

UNC Charlotte Urban Institute

**Gaston  
County  
Profile 2009**

Charlotte Regional  
Indicators Project

**The Charlotte Regional Indicators Project.** *The Charlotte Regional Indicators Project compiles objective, reliable, and relevant measures for the 14-county bi-state Charlotte region on indicators important to the region's quality of life. By measuring the indicators over time and comparing them to state or national data, the Indicators Project provides policy-makers, civic leaders, and the public with a solid foundation for engaging in efforts to address the region's challenges.*

*The indicators are organized in ten theme areas:*

- *Arts, Recreation, and Cultural Life;*
- *Economy;*
- *Education;*
- *Environment;*
- *Government and Citizen Participation;*
- *Health;*
- *Housing;*
- *Public Safety;*
- *Social Well-Being; and,*
- *Transportation.*

*The Charlotte Regional Indicators Project is an initiative of the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute. It is funded in part by Advantage Carolinas, the Foundation for the Carolinas, and the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation. Indicators are recommended by consensus of Task Forces of regional experts in each of the ten theme areas, and are evaluated by UNC Charlotte Urban Institute researchers for feasibility before indicator data is gathered, added to the Indicators database and incorporated into Indicators Project reports. Indicator data is updated throughout the year as source agencies release the relevant data sets, and is made available on the Indicators Project website. A comprehensive Indicators Report is produced every two years.*

*More information about the Indicators Project and the most recent comprehensive Indicators Report are available at [www.ui.uncc.edu](http://www.ui.uncc.edu).*

# Gaston County Profile 2009

**The County Profile Reports.** *The County Profile Reports present individual county indicator data in a format intended to make it easy to examine relationships between indicators and across themes for a single county. Each County Profile Report begins with a concise summary of indicator highlights for the county, then presents a quick-reference table of the most recent indicator data, and finally provides more detailed indicator trend data in user-friendly charts. The reports are available for each of the region's fourteen counties, and are produced every two years.*

**Summary Highlights.** For the most recent indicator data, Gaston outpaces the region in these indicators:

- Library Print Holdings
- Solid Waste Disposal Rate
- 911 Calls
- Child Abuse Reports Substantiated
- Investigated Workplace Fatalities



Gaston lags the region on these indicators:

- Arts Grants Expenditures
- Library Funding Per Capita
- Public School Enrollment Growth
- Percent Population with Bachelors Degree or Higher
- Per Pupil 5 Yr. Avg. Capital Expenditures
- Poverty Levels
- Giving Per Capita (Both Public Charities and Private Foundations)
- Teenage Birth Rates
- Economy (All Indicators)
- Government and Citizen Participation (All Indicators)
- Health (All Indicators)

That is, Gaston's Poverty Levels and Teenage Birth Rates are *higher* than the regional composite rates, and its Arts Grants Expenditures, Library Funding Per Capita, Public School Enrollment Growth, Percent Population with Bachelors Degree or Higher, Per Pupil 5 Yr. Avg. Capital Expenditures, and Giving Per Capita are *lower* than the regional composite percentage.

Looking at trends over time, key Gaston County indicators demonstrating appreciable change over the most recent available five-year time periods include:

- Giving Per Capita (Private Foundations) (+106.5%, 2006 vs. 2002)
- Grants Expenditures Per Capita (+100.4%, 2007 vs. 2005)
- Investigated Workplace Fatalities (-100.0%, 2008 vs. 2004)
- Chlamydia Rate Per 100,000 (+93.3%, 2007 vs. 2003)
- White Infant Mortality Per 1,000 Live Births (+51.0%, 2007 vs. 2003)
- Percent Families Living in Poverty (+46.7%, 2007 vs. 2000)
- Gonorrhea Rate Per 100,000 (+41.9%, 2007 vs. 2003)
- Library Print Holdings Per Capita (+41.1%, 2006 vs. 2002)

## Quick-Reference Indicator Table

Gaston County Profile 2009

Indicator by Theme	Year	Region <sup>1</sup>	County	County	
				Percent Change	From Year
<b>Arts, Recreation, and Cultural Life</b>					
Grants Expenditures Per Capita	2007	\$0.84	\$0.30	100.4	2005
Library Funding Per Capita	2007	\$25.66	\$14.72	1.7	2004
Library Print Holdings Per Capita	2006	1.6	2.9	41.1	2002
<b>Economy</b>					
Unemployment Rate	2007	5.1	5.5	-24.7	2003
Total Employment, All Industries	2007	1,148,937	70,051	1.8	2003
Number of Business Establishments	2007	68,947	4,211	5.5	2003
Average Annual Wage	2007	\$34,995	\$33,488	12.0	2003
Per Capita Income	2006	\$34,958	\$30,892	13.9	2002
Median Household Income	2007	\$44,772	\$42,292	7.6	2003
<b>Education</b>					
Percent Change in Public School Enrollment vs. Prior Year <sup>2</sup>	2006-07	3.8	0.9	4.9	2002-03
Percent Population with Bachelors Degree or Higher	2007	28.2	16.7	17.6	2000
Average SAT Score	2007-08	992	1012	4.5	2003-04
High School Cohort Graduation Rate	2007-08	71.9	72.3	6.2	2005-06
Percent of Graduates Pursuing Higher Education	2005-06	82.9	87.4	10.2	2001-02
Public School Expenditures Per Pupil	2005-06	\$7,362	\$6,752	11.1	2001-02
Per Pupil Capital Expenditures, 5 Year Avg.	2005-06	\$857	\$282	23.9	2004-05
<b>Environment</b>					
Vehicle Emissions of Nitrogen Oxides, Pounds Per Capita	2002	82.8	73.8	NA	NA
Average Daily Water Consumption, Gallons Per Capita	2002	160.9	169.4	-28.4	1997
Solid Waste Disposal, Pounds Per Capita	2007	3,188.0	2,474.7	5.9	2004
Developed Acreage, Per Capita	2006	0.41	0.40	11.3	1996
<b>Government and Citizen Participation</b>					
Percent Voter Turnout of Registered Voters	2008	68.5	66.8	19.2	2004
Registered Public Charities Per 1,000	2007	2.5	2.2	5.7	2004
Public Charities Filing Form 990 Per 1,000	2007	0.9	0.7	3.0	2004
Private Foundations Filing Form 990 per 1,000	2007	0.21	0.11	-4.3	2004
Giving Per Capita (Public Charities)	2007	\$724.55	\$247.29	-10.8	2003
Giving Per Capita (Private Foundations)	2006	\$110.04	\$19.48	106.5	2002
<b>Health</b>					
Birth Rate Per 1,000	2007	15.1	14.1	10.0	2003
Total Infant Mortality Per 1,000 Live Births	2007	6.7	11.2	26.2	2003
White Infant Mortality Per 1,000 Live Births	2007	5.6	11.0	51.0	2003
Minority Infant Mortality Per 1,000 Live Births	2007	9.6	12.0	-28.1	2003
Total Mortality Rate Per 100,000	2007	747.5	1003.8	0.7	2003
Heart Disease Mortality Rate Per 100,000	2007	170.7	246.4	-7.3	2003
Cancer Mortality Rate Per 100,000	2007	167.4	210.3	-3.0	2003
Suicide Rate Per 100,000	2007	11.0	16.8	7.6	2003
Chlamydia Rate Per 100,000	2007	241.7	339.7	93.3	2003
Gonorrhea Rate Per 100,000	2007	148.6	179.2	41.9	2003

## Quick-Reference Indicator Table

Gaston County Profile 2009

Indicator by Theme	Year	Region <sup>1</sup>	County	County	
				Percent Change	From Year
<b>Housing</b>					
Housing Units Per 1,000	2007	430.2	430.4	0.8	2003
Percent Single Family Detached Housing	2000	67.1	73.4	-0.9	1990
Percent Single Family Attached Housing	2000	2.8	1.4	52.4	1990
Percent Multi-family Housing	2000	18.2	13.7	12.6	1990
Percent Mobile Home or Trailer Housing	2000	11.8	11.4	-5.0	1990
Percent Other Housing	2000	0.1	0.0	-94.7	1990
Percent Owner Occupied Housing	2007	69.2	68.0	-1.2	2000
Percent Renter Occupied Housing	2007	30.8	32.0	2.7	2000
Number of Housing Units Permitted Per 1,000	2007	11.4	7.2	5.7	2003
Construction Cost Per Unit Permitted	2007	\$165,197	\$168,272	34.3	2003
Average Residential Sales Price	2007	\$235,517	\$144,023	11.0	2005
Average Apartment Vacancy Rate	2008	9.1	8.4	-22.9	2004
Average Apartment Rental Rate	2008	\$677.17	\$622.00	13.9	2004
<b>Public Safety</b>					
Calls for Emergency Service (911) Per Capita	2007	0.78	0.69	16.3	2005
Crime Index Per 10,000	2007	531.0	503.8	3.3	2003
People in Motor Vehicle Accidents, Total	2007	153,726	13,044	-4.7	2001
People in Motor Vehicle Accidents, Property Damage Only	2007	94,140	7,132	-4.1	2001
People in Motor Vehicle Accidents, Fatality	2007	746	76	5.6	2001
People in Motor Vehicle Accidents, Non-fatal Injury	2007	58,840	5,836	-5.7	2001
Investigated Workplace Fatalities	2008	12	0	-100.0	2004
<b>Social Well-Being</b>					
Percent Individuals Living in Poverty	2007	11.9	15.0	38.1	2000
Percent Families Living in Poverty	2007	8.6	12.2	46.7	2000
Percent Children Living in Poverty	2007	15.9	21.6	4.0	2003
Percent of Report of Child Abuse or Neglect Substantiated	2005-06	22.2	14.8	-38.5	2004-05
Percent Births to Mothers Under Age 18	2007	3.8	5.3	37.9	2003
Elderly Assistance Rate	2007	42.2	42.8	-13.7	2000
<b>Transportation</b>					
Percent of Workers 16 or Older Driving to Work Alone	2007	81.7	84.7	1.2	2000
Percent of Workers Commuting More Than 25 Minutes	2007	42.3	42.2	6.8	2000

For each indicator for which county-level data is available as of January, 2009, this table presents the most recent data for the county and the region, along with a percent change for the county. County percent change represents a five-year trend wherever possible: it is the percent change from a prior year (the “from year” column) to the most recent data; generally, the “from year” is five years prior. Indicator definitions and data sources can be found at the end of this document. Regional data is calculated as a fourteen county average whenever possible, and exceptions to this are detailed in the endnotes. Unless otherwise noted, “Per 1,000” or “per 100,000” refers to population.

