



# IMAGINE CENTRAL ARKANSAS

**Plan Smart. Live Smart.**

STATE OF THE REGION: DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

WORKING PAPER #2

*October 2012*



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

STATE OF THE REGION: DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS .....	1
Population.....	1
Population by Age and Gender .....	1
Population by Ethnicity .....	4
Housing Composition .....	5
Household Income .....	6
Conclusion .....	6

## TABLES

Table 1. Population Change and Growth Rates for 2000-2010 .....	2
Table 2. Population by Gender, 2010-2040 .....	3
Table 3. Population by Race/Ethnicity (2000 and 2010) for the Region .....	4

## FIGURES

Figure 1. Region’s Population Trends, 1980-2040 .....	2
Figure 2. Region’s Median Age from 1970 .....	2
Figure 3. Region’s Population by Age Group/Gender in 2010 .....	3
Figure 4. Region’s Population by Age Group/Gender in 2040 .....	3
Figure 5. Ethnic Composition of Four-County Region (2010).....	4
Figure 6. Households are Increasing More Rapidly than Population (2000-2010) .....	5
Figure 7. Range of Average Household Sizes (1990, 2000 and 2010) .....	5
Figure 8. Median Household Income .....	6



# STATE OF THE REGION: DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

*This is the second in the series of white papers that will serve as background information for Imagine Central Arkansas. This paper addresses major demographic trends in the region, including population, age and gender, household composition and income.*

## Population

Between 2000 and 2010 central Arkansas grew at a rate of over 15 percent (from 584,000 to 671,000 people), higher than either of the previous two decades. According to population projections prepared by Metroplan, the region is expected to continue to grow over the next three decades, but at a slightly lower rate, to 943,000 people (40.5 percent increase).

Pulaski County, central Arkansas' traditional population and employment center, is expected to see a smaller share of this growth as population pushes outward to the region's other counties. In 2000 Pulaski County housed almost 62 percent of the region's residents (about 362,000 out of 583,800), but had only about 57 percent of the total population (383,000) by 2010. Faulkner, Lonoke and Saline Counties absorbed a majority of the region's population growth between 2000 and 2010 (about 67,000 out of a total increase of 88,000). Recent trends have shown this decline in population in central business districts as residents look for shorter commutes and lower transportation cost.

## Population by Age and Gender

The region's population is getting older, and is expected to continue to age. In 1970, the median age was a youthful 27.7. By 2010, the overall median age was 35.7, up from 34.7 in 2000. Central Arkansas is expected to continue to age steadily to a median age of almost 40 by 2030 before virtually leveling off between 2030 and 2040.

Women currently outnumber men in central Arkansas, comprising 51.4 percent of the region's population. The gender balance is anticipated to remain about the same through 2040.

## Highlights

- Central Arkansas grew by over 15 percent between 2000 and 2010, faster than either of the previous two decades.
- The region will continue to grow, although at a slightly slower pace, to almost one million people by 2040.
- Population growth continues to move outward. Between 2000 and 2010, a majority of population growth occurred outside of Pulaski County.
- Central Arkansas continues to grow older. The median age will be close to 40 by 2040 (compared to just over 35 in 2010 and less than 28 in 1970).
- Women have a slight edge in total population at just over 51.4 percent.
- The distribution of age groups will change significantly over the next two decades, with an increasing number in the 55 and older age cohorts.
- Minority populations, led by Hispanics, are growing at a significantly faster rate than the population as a whole. Pulaski County holds the bulk of the region's minority population.
- Median incomes are growing across central Arkansas. Median incomes are highest in Saline County and lowest in Faulkner County. Per capita income is the highest in Pulaski County.

