

Introduction

The Albemarle County *Community Profile* began in 2003 as a project commissioned by the County Executive Office. The purpose of the *Community Profile* is to establish a source of data that will help inform discussions of current policy issues and trends in the county. The *Community Profile* is organized by the five strategic goals of the Albemarle County Strategic Plan:

- Enhance the quality of life;
- Protect the County's natural resources;
- Develop policies and infrastructure improvements to address the County's growing needs;
- Effectively manage the County's growth and development; and
- Fund the County's future needs.

The 2008 Albemarle County *Community Profile* updates much of the information that has changed in the past several years, and includes new information that the County Executive Office believes will be useful to the Board of Supervisors, County staff, and the community at large. The following pages highlight several interesting facts about Albemarle County.

The County Executive Office would like to take this opportunity to recognize County staff members who helped contribute to the production of the 2008 *Community Profile*. Many thanks go to Pat Mullaney, Margaret Maliszewski, Derek Bedarf, Lisa Gilliam, Jennifer Behrens, Capt. John Parrent, Deputy Chief John Oprandy, Lori Allshouse, Brenda Neitz, and Laura Vinzant for their guidance and assistance.

Sincerely,

Steven A. Allshouse
Coordinator of Research and Analysis

Community Profile Highlights

Enhance the Quality of Life:

- **Educational Profile**

Total public school enrollment in Albemarle grew by only 16 students between the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years. This numerical growth translated into a percentage increase of only about 0.10%. Since the 1998-99 school year, total enrollment has risen by 658 pupils, or about 5.5%; this figure means that, on average, the Schools Division enrollment has risen by about 82 students per year, or at an annual rate of 0.67%. Between school year 2002-03 and 2006-07, however, the respective numbers were only 37 and 0.30%. [p. 4].

- **Demographic Profile**

Albemarle remains an attractive place to live, as evidenced by the proportion of the County's population growth that is due to net migration. Between 1990 and 2006, roughly 50% to 84% of the annual increase in Albemarle's population resulted from net migration; in eleven of the years during this time period, the figure was 70% or higher. [p. 6].

- **Business Profile – Taxable Sales**

Since 1997 taxable sales in the County have increased [p.13] but, in per-capita terms, Albemarle's taxable sales are only at a level that is in the middle of the County's peer jurisdictions. [p. 14]. When Albemarle's per-capita taxable sales are measured as a percentage of the average of peer county taxable sales, however, Albemarle's trend line between 1997 and 2007 was positive [p. 18]. This fact means that per-capita taxable sale in the County generally were trending toward convergence with the average per-capita taxable sales level of the County's peer localities.

- **Business Profile – Total Employment**

The total number of jobs in Albemarle County increased roughly 53% between 1997 and 2007 [p. 19]. By the end of this time period, the total number of jobs in the County essentially equaled the total number of employed residents [p. 21]], a fact that illustrates that Albemarle has become a major employment center, rather than just a "bedroom" community. As further evidence of this transition, Albemarle since 2002 has become a bigger employment center than is the City of Charlottesville and the gap between the total number of jobs in Albemarle and the total number of jobs in Charlottesville continues to widen [p. 24]. Just as importantly, since 2006, Albemarle has had the *majority of jobs* in the Charlottesville metropolitan area [p. 25].

- **Business Profile – Unemployment**
Albemarle’s unemployment rate is lower than the peer county average, as well as the Virginia and U.S. rates, [p. 26]. In the past year, however, the County’s unemployment rate has jumped to a level not seen in over ten years [p. 27].
- **Workforce Profile**
During the years 2002-07, Albemarle experienced steady, healthy job growth, with the private sector generating 70% of the net growth [p. 34]. The inflation-adjusted average weekly wage grew by a total of about 8% during this time period [p. 37].
- **Public Safety**
Since 2004, the crime rate per 100,000 residents has increased but, between 2005 and 2007 inclusive, the rate has remained fairly steady [p. 41]. Between 2002 and 2005 the fire and rescue call load jumped, but remained relatively flat in 2006 and 2007.
- **Housing Profile**
The median sale price of dwelling units in Albemarle peaked in 2006 and declined in 2007 [p. 47]; Albemarle has the least affordable for-sale housing stock in the Charlottesville area, but a substantial proportion of dwelling units in the County are in an “affordable” range [p. 48]; and after 2004, housing prices in Albemarle entered “bubble” territory [p. 50].

Protect Natural Resources:

- **National Register Historic District**
Albemarle also has dozens of registered historic properties, including many in a National Register Historic District [p. 73].
- **Acquisition of Conservation Easements**
Between FY 2007-08 and FY 2011-12, the County has budgeted \$8.6 million toward the acquisition of conservation easements [p. 76].

Develop Policies and Infrastructure to Address Growing Needs:

- **CIP funding**
The County has an adopted five year CIP that will expend over \$188 million between FY 2007-08 and FY 2011-12 on items such as schools projects, neighborhood development, public safety, libraries, and various other capital projects [p. 76].

Effectively Manage Growth and Development

- **Development Profile**

Albemarle continues to face challenges in encouraging growth to occur in the County's development areas. In 2007 76% of Albemarle's residential building permits were issued in the development areas, but this number has bounced around substantially since 2000, with a low of 53% in 2004 and a high of 82% in 2002 [p. 80].

Fund Future Needs

- **Financial Profile**

Albemarle has the lowest net bonded debt vs. assessed valuation of taxable property ratio among its peer counties, and this ratio places Albemarle below the average of other AAA-rated Virginia counties [p.88]. The County has the lowest debt service-to-revenues ratio among the peer counties, and is below the average of AAA-rated Virginia counties [p. 89].