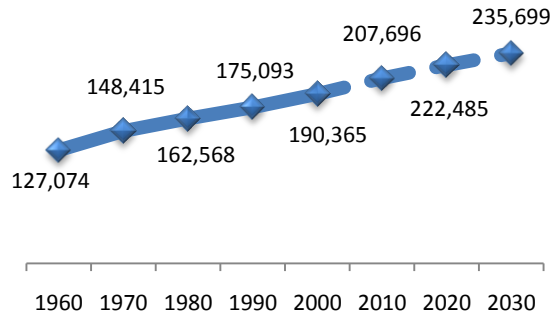
# Indicator Trend Data

## Gaston County Profile 2009

### Demographics

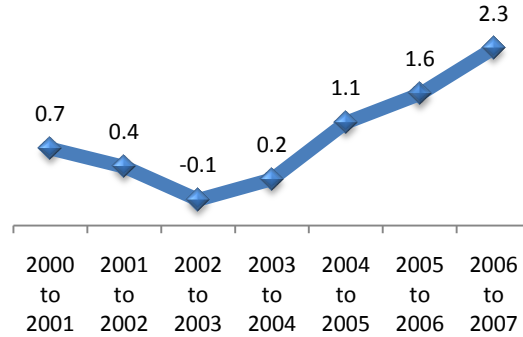
Gaston County is one of the more populous counties in the region. Between 2000 and 2007, its population increased from 190,365 to 202,535, with no significant growth, though, from 2002 to 2004, and an accelerating rate of growth from 2005 to 2007. This general pattern of slow growth held true over the past four decades and is projected to continue through the next three. The county became more ethnically and racially diverse between 2000 and 2007, with the percentage white population decreasing slightly as minority shares of the population increased. Between 2000 and 2007, the county's age distribution showed a shift towards older age groups. Although the 35-44 year old group remained the largest, it joined the younger groups in showing a decline in size, while the 45 and older groups increased.

**Decennial Population and Projections**



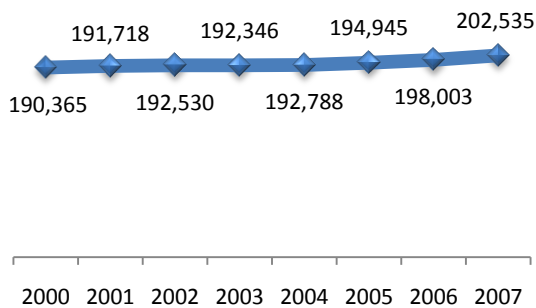
Source: NC Office of State Budget and Management, NC State Demographics; South Carolina State Budget and Control Board Office of Research Statistics, SC Community Profiles

**Percent Population Growth**



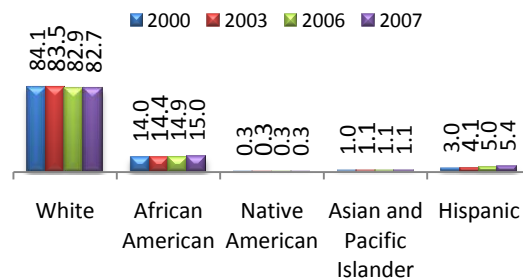
Source: US Census: Decennial, Estimates Division

**Annual Population Estimates**



Source: US Census: Decennial, Estimates Division

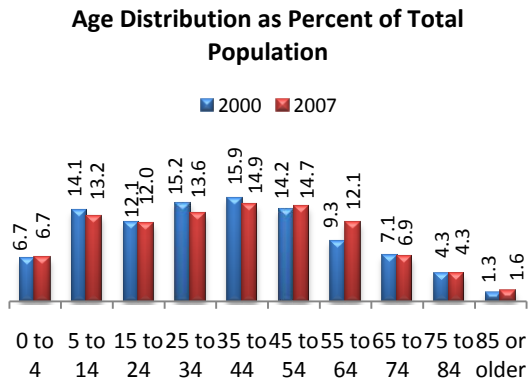
**Race and Ethnicity as Percent of Total Population**



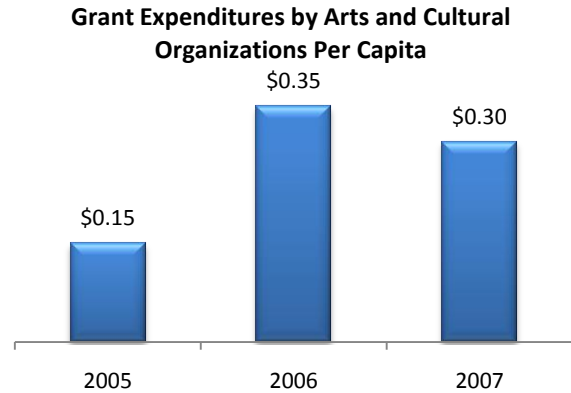
Source: US Census: Decennial, Estimates Division

## Indicator Trend Data

### Gaston County Profile 2009



Source: US Census: Decennial, Estimates Division



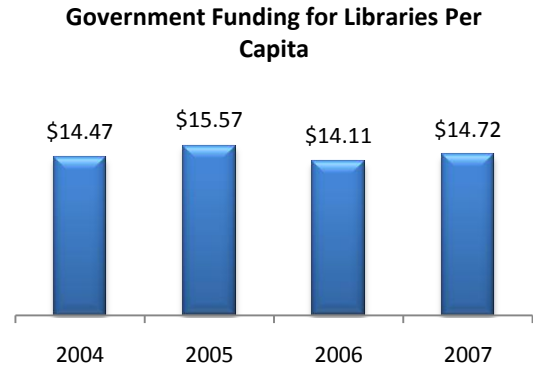
Source: North Carolina Arts Council; South Carolina Arts Commission

### Arts, Recreation, and Cultural Life

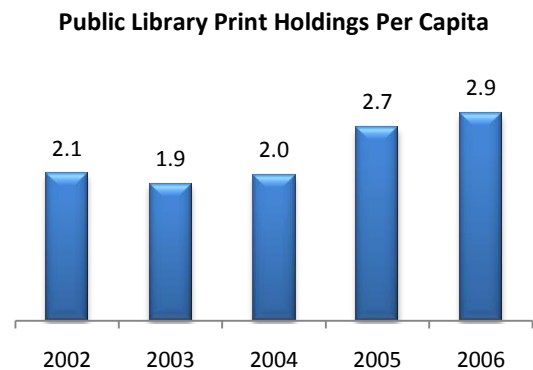
Arts, recreation and cultural activities are measured by four indicators:

- Grants Expenditures;
- Library Holdings;
- Library Funding; and
- Arts Graduates.

Of these, only the first three have county-level data available. Per capita grant expenditures by arts and cultural organizations more than doubled from 2005 to 2006, then decreased 14% in 2007. Government funding for libraries per capita remained in the \$14-15 range from 2004 through 2007. Public library print holdings per capita increased from 2.1 in 2002 to 2.9 in 2006.



Source: North Carolina Department of State Treasurer; South Carolina State Budget and Control Board



Source: National Center for Education Statistics (Library Research Center)

## Indicator Trend Data

### Gaston County Profile 2009

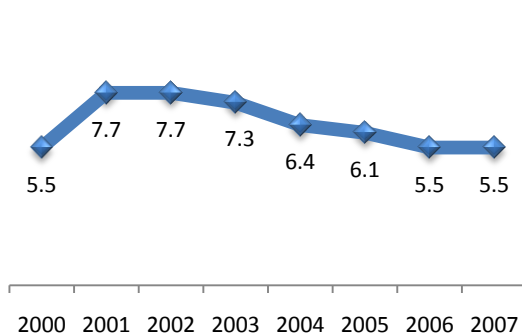
#### Economy

The local economy is measured by six indicators:

- Labor Force (Unemployment Rate);
- Industry Employment (Jobs);
- Business Establishments;
- Average Annual Wage;
- Per Capita Income; and
- Median Household Income.

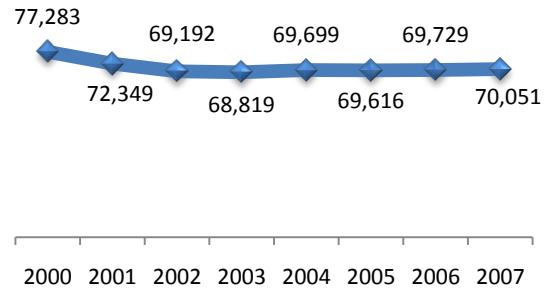
The county's labor force unemployment rate increased from 2000 to 2001 then decreased from 2003 to 2007. Total industry employment decreased substantially from 2000 to 2003 and then from 2004 to 2007, hovered around 69,800 persons. The number of business establishments in Gaston County decreased from 2000 to 2005, reaching a low of 3,948 establishments in 2005, and then returned to 2000-2001 levels by 2007. Average annual wage increased each year from 2000 to 2007, as did per capita income from 2000 to 2006. Median household income fluctuated around \$39,000 from 2000 through 2005, and then increased to \$42,292 in 2007.