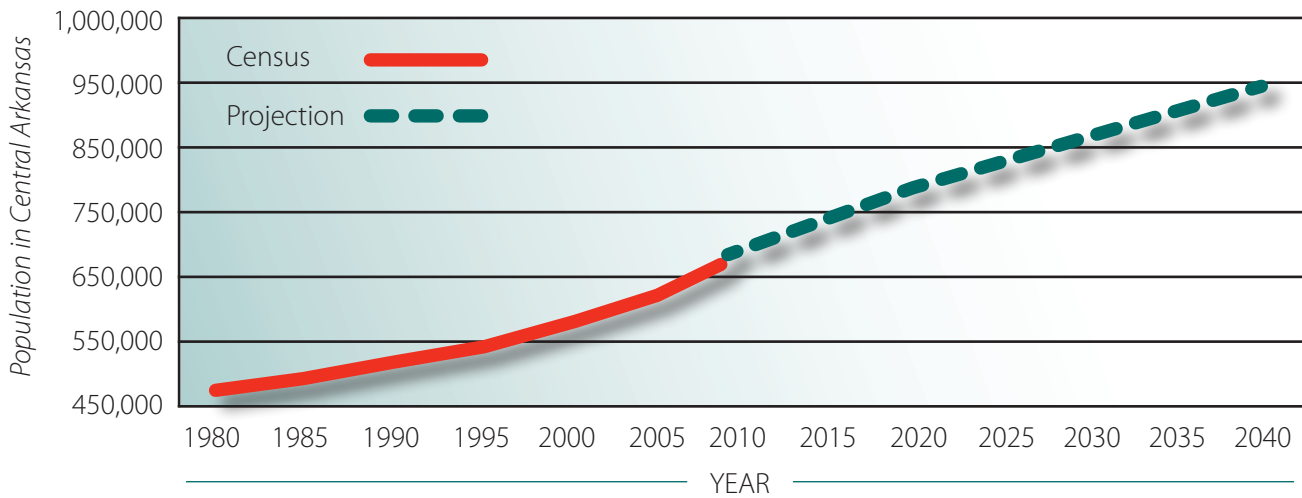
THE REGION WILL CONTINUE TO GROW, ALTHOUGH AT A SLIGHTLY SLOWER PACE, TO ALMOST ONE MILLION PEOPLE BY 2040.

Table 1. Population Change and Growth Rates for 2000-2010

	2000 Population	2010 Population	Absolute Change	Growth Rate 2000 -2010 (%)
Faulkner	86,000	113,200	27,200	31.6%
Lonoke	52,800	68,400	15,600	29.4%
Pulaski	361,500	382,700	21,200	5.9%
Saline	83,500	107,100	23,600	28.2%
Region	583,800	671,500	87,700	15.0%

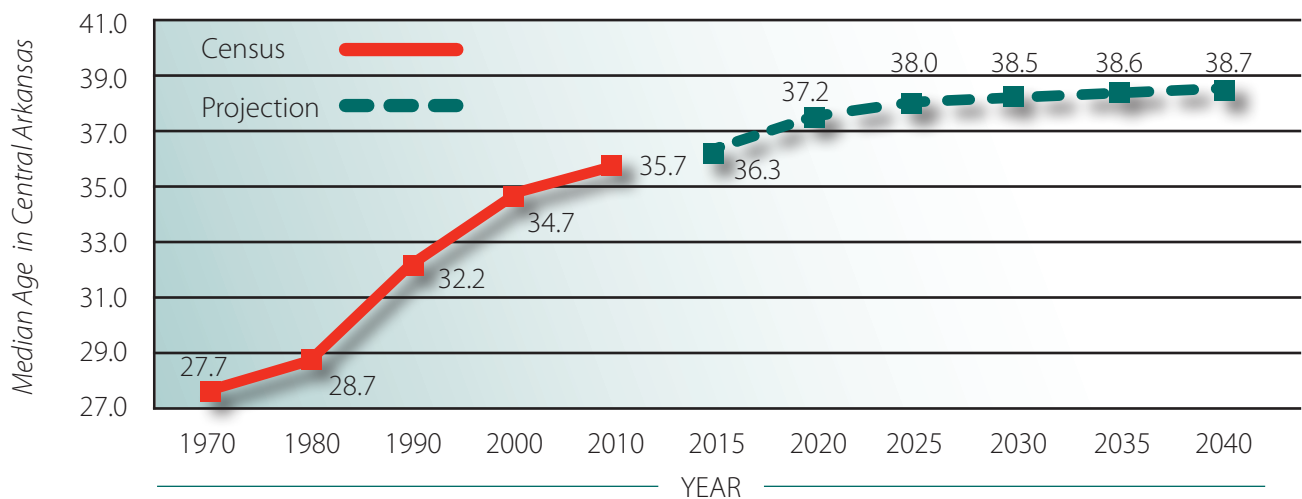
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Metroplan Estimates (rounded to the nearest hundred)

