor compared to the nation and to the State of Tennessee. The projected MAB 2014 percentage is 3.1%, the national projected percentage is 12.3% and the Tennessee percentage is 16.4%. The figures for both Hispanic and Black, even though they are far below the averages elsewhere, do not indicate that these market segments should be ignored in planning for parks and recreation. With projected populations by 2014 of 1,910 and 3,695 respectively, they represent a major population source for participation in programs. The Asian population is also important to note in MAB. Asians were not included in the charts because the total number represents less than one percent of the county's population. However the total of 786 reported for the county in the 2000 Census is a significant figure for this predominantly white county. Almost half of the Asian population lives in Maryville, the other half in the county. Only 20 are residents of Alcoa. This unexpected high number of Asians could be due to the highly technical positions at the Alcoa Plant along with the collegiate staff positions at Maryville College.

Residential Building Permits

Another method of predicting growth patterns in an area is to look at the recent years' residential building permits issued. This figure generally indicates an increase in families moving into the area. The latest figures available for the City of Maryville are figures from 2000. In 2000, there were 126 single-family detached home permits issued, up from 106 the previous year. There were 9 permits issued for single-family attached homes (condominiums), up from 0 in 1999. At an average of 2.6 members per household, that represents housing for approximately 351 new residents in the city during that year.

Numbers available from the City of Alcoa are from July 2002 to June 2003, recording 123 new residential permits. Alcoa's average of 2.2 members per household would indicate a total of 271 new residents in single-family homes during the year. The MAB total had approximately 700 residential permits issued in 2003. (This number also includes the city permits that were issued.) At 2.5 average residents per household, a total of 1,750 residents would have moved into the county.

Conclusions

All data indicates a significant growth over the next ten years for Blount County and the cities and towns within the county. Maryville is the most built out segment of the county, yet there still remains available land for recreation acquisition within the city. The acreage that reports show as available may not, however, be appropriate for active parks due to the nature of the terrain. Certainly there is available land within the county, however, the mapping reports of available land may be deceptive as to the viability of active park construction due to the terrain. Certainly, with the projected population rate increase, land prices will rise and availability will diminish. It is essential to identify potential acquisition sites in order to provide sufficient recreation opportunities to all residents of the county.

The proximity of Gatlinburg, Sevierville, Pigeon Forge and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park should provide an important incentive to any league or group of recreation participants in planning their tournament sites. This opportunity is unique to the area and should of prime consideration when planning facilities. Visitor count to the Great Smoky Mountain National Park continues to increase yearly with a total of 10,263,600 in 2002. The top ten markets that the area draws from are:

1. Cincinnati, OH
2. Nashville, TN
3. Knoxville, TN
4. Atlanta, GA
5. Louisville, KY
6. Birmingham, AL
7. Indianapolis, IN
8. Greenville-Spartanburg-Ashville
9. Bristol-Kingsport-Johnson City
10. Dayton, OH

A review of the largest participation and team sports in these markets may also prove helpful in determining future competition facilities the county would want to develop.

Current Parks and Recreation Delivery

Traditionally, planning for all recreation delivery is approached from the standpoint of how much of the population is served within a ¼ -mile radius for mini parks, ½-mile radius for neighborhood parks, and a 2-mile/5-mile service area for community parks. In looking at Maryville, Alcoa and Blount County, all of the parks, with the exception of Louisville Point Park, a community park in Louisville, are concentrated within the two cities of Maryville and Alcoa; the community parks overlap the neighborhood parks and the one mini park, Richard Williams Park. There is minimal recreation delivery to county residents living further than five miles outside these two cities.

In evaluating the population growth rate comparison chart, projections show a greater rate of growth within Blount County than within the two cities. There is a timely opportunity, then, to formulate a plan that will serve all citizens of the MAB area. Options include plans for new neighborhood parks in areas of somewhat isolated high density, several new community parks strategically placed throughout the county to serve most of the areas of high density in the county, and/or a large regional park offering many services and programs that would serve the entire county including Maryville and Alcoa with tournament-quality facilities.