**Unemployment Rate**



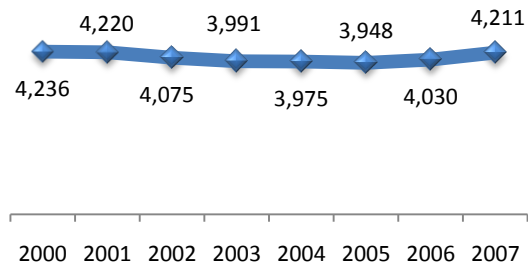
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

**Total Employment, All Industries**



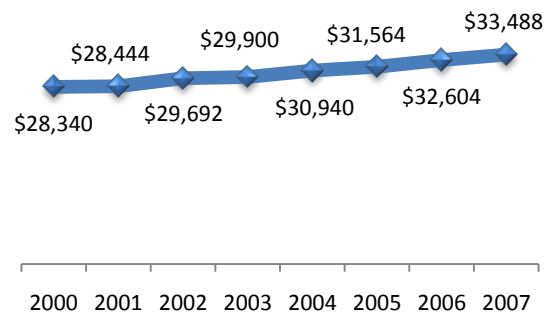
Source: North Carolina Employment Security Commission; South Carolina Employment Security Commission

**Number of Business Establishments, All Industries**



Source: North Carolina Employment Security Commission; South Carolina Employment Security Commission

**Average Annual Wage**

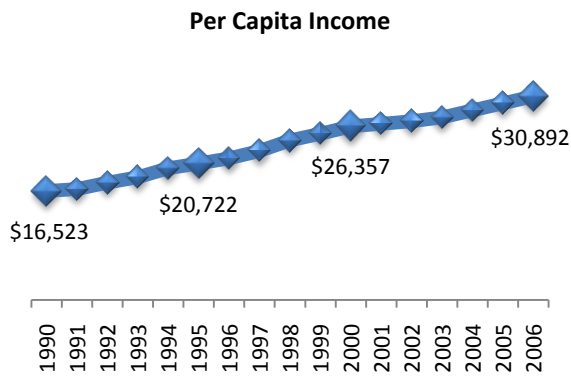


Source: North Carolina Employment Security Commission; South Carolina Employment Security Commission

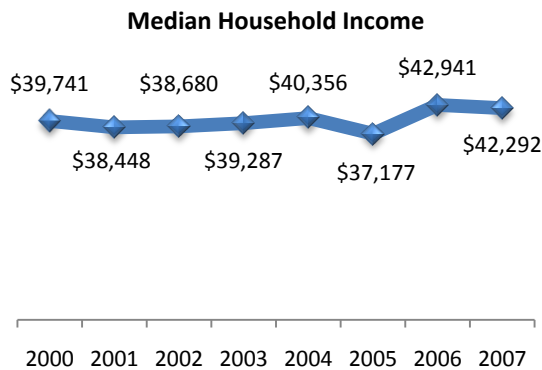


## Indicator Trend Data

### Gaston County Profile 2009



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis



Source: U.S. Census Bureau's Small Area Income and Poverty Division

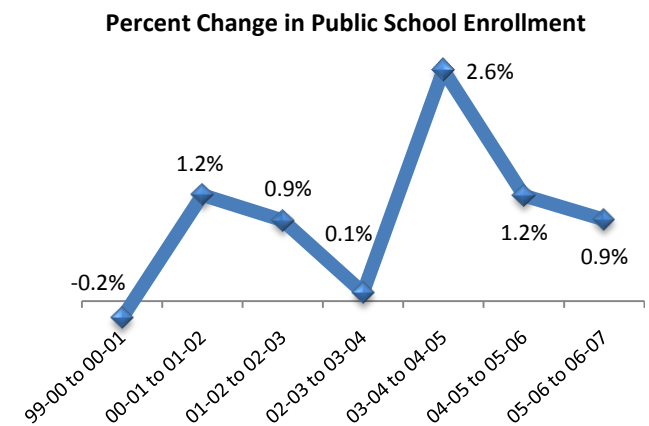
### Education

Education is measured by seven indicators:

- Public Schools Enrollment;
- Educational Attainment;
- SAT Scores (Math and Verbal);
- Graduation Rate;
- College Plans;
- Expenditures Per Pupil; and
- Capital Expenditures.

After a decline in 2000-01 public school enrollment in Gaston County increased

each school year through 2006-07. The percentage of college graduates increased over 70% between 1990 and 2006 but decreased 10% in 2007. Average SAT scores fluctuated around 975 from 2001-02 to 2006-07, then rose to 1,012 in 2007-08. The high school cohort graduation rate increased each of the past three years. College-bound high school graduates remained in the low 80's from 2000-01 to 2003-04, then rose to about 87% in 2004-05 and 2005-06. After a slight dip in 2001-02, public school expenditures per pupil rose each of four subsequent years. The five-year average annual per pupil capital expenditure rose from \$227 in the 2000-01 through 2004-05 time period to \$282 in the 2001-02 through 2005-06 time period.

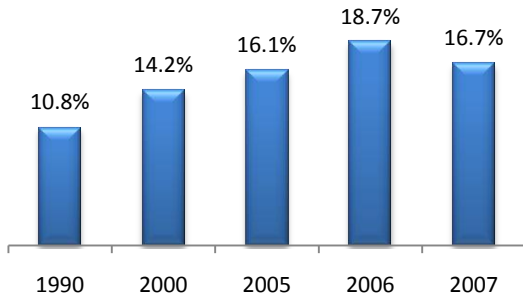


Source: National Center for Education Statistics

## Indicator Trend Data

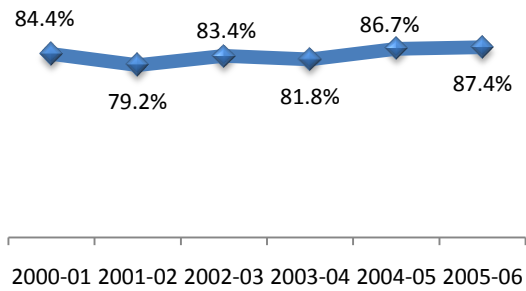
### Gaston County Profile 2009

**Percent of Population 25 and Older with Bachelor's Degree or Higher**



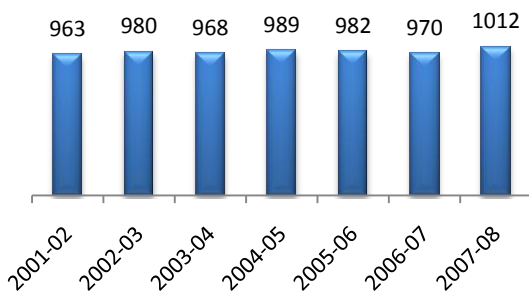
Source: US Census: Decennial, American Community Survey

**Percent of High School Graduates Pursuing Higher Education**



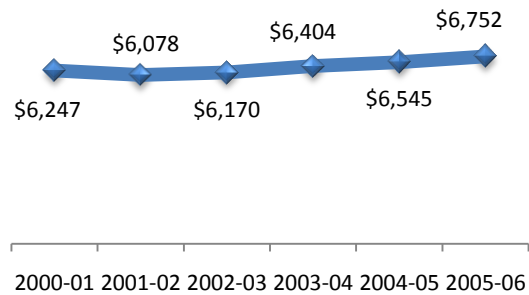
Source: NC Public Schools Statistical Profile; SC Dept. of Education

**Average SAT Scores (Math and Verbal)**



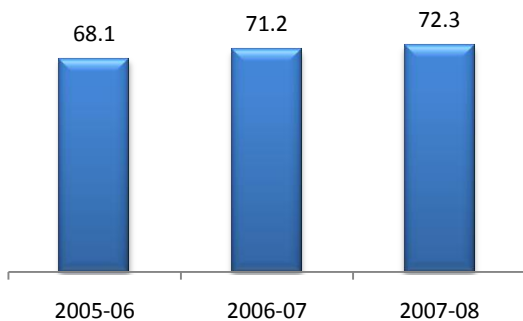
Source: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction; SC Dept. of Education

**Public School Expenditure Per Pupil**



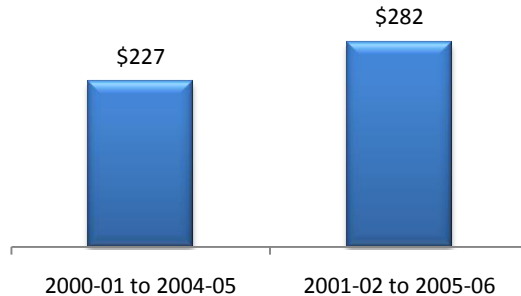
Source: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction; SC Dept. of Education

**High School Cohort Graduation Rate**



Source: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction; SC Dept. of Education

**5 Year Average Annual Per Pupil Capital Expenditure**



Source: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction; SC Dept. of Education

# Indicator Trend Data

## Gaston County Profile 2009

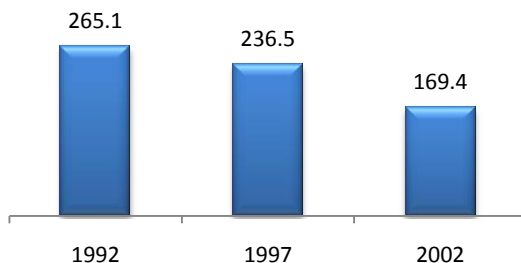
### Environment

The environment is measured by six indicators:

- Air Quality Index (“AQI”);
- Vehicular Emissions;
- Water Consumption;
- Impaired Streams;
- Solid Waste Disposal; and
- Developed Acreage.

