

Community Profile Highlights

Educational Opportunities:

- **High Level of Educational Attainment**
The 2000 Census revealed that 53% of Albemarle County residents have received at least their associate's degree or higher. This is well above the state average of 35%. [p. 84]
- **School Demographics**
Total public school enrollment in Albemarle grew by 101 students, from 12,222 to 12,323 in 2004-05. Total state public school enrollment grew roughly 1.3% in that same year. [p. 11] Albemarle County continues to have a smaller percentage of ethnic students than the state average. In Albemarle County, 78.6% of Albemarle students are white versus the state average of 59%. African-Americans make up the largest ethnic group in Albemarle County schools at 13.3%. This last figure is well below the comparable state average of 27%. [p. 13]
- **High Achieving Students**
100% of Albemarle County Schools received full state accreditation this year, up from 96% one year ago. [p. 18] Albemarle County students perform at a higher level academically, and tend to drop out at a consistently lower rate, than do students state-wide. Only 1.37% of Albemarle County students dropped out this year versus the 2.05% state average; however, in 2003-04 the dropout rate of 1.37%, was up from .6% in 2002-03. [p. 22] 80% of Albemarle County graduating students planned on pursuing higher education versus 69% of students statewide. [p. 21]

Natural / Historic Resources Profile

- **Residential Development in Rural and Development Areas**
In 2003 72% of residential development took place in Development Areas and 28% took place in Rural Areas. In 2004 53% were constructed in Development Areas, while 47% of residential units were built in Rural Areas. [p. 33]
- **Decrease in Rural Lots**
For the first time in three years Albemarle County has experienced a decrease in the number of rural lots created that were appropriate size for residential development (<21 acres). Since 2001, the number of new lots created in rural areas each year has more than doubled, from 144 in 2001, to 311 in 2003. In 2004, however, the number of new lots created decreased to 169. [p. 36]

Quality of Life

- **No Longer a Just a “Bedroom” Community**

Prior to the late 1990’s, the number of employed Albemarle residents vastly outnumbered the number of jobs in the County, but this situation has changed. In 2004, for example, the number of employed residents (44,529) nearly equaled the number of jobs (43,822). [pp. 68-70] This situation means that, *in theory*, virtually no employed resident would have to leave the County in order to work. In practice, of course, many employed Albemarle residents work in other jurisdictions, and many residents of other localities work in the County [p. 92], but the near match in the residents and jobs numbers suggests that the County is no longer just a “bedroom” community of Charlottesville. In recent years, in fact, Albemarle has increased its share of the total number of jobs in the Charlottesville Metropolitan Statistical Area by almost nine percentage points, from roughly 40% in 1993 to 49% in 2004. [p. 72]
- **Full Employment**

The unemployment rate among Albemarle residents in 2004 equaled 2.6%. This figure is below the average rate of our peer counties, and is under the state and U.S. rates as well. [p. 73] The County’s unemployment rate falls within the range that most economists would consider “full” employment.
- **Long-Term Decline in Manufacturing’s Share of Employment, but a Rise in Number of Manufacturing Jobs in 2004**

In 1994 the manufacturing sector accounted for about 17% of total employment in Albemarle County and the service sector represented roughly 52%. Between 1994 and 2004 manufacturing’s share declined by ten percentage points, to around 7% of total employment, while the service sector has increased by about ten percentage points, to approximately 62% of the total. [p. 90] *Note, however, that in 2004 there was an increase of 284 manufacturing jobs in Albemarle County. This increase was the first rise in the number of manufacturing jobs since the County began keeping track of this statistic.* [p. 87]
- **Fair Market Value of Real Property Increase**

In 2004 both in nominal and constant dollar terms, the fair market value of real estate in Albemarle County increased well ahead of the peer county average. In constant dollar figures the peer counties’ fair market value of properties increased 7.5%, while in Albemarle County the fair market value of real property increased 19.3% to a total of \$9.765 Billion. [pp. 75-76]
- **Overall Crime Rate has Decreased in Albemarle County**

The crime rate per 100,000 decreased for a fourth consecutive year; in 2004 a 6.8% decrease occurred. [p. 96]

- **Crimes Against Property Decreased in 2004.**
Crimes against property, as reported by the Albemarle County Police Department, dropped by 7.9% in 2004. This figure continues the decline that the County has experienced since 2000. [p. 95]
- **Crimes Against Persons Increased in 2004**
Crimes against persons increased for the first time in three years, increasing by 13.25%. In 2003 reported crimes against persons numbered 928, while in 2004 that number increased to 1,051. Kidnappings were up in 2004 (9 incidents, versus 5 in 2003). Aggravated assault showed a 20% increase, from 55 incidents in 2003 to 66 incidents in 2004. [p. 95]
- **Traffic Accidents Decrease in 2004**
For the first time in 6 years, traffic accidents decreased in Albemarle County. A total of 3,213 traffic accidents occurred in Albemarle in 2004, a decline of 2.5% or 84 incidents from 2003. [p. 98]
- **Housing Affordability is an Issue**
According to Albemarle's 2005 real estate assessment, 64% of homes in the County are valued above \$200,000. [p. 118] The maximum affordability, i.e., what a person who earns an average area income could afford for a home in 2005, is \$192,050. [p. 119] This fact can be interpreted to mean that fewer than 36% of homes in Albemarle County are affordable. It is worth noting that, according to the 2000 census, more houses in Albemarle County were valued under \$100,000 (1,878) than over \$750,000 (1,816). [p. 118]

Effective and Efficient Services

- **Debt Service v. Revenue**
Following Albemarle County policy, the County has maintained a low debt service to revenue percentage again this year. This debt service percentage is lower than the average for both AA rated and AAA rated Virginia jurisdictions. In 2004, the County's debt service to revenue percentage was 5.86%. [p. 178]