Figure 1. Region’s Population Trends, 1980-2040



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Metroplan Estimates

Figure 2. Region’s Median Age from 1970



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Metroplan Estimates

Table 2. Population by Gender, 2010-2040

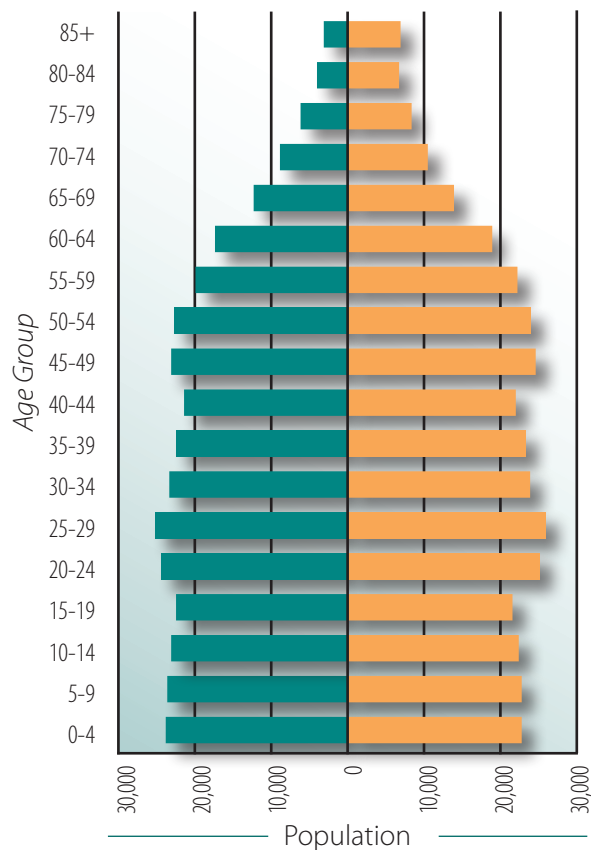
	2010	% of the Population in 2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Projected % of the Population in 2040	Projected Growth 2010-2040
Total Males	326,100	48.6%	351,337	374,755	397,025	418,373	437,502	457,032	48.0%	130,943
Total Females	345,400	51.4%	371,027	395,885	420,300	443,840	465,014	486,191	52.0%	140,821
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>671,500</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>722,364</b>	<b>770,640</b>	<b>817,325</b>	<b>862,213</b>	<b>902,516</b>	<b>943,223</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>271,764</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Metroplan Projections (rounded to the nearest hundred)

Population pyramids are useful tools for understanding how various demographic characteristics are distributed among age groups. In the oldest age cohorts (70 to 85+), women clearly outnumber men in central Arkansas. This is attributed to the fact that women’s life expectancy is higher than men’s. The largest concentration of males is in the 25 to

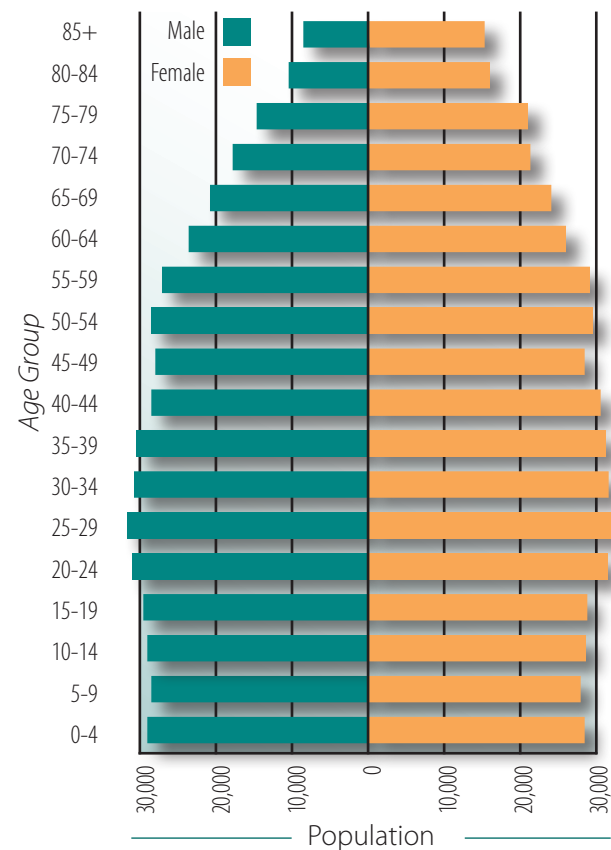
29 age group, whereas the 20 to 24 age comprises the largest population of the female population in central Arkansas. Approximately half, or 49 percent, of the region’s population is 20 to 54 years old, and comprise a majority of the workforce and commuters in the region.