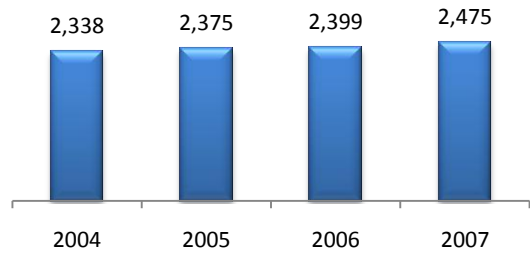
Of these, county-level data are available for all but AQI Days and Impaired Streams, which are available only at larger regional scales. While multi-year trend data for per capita on-road vehicular nitrogen oxides (NOx) emissions are not available, the 2002 Gaston County rate (73.8) was below the average for the Charlotte region (82.8). Per capita average daily water consumption decreased 36% from 1992 to 2002. Per capita average annual solid waste sent to landfills increased over 5% from 2004 to 2007. Developed acres per person increased each decade from 1976 to 2006 with an almost three-fold increase between 1985 and 1996; this is projected to increase more slowly through 2030.

**Average Daily Water Consumption for Local Water Systems, Gallons Per Capita**



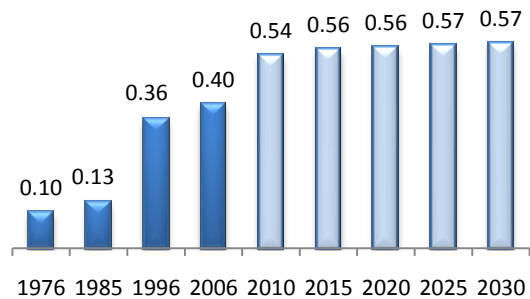
*Source: North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources; South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control*

**Average Annual Solid Waste Disposal Rates, Pounds Per Capita**



*Source: North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources; South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control*

**Developed Acres Per Person**



*Source: UNC Charlotte Center for Applied GIS*

### Government and Citizen Participation

Indicators of government and citizen participation focused on five measures of voter turnout and charitable giving:

- Voter Turnout;
- Public Charities;
- Private Foundations;
- Giving to Public Charities; and
- Giving to Private Foundations.

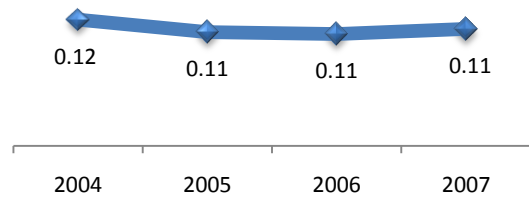
Voter turnout was higher in the 2008 presidential election when compared to the 2004 and 2000 presidential elections, but the 2006 mid-term election turnout was lower than that in 2002. The ratio of all

## Indicator Trend Data

### Gaston County Profile 2009

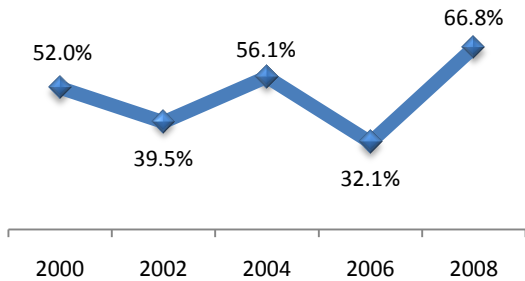
registered public charities to population remained relatively steady as did the corresponding ratios for larger public charities only (those using IRS Form 990 to report income greater than \$25,000,) and for larger private foundations. Per capita giving to public charities fluctuated from 2001 to 2007, with the highest and lowest values differing by over 50% but only two years apart. Per capita giving to private foundations showed even greater variation, at under \$10 from 2001 to 2003, over \$40 in 2004, and around \$20 in 2005 and 2006.

**Number of Private 501(c)(3) Foundations Filing Form 990 Per 1,000 Population**



*Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics*

**Percent Voter Turnout of Registered Voters**



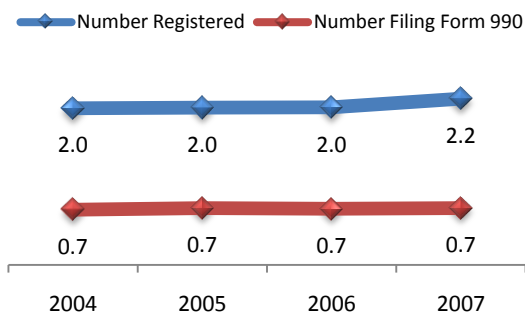
*Source: North Carolina State Board of Elections; South Carolina State Board of Elections*

**Contributions, Gifts, and Grants per Capita for Public Charities**



*Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics*

**Public Charities Per 1,000 Population**



*Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics*

**Contributions, Gifts, and Grants per Capita for Private Foundations**



*Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics*

# Indicator Trend Data

## Gaston County Profile 2009

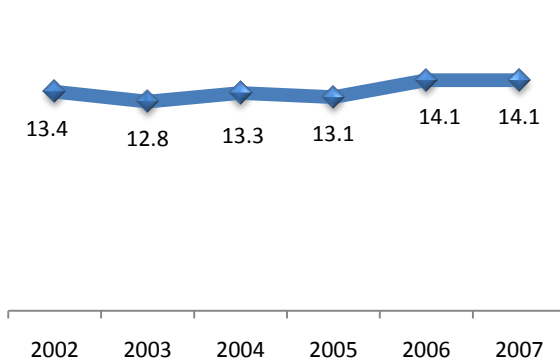
### Health

Health is measured by five indicators:

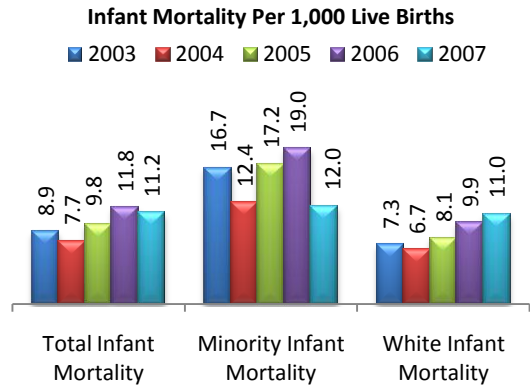
- Birth Rate;
- Infant Mortality;
- Mortality Rate;
- Suicide Rate; and
- Sexually-Transmitted Diseases Rate.

The birth rate remained relatively stable from 2002 to 2005, and then increased slightly through 2007. Total infant mortality showed an initial decline in 2004 to 7.7, then increased to a high of 11.8 in 2006 and remained near that level in 2007. Minority infant mortality rates remained higher than white infant mortality rates throughout 2003-2007; however, the gap narrowed in 2007 as minority rates dropped while white rates climbed. Total mortality rates fluctuated slightly from 2003 through 2007, as did heart disease mortality and cancer mortality rates. Suicide rates for Gaston County declined between 2003 and 2004, and then increased each subsequent year through 2007. Incidence rates of the sexually-transmitted diseases, chlamydia and gonorrhea, increased from 2002 to 2005, then decreased from 2005 to 2007.

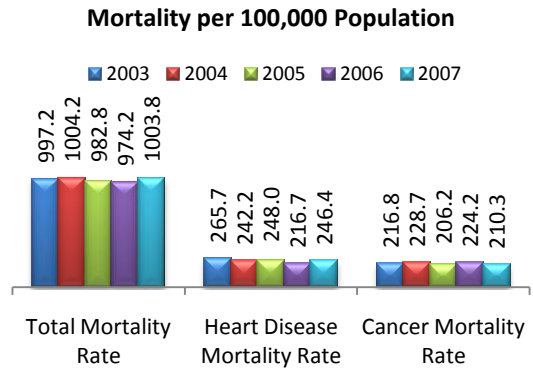
**Birth Rate per 1,000 Population**



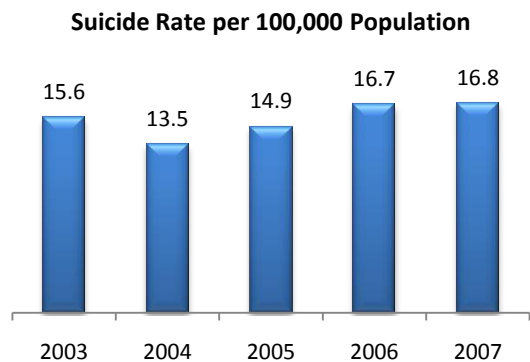
*Source: NC Department of Health & Human Services State Center for Health Statistics; SC Department of Health and Environmental Control*



*Source: NC Department of Health & Human Services State Center for Health Statistics; SC Department of Health and Environmental Control*



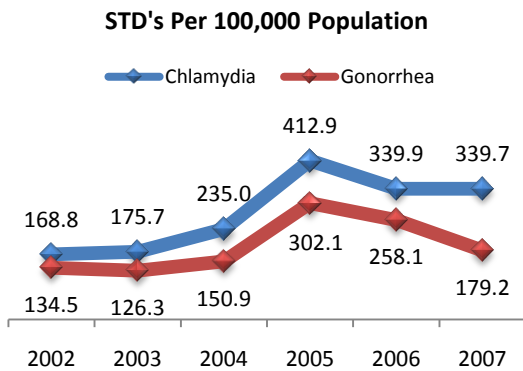
*Source: NC Department of Health & Human Services State Center for Health Statistics; SC Department of Health and Environmental Control*



*Source: NC Department of Health & Human Services State Center for Health Statistics; SC Department of Health and Environmental Control*

## Indicator Trend Data

### Gaston County Profile 2009



*Source: NC Department of Health & Human Services State Center for Health Statistics; SC Department of Health and Environmental Control*

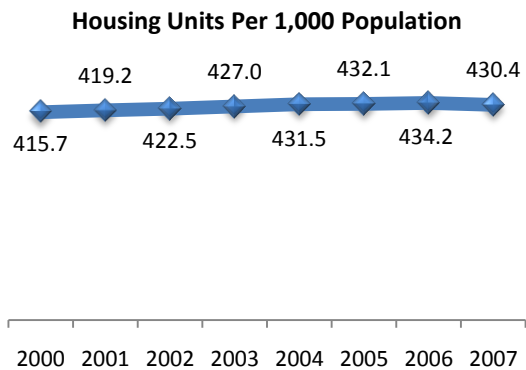
### Housing

Housing is measured by six indicators:

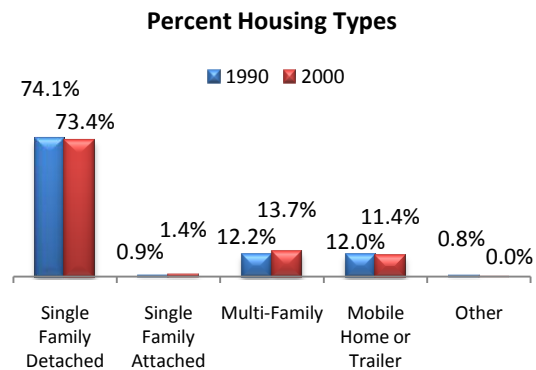
- Housing Units;
- Housing Types;
- Home Ownership;
- Residential Construction;
- Sales; and
- Rental and Vacancy Rates.

The ratio of housing units to population increased each year from 2000 to 2006 and then decreased slightly in 2007. From 1990 to 2000, the dominant housing type remained single family detached, followed by multi-family and mobile home or trailer housing. Owner occupied housing remained at about 68% in each year measured except for 2006, when it increased to 71.4%. As measured by housing units permitted per 1,000 persons, residential construction generally increased from 2000 to 2007, with the exception of an almost 8% decrease in 2001. Construction cost per unit permitted also showed a generally increasing trend, rising a total of 72% from 2000 to 2007. The average residential sales price rose steadily from 2005 to 2007. The average apartment rental rate increased 4.5% from 2000 to 2003, decreased almost 10% in

2004, and then increased a total of almost 14% from 2004 to 2008. The average apartment vacancy rate increased over 120% from 2000 to 2003, decreased through 2007 to within 30% of its 2000 levels, and then increased 25% in 2008.



*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Estimates Division*

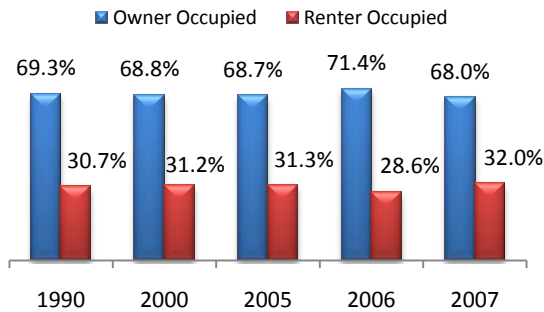


*Source: US Census: Decennial*

## Indicator Trend Data

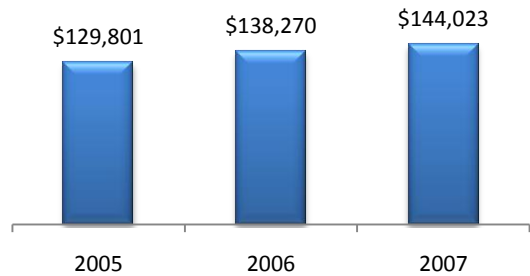
### Gaston County Profile 2009

#### Percent Occupied Housing



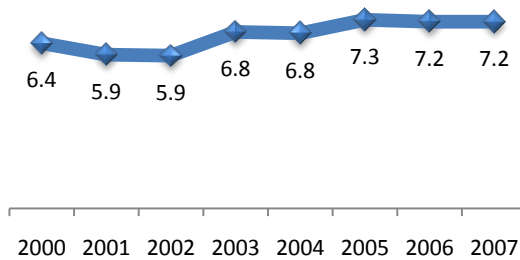
Source: US Census: Decennial, American Community Survey

#### Average Residential Sales Price



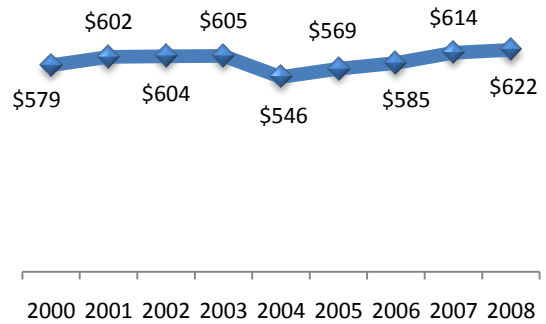
Source: Carolina Multiple Listing Services, Charlotte Regional Realtor Association

#### Number of Housing Units Permitted per 1,000 Population



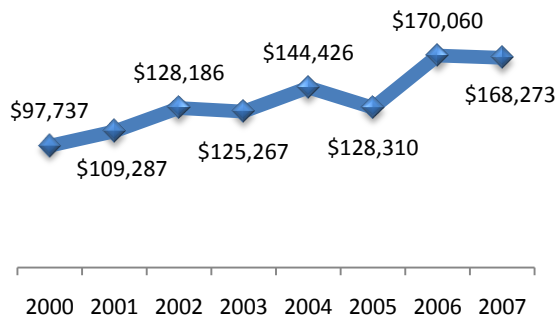
Source: US Census: Manufacturing, Mining and Construction Statistics

#### Average Apartment Rental Rate



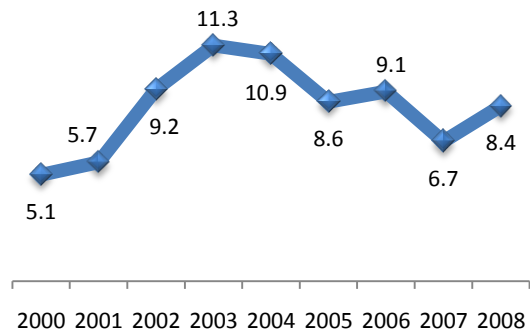
Source: Carolinas Real Data

#### Construction Cost per Unit Permitted



Source: US Census: Manufacturing, Mining and Construction Statistics

#### Average Apartment Vacancy Rate



Source: Carolinas Real Data

## Indicator Trend Data

### Gaston County Profile 2009

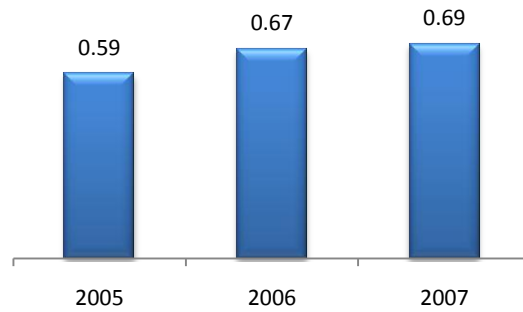
#### Public Safety

Public Safety is measured by six indicators:

- 911 Calls;
- Crime Index;
- Vehicle Accidents;
- Workplace Fatalities;
- Public Safety Education; and
- Evacuation Plans and Disaster Preparedness.

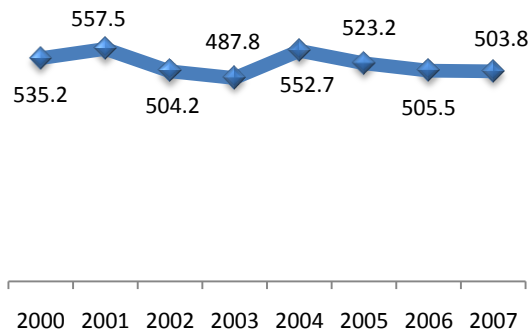
Of these, county-level data are available for all except Public Safety Education. Per capita calls for emergency service increased 13% from 2005 to 2006, but only by 2% in 2007. From 2001 through 2007, crime rates were below their 2000 level every year but two (2001, 2004,) ending at 503.8 (6% below the 2000 level) in 2007. The total number of people in motor vehicle accidents increased from 2001 to 2005 but decreased in 2006 and 2007; however, the number of persons in crashes with fatalities decreased 44% between 2001 and 2006, and then rose substantially in 2007. Investigated workplace fatalities were consistent at 2-3 for 2002, 2004 and 2007, while all other years reported zero workplace fatalities. As of 2009, Gaston County had in place all nine evacuation planning and disaster preparedness measures.

**Calls for Emergency Service Per Capita**



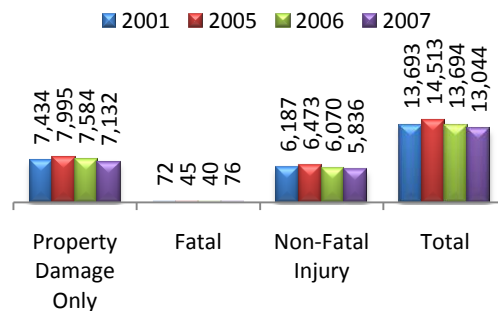
Source: Survey Questionnaire Administered by UNC Charlotte Urban Institute

**Crime Index per 10,000 Population**



Source: North Carolina Department of Justice, State Bureau of Investigation; South Carolina Law Enforcement Division

**People in Motor Vehicle Crashes**



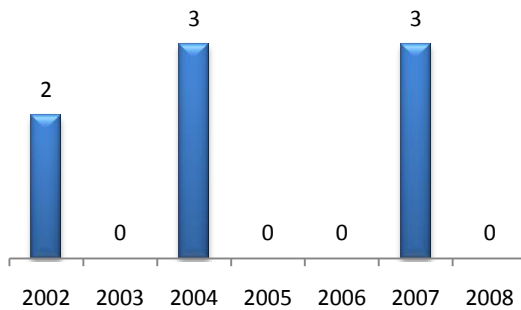
Source: Highway Safety Research Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; South Carolina Department of Public Safety



## Indicator Trend Data

### Gaston County Profile 2009

#### Investigated Workplace Fatalities



*Source: North Carolina Department of Labor; South Carolina Department of Labor*

#### Evacuation and Disaster Preparedness, 2009

✔ **Yes**   
 ⬮ **No**   
 ▼ **Limited/Partial**

Emergency/disaster response plan	✔
Evacuation plan	✔
Have had mock disaster drill in the last year	✔
Means to quickly warn citizens about a threat situation (Reverse 911 system)	✔
Radio interoperability for emergency personnel; full coverage within county	✔
Radio interoperability for emergency personnel; with surrounding counties	✔
Emergency response team for incidents involving chemical, biological or nuclear weapons	✔
Regular training sessions for fire, police, and emergency personnel for disaster preparation	✔
Mutual assistance agreement with surrounding counties	✔

*Source: Survey Questionnaire Administered by UNC Charlotte Urban Institute*

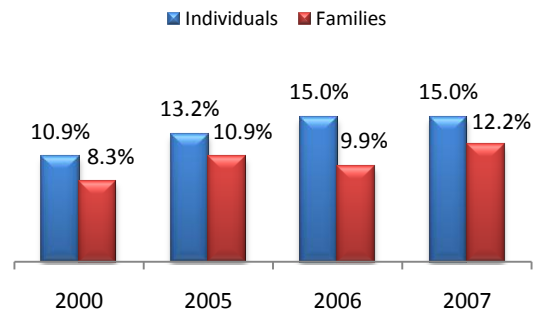
#### Social Well-being

Social Well-being indicators include these five measures:

- Poverty Rate;
- Child Poverty Rate;
- Child Abuse;
- Teenage Birth Rate; and
- Elderly Assistance Rate.

The poverty rate for both individuals and families generally increased from 2000 to 2007. The percentage of children in poverty increased 35% from 2000 to 2007 (from 16% to almost 22%), although the rate dropped slightly for two consecutive years, 2004 and 2005. The percentage of substantiated reports of child abuse decreased by nearly 10 percentage points from 2004-05 to 2005-06 (a decline of almost 40%). The teenage birth rate was relatively stable from 2001 to 2007, with the only major decrease occurring in 2003. Gaston County's percentage of elderly needing assistance with daily activities began the decade at 49.6%, and then stabilized in the low 40's from 2005 through 2007.

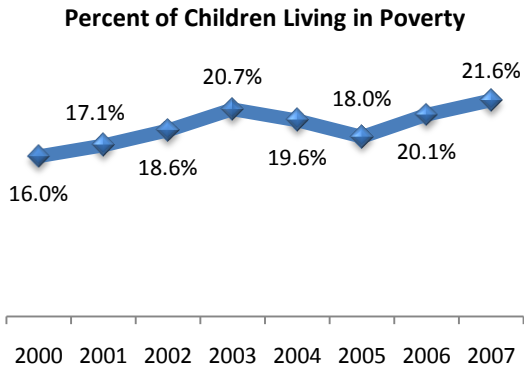
#### Percent Living in Poverty



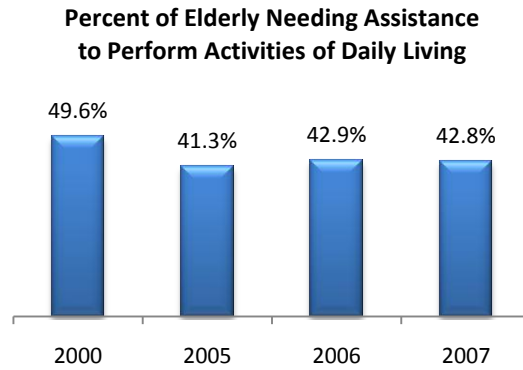
*Source: US Census: Decennial, American Community Survey*

## Indicator Trend Data

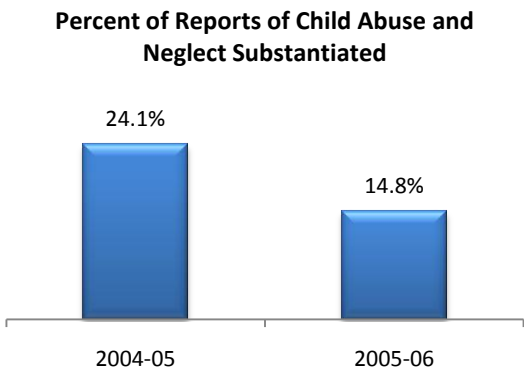
### Gaston County Profile 2009



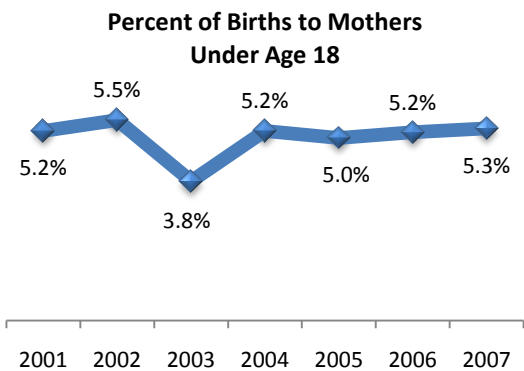
*Source: U.S. Census, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates*



*Source: US Census: Decennial, American Community Survey*



*Source: North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services; Prevent Child Abuse South Carolina*



*Source: NC Department of Health & Human Services State Center for Health Statistics; South Carolina State Budget and Control Board Office of Research Statistics*

### Transportation

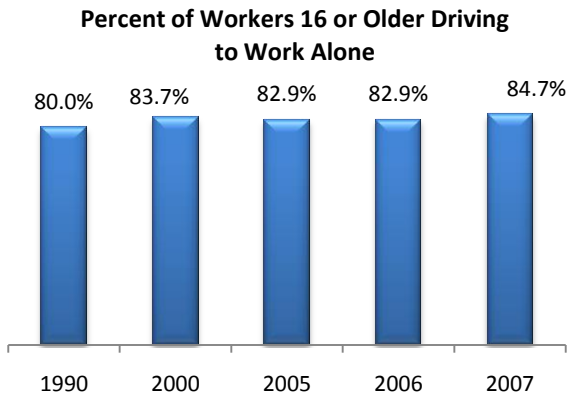
Transportation is measured by four indicators:

- Commuting Alone;
- Average Travel Delay;
- Commute Time; and
- Airport Travelers.

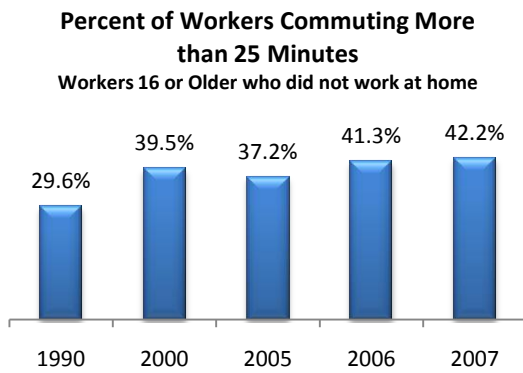
Of these, only two are represented at the county level: Commuting Alone, and Commute Time. Gaston County's percentage of workers driving to work alone increased slightly between 1990 and 2000 and remained relatively stable through 2007. The percentage of workers commuting more than 25 minutes increased by one-third from 1990 to 2000, to 39.5%, and remained near 40% through 2007.

## Indicator Trend Data

Gaston County Profile 2009



Source: US Census: Decennial, American Community Survey



Source: US Census: Decennial, American Community Survey

## Data Definitions

### Gaston County Profile 2009

A complete definition is given below for each indicator, identifying the specific quantitative measurement the indicator represents. Definitions are listed by theme area, with the indicator's "short name" shown first, followed by the "long name" and/or explanation of how the indicator is calculated.

#### **Demographics**

**Annual Population Estimates:** Measures the annual estimate of population.

**Decennial Population and Projections:** The measurement of past population and future population projections on a decennial basis.

**Percent Population Growth:** This indicator measures the annual percentage growth of the population from the previous year.

**Race and Ethnicity:** This indicator measures the composition of both race and ethnicity for the population.

**Age Distribution:** Age Distribution looks at the range of ages for the population.

#### **Arts, Recreation, and Cultural Life**

**Grants Expenditures:** Dollars per capita in state and federal appropriations awarded to arts and cultural organizations through the North Carolina Arts Commission and the South Carolina Arts Commission.

**Library Holdings:** Per capita number of public library print holdings and print serial subscriptions (excluding electronic documents.)

**Library Funding:** Per capita government funding for public libraries (excluding libraries at state universities or colleges.)

**Arts Graduates:** Annual number of undergraduate and graduate degree completions in the arts, music and theater from all institutions of higher education in the region, including private and public universities, technical and community colleges and other colleges.

#### **Economy**

**Labor Force:** The civilian workforce is the number of workers employed or looking for work, including members of the military. The labor force unemployment rate is the ratio of the number of unemployed to the total civilian workforce.

**Industry Employment:** Total Employment, All Industries is the total number of jobs across all industry classifications. Employment by Industry is the number of jobs in each industry sector by the North American Industry Classification System's standard two-digit sector codes.

**Business Establishments:** Business Establishments, All Industries, is the total number of physical locations of businesses in all industry classifications; note that a business may have more than one physical location, each of which counts as a "business establishment." Business Establishments by Industry is the number of business establishments in each industry sector by the North American Industry Classification System's standard two-digit sector codes.

**Average Annual Wage:** Average Annual Wage, All Industries is the annual total wages across all jobs, divided by total number of jobs in all industry classifications. Average Annual Wage by Industry is the annual total wages in jobs in a given industry sector (defined by the North American Industry Classification System's standard two-digit sector codes) divided by the total number of jobs in that same industry sector.

**Per Capita Income:** Total personal income divided by total population.

**Median Household Income:** Median Household Income is the income of the particular household for which there are an equal number of households with more income and of households with less income.

#### **Education**

**Public School Enrollment:** Public School Enrollment is the percentage change in public school enrollment from the previous school year, by school district and for the region. The enrollment data includes students from pre-kindergarten through grade 12.

**Education Attainment:** This indicator measures the percentage of the working-age population (age 25 and older) with a bachelor's degree or higher.

## Data Definitions

### Gaston County Profile 2009

**SAT Scores:** Examines the average Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) score as a percentage of the U.S. average score, for each of the region's 21 school districts and for the region as a whole. Average scores are published both for individual high schools and for school districts, based on scores of all students taking the SAT in a given year. Students taking the SAT are mostly juniors in high school, but can include some sophomores and seniors as well.

**Graduation Rate:** The figures are the four-year cohort graduation rate, which reflects the number of graduating seniors in a given year as a percentage of the number of enrolled ninth graders from three years prior – in effect, it is the percent of ninth graders who graduate four years later.

**College Plans:** This indicator tracks the higher-education plans of high school seniors for the year after they graduate from public high schools. Percentages are calculated for students planning on attending two-year, four-year or community colleges, and for those with no plans for higher education (this may include military service).

**Expenditures Per Pupil:** This indicator measures expenditures per pupil in public schools, excluding capital expenditures. A regional figure was estimated for each school year by multiplying expenditures per pupil by enrollment figures for each school district. The sum of total expenditures across all districts was divided by the total regional enrollment to estimate the regional expenditure per pupil.

**Capital Expenditures:** Public school capital expenditures per pupil are measured both for school districts and the region. A five-year average is calculated because capital spending by school districts fluctuates significantly from year to year. Total capital expenditures were divided by total enrollment to produce an annual per pupil capital expenditure for each school year. Those annual figures were then averaged to produce an average per pupil capital expenditure in public education for the five-year period.

#### **Environment**

**Air Quality Index:** The percentage of Air Quality Index (AQI) days per year in the “Unhealthy” ranges for the Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The EPA calculates a daily AQI based on the measurement of five major air pollutants regulated by the Clean Air Act, as recorded at approximately 4,000

monitoring stations across the country. The five pollutants are: ground-level ozone, particle pollution (also known as particulate matter), carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>). A daily index value is calculated for each air pollutant measured. The highest of those index values is the AQI value, and the pollutant responsible for the highest index value is the “Main Pollutant.”

**Vehicle Emissions:** This indicator measures on-road vehicular emissions of nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) in the 14-county region. States are required by the EPA to collect and report emissions data every three years.

**Water Consumption:** The indicator examines local water system use in average gallons per day per person served by the water systems. This indicator includes only the use of water by local water systems filing reports with the states, and excludes water used for agriculture or power generation, water drawn from individual wells and permitted water intakes by residential or industrial water consumers. These local water systems include municipal, county, and private water systems.

**Impaired Streams:** This indicator measures looks at impaired stream miles as a percentage of total stream miles in the 11 North Carolina counties in the Charlotte region. It also examines monitoring sites reporting impaired streams in the three South Carolina counties in the region.

**Solid Waste Disposal:** The Solid Waste Disposal indicator quantifies the disposal of municipal solid waste (MSW) and construction and demolition (C&D) debris. Both states adjust their county-level data to exclude waste “imported” from other places and to include waste “exported” to other places, providing a measure of waste generated from within each county that is disposed at landfills, regardless of where the disposal occurs.

**Developed Acreage:** This indicator measures developed land in acres per person. Developed acres include both residential and nonresidential development, excluding agriculture, and are assessed using satellite imagery, taken at roughly 10-year intervals from 1976 to 2006.

#### **Government and Citizen Participation**

**Private Foundations:** Private Foundations are registered 501(c)(3) private foundations that have filed Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 990. Foundations designated as 501(c)(3) organizations under the Internal Revenue Code are exempt from

## Data Definitions

### Gaston County Profile 2009

federal income taxes because they are operated solely for religious, charitable, scientific, public-safety (testing), literary or educational purposes; amateur sports competition or for the prevention of cruelty to children or animals.

**Public Charities:** Public Charities are registered 501(c)(3) public charities in the region, including those that have filed an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 990. Public charities designated as 501(c)(3) organizations under the Internal Revenue Code are exempt from federal income taxes because they are operated solely for religious, charitable, scientific, public safety (testing), literary or educational purposes; amateur sports competition or for the prevention of cruelty to children or animals.

**Giving (Public Charities):** This indicator measures the amount of contributions, gifts, and grants given to 501(c)(3) public charities located in the region and filing Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 990.

**Giving (Private Foundations):** This indicator measures the amount of contributions, gifts and grants received by 501(c)(3) private foundations located in the region and filing Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 990.

**Voter Turnout:** This indicator represents the percentage of registered voters who voted in election years 2000, 2002, 2004 and 2006.

#### **Health**

**Mortality Rate:** Mortality Rates are calculated as the number of deaths per 100,000 population. Mortality Rates for heart disease and cancer were also calculated.

**STD Rate:** These indicators report sexually transmitted disease rates for Gonorrhea and Chlamydia as the number of cases per 100,000 persons.

**Infant Mortality Rate:** Infant Mortality Rates reflect deaths of infants aged one year or younger per 1,000 live births. The data also compare infant mortality rates for minorities and whites.

**Birth Rate:** Birth Rate measures the number of live births reported per 1,000 persons.

**Suicide Rate:** Suicide Rate is reported as deaths by suicide per 100,000 persons.

#### **Housing**

**Housing Units:** The indicator represents the number of housing units per capita and includes all types of residential development, encompassing single-family homes, apartments, condos, townhomes and all other housing types.

**Housing Types:** Housing Types include single-family detached, single-family attached (row houses or townhomes), multi-family units, mobile homes and all other housing (such as boats, RVs and vans).

**Home Ownership:** Home Ownership measures owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing as a percentage of occupied housing units.

**Residential Construction:** This indicator measures the number of housing units for which building permits were issued. The indicator is expressed as housing units per 1,000 persons.

**Sales:** This indicator measures the rate of residential real estate closings (the number of closings per 1,000 persons) and the average price of such home sales for single-family homes, condominiums and townhomes.

**Rent and Vacancy Rates:** The apartment vacancy rate is the percent of all apartments that are vacant as of the date of the survey call on that certain day. The rental rate is the average rent in dollars per month.

#### **Public Safety**

**911 Calls:** This indicator measures the annual per capita calls for 911 Emergency Service.

**Crime Index:** This indicator measures the number of crimes per 10,000 persons. It is the sum of the crime rates per 10,000 persons for seven categories of crimes: murders, rapes, robberies, aggravated assaults, burglaries, larcenies and motor-vehicle thefts.

**Vehicle Accidents:** People in Motor Vehicle Accidents measures the total number of people in motor-vehicle accidents and whether the accidents involved a fatality, non-fatal injuries, or property damage only.

**Workplace Fatalities:** This indicator examines the number of workplace fatalities in the region that have been investigated or are under investigation.

**Public Safety Education:** Public Safety Education looks at the number of colleges and universities in the 14-county region with a two- or four-year

## Data Definitions

### Gaston County Profile 2009

degree in criminal justice, fire safety or emergency-medical training.

**Evacuation Planning:** Evacuation Planning addressed evacuation plans and disaster preparedness through a survey designed by the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute. Survey questions concerned reverse 911 systems, radio interoperability, disaster training, disaster response and evacuation plans, mutual-assistance agreements, and related topics.

#### **Social Well-being**

**Poverty Rate:** This indicator measures the percentage of families and individuals in the region living in poverty. “Living in poverty” is defined by federally-determined income thresholds verifying what is needed to feed, clothe and economically sustain an individual or families of specified sizes (for example, “a family of four”.) Any family or individual whose income does not reach the threshold amount is considered to be in poverty.

**Child Poverty:** Child Poverty measures the percentage of children under the age of 18, living at or below the poverty level. “Living in poverty” is defined using federally-defined poverty thresholds.

**Child Abuse:** Child Abuse measures substantiated reports of child abuse or neglect per county for the fiscal year. It represents only the percentage of abuse and/or neglect reports made to each county’s child protective services that are substantiated by those agencies, based on investigative findings.

**Teenage Birth Rate:** Teenage Birth Rate measures the number of births to mothers under the age of 18 as a percent of all births.

**Elderly Assistance Rate:** This indicator measures the percentage of individuals age 65 or older who require assistance in performing Activities of Daily Living (ADL). Activities of Daily Living include eating, dressing, bathing, personal hygiene-related tasks, transfers (the ability to get in and out of a bed or chair), ambulation and communication.

#### **Transportation**

**Commuting Alone:** This indicator measures the percent of workers 16 or older who drive to work alone by car, truck or van.

**Average Travel Delay:** This section focuses on travel delays during peak travel times – considered to be from 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and from 4 p.m. to 7

p.m. The figures are calculated by dividing the number of extra travel hours by the number of peak period travelers in an urban area. The average annual travel delay per peak traveler is the yearly sum of delays per peak trip, divided by the number of travelers who started a trip during the peak period.

**Commute Length:** Commute Length measures the percentage of workers 16 or older not working at home who commute more than 25 minutes.

**Airport Travelers:** This indicator measures the number of passengers boarding planes (“enplanements”) and disembarking from planes (“deplanements”) at Charlotte/Douglas International Airport. Passengers making connecting flights at Charlotte/Douglas are included in these figures.

## **Data Sources**

### Gaston County Profile 2009

Data Sources for each indicator are listed below. Data for the 2009 County Profiles were compiled using these sources from November, 2008 through January, 2009.

#### **Demographics**

Population Estimates: US Census: Decennial, Estimates Division

Population Projections: NC Office of State Budget and Management, NC State Demographics; South Carolina State

Budget and Control Board Office of Research Statistics, SC Community Profiles

Population Growth: US Census: Decennial, Estimates Division

Race and Ethnicity: US Census: Decennial, Estimates Division

Age and Gender: US Census: Decennial, Estimates Division

#### **Arts, Recreation, and Cultural Life**

Grants Expenditures: North Carolina Arts Council; South Carolina Arts Commission

Arts Graduates: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), IPEDS database

Library Funding: North Carolina Department of State Treasurer; South Carolina State Budget and Control Board

Library Holdings: National Center for Education Statistics (Library Research Center)

#### **Economy**

Labor Force: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Industry Employment: North Carolina Employment Security Commission; South Carolina Employment Security Commission

Business Establishments: North Carolina Employment Security Commission; South Carolina Employment Security Commission

Average Annual Wage: North Carolina Employment Security Commission; South Carolina Employment Security Commission

Per Capita Income: Bureau of Economic Analysis

Median Household Income: U.S. Census Bureau's Small Area Income and Poverty Division

#### **Education**

Public School Enrollment: National Center for Education Statistics

Educational Attainment: US Census: Decennial, American Community Survey

SAT Scores: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction; SC Dept. of Education

Graduation Rate: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction; SC Dept. of Education

College Plans: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction; SC Dept. of Education

Expenditures Per Pupil: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction; SC Dept. of Education

Capital Expenditures: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction; SC Dept. of Education

#### **Environment**

Air Quality Index: United States Environmental Protection Agency

Vehicle Emissions: North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources; South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

Water Consumption: North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources; South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

Impaired Streams: North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources; South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

Solid Waste Disposal: North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources; South



# Data Sources

## Gaston County Profile 2009

Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

Developed Acreage: UNC Charlotte Center for Applied GIS

### **Governmental and Citizen Participation**

Private Foundations: National Center for Charitable Statistics

Public Charities: National Center for Charitable Statistics

Giving (Public Charities): National Center for Charitable Statistics

Giving (Private Foundations): National Center for Charitable Statistics

Voter Turnout: North Carolina State Board of Elections; South Carolina State Board of Elections

### **Health**

Mortality Rate: NC Department of Health & Human Services State Center for Health; SC Department of Health and Environmental Control

STD Rate: NC Department of Health & Human Services State Center for Health; SC Department of Health and Environmental Control

Infant Mortality Rate: NC Department of Health & Human Services State Center for Health; SC Department of Health and Environmental Control

Birth Rate: NC Department of Health & Human Services State Center for Health; SC Department of Health and Environmental Control

Suicide Rate: NC Department of Health & Human Services State Center for Health; SC Department of Health and Environmental Control

### **Housing**

Housing Units: U.S. Census Bureau, Estimates Division

Housing Types: US Census: Decennial

Home Ownership: US Census: Decennial, American Community Survey

Residential Construction: US Census: Manufacturing, Mining and Construction Statistics

Sales: Carolina Multiple Listing Services, Charlotte Regional Realtor

Rent and Vacancy Rates: Carolinas Real Data

### **Public Safety**

911 Calls: Survey Questionnaire Administered by UNC Charlotte Urban Institute

Crime Index: North Carolina Department of Justice, State Bureau of Investigation; South Carolina Law Enforcement Division

Vehicle Accidents: Highway Safety Research Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; South Carolina Department of Public Safety

Workplace Fatalities: North Carolina Department of Labor; South Carolina Department of Labor

Public Safety Education: National Center for Education Statistics

Evacuation Planning: Survey Questionnaire Administered by UNC Charlotte Urban Institute

### **Social Well-Being**

Poverty Rate: US Census: Decennial, American Community Survey

Child Poverty Rate: U.S. Census, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates

Child Abuse: North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services; Prevent Child Abuse South Carolina

Teenage Birth Rate: NC Department of Health & Human Services State Center for Health; South Carolina State Budget and Control Board Office of Research

Elderly Assistance Rate: US Census: Decennial, American Community Survey

### **Transportation**

Commuting Alone: US Census: Decennial, American Community Survey

## **Data Sources**

### Gaston County Profile 2009

Average Travel Delay: Texas Transportation  
Institute (TTI)

Commute Length: US Census: Decennial,  
American Community Survey

Airport Travelers: Charlotte/Douglas Aviation  
Activity Reports

## Endnotes

### Gaston County Profile 2009

<sup>1</sup>Indicator data at the regional level was calculated whenever possible as a weighted average of the source data for all 14 counties. However, in the following instances, the regional figure is calculated differently:

Library Funding Per Capita: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Library Print Holdings Per Capita: Region Number represents 13 of 14 counties excluding Anson

Median Household Income: Region Number represents North Carolina state average

Percent Population with Bachelors Degree or Higher: Region Number represents 11 of 14 counties excluding Anson, Chester and Stanly

High School Cohort Graduation Rate: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Average Daily Water Consumption, Gallons Per Capita: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Solid Waste Disposal, Pounds Per Capita: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Percent Voter Turnout of Registered Voters: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Birth Rate Per 1,000: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Total Infant Mortality Per 1,000 Live Births: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

White Infant Mortality Per 1,000 Live Births: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Minority Infant Mortality Per 1,000 Live Births: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Total Mortality Rate Per 100,000: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Heart Disease Mortality Rate Per 100,000: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Cancer Mortality Rate Per 100,000: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Suicide Rate Per 100,000: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Chlamydia Rate Per 100,000: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Gonorrhea Rate Per 100,000: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Percent Owner Occupied Housing: Regional Number represents 11 of 14 counties excluding Anson, Chester and Stanly

Percent Renter Occupied Housing: Regional Number represents 11 of 14 counties excluding Anson, Chester and Stanly

Average Residential Sales Price: Region Number represents 7 of 14 counties excluding Anson, Catawba, Chester, Cleveland, Lancaster, Rowan and York

Average Apartment Vacancy Rate: Region Number represents 6 of 14 counties excluding Anson, Catawba, Chester, Cleveland, Lancaster, Lincoln, Rowan and Stanly

Average Apartment Rental Rate: Region Number represents 6 of 14 counties excluding Anson, Catawba, Chester, Cleveland, Lancaster, Lincoln, Rowan and Stanly

Calls for Emergency Service (911) Per Capita: Region Number represents 11 of 14 counties excluding Chester, Mecklenburg and York

Crime Index Per 10,000: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

People in Motor Vehicle Accidents, Total: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

People in Motor Vehicle Accidents, Property Damage Only: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

People in Motor Vehicle Accidents, Fatality: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

## Endnotes

### Gaston County Profile 2009

People in Motor Vehicle Accidents, Non-fatal Injury: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Investigated Workplace Fatalities: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Percent Individuals Living in Poverty: Regional Number represents 11 of 14 counties excluding Anson, Chester and Stanly

Percent Families Living in Poverty: Regional Number represents 10 of 14 counties excluding Anson, Chester, Lancaster and Stanly

Percent Births to Mothers Under Age 18: Region Number represents the 11 North Carolina counties

Elderly Assistance Rate: Region Number represents 11 of 14 counties excluding Anson, Chester and Stanly

Percent of Workers 16 or Older Driving to Work Alone: Region Number represents 11 of 14 counties excluding Anson, Chester and Stanly

Percent of Workers Commuting More Than 25 Minutes: Region Number represents 11 of 14 counties excluding Anson, Chester, and Stanly

<sup>2</sup>For Percent Change in Public School Enrollment vs. Prior Year, the 'County Percent Change' column contains the five year percent change in enrollment (that is, the most recent year's enrollment is compared to enrollment from four years prior) instead of the five year percent change in the percent change in enrollment (comparing the most recent change to the percent change of four years ago).

## Acknowledgements

Gaston County Profile 2009

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