Figure 3. Region’s Population by Age Group/Gender in 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010

Figure 4. Region’s Population by Age Group/Gender in 2040



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Metroplan Estimates

The age/gender pyramid for the region’s population is projected to change dramatically by 2040. Each cohort from 55 to 85+ is expected to make up a significantly larger share of the total population than it did in 2010 for both genders. The young elderly population (over age 60) is projected to grow substantially by 2040, reflecting the aging baby boom population (born between the mid 1940s and early 1960s).

### Population by Ethnicity

Central Arkansas is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. Between 2000 and 2010, the region’s minority populations grew at a much faster rate than

the region as a whole. The Hispanic population grew the largest amount in relative terms (167 percent) to a total of 33,000 residents, and non-Hispanic Whites grew by the slowest rate of just 7.3 percent, to a total of 460,000 residents.

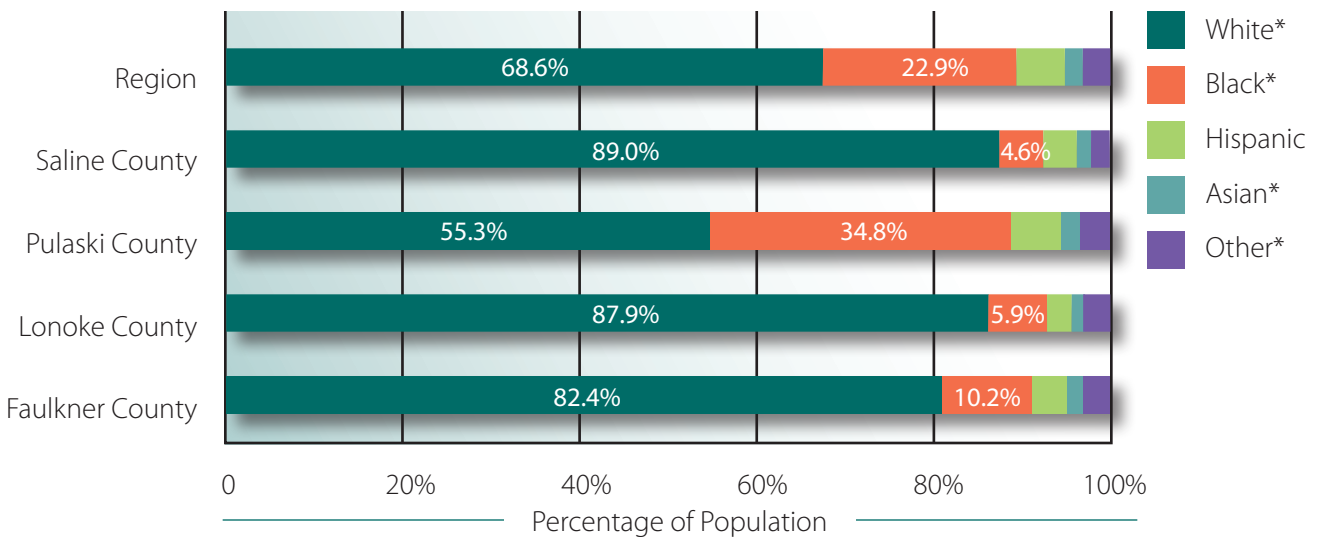
Non-Hispanic Whites now constitute 68.6 percent of the region’s population, down from 73.5 percent in 2000. There is a sizeable Black/African-American minority population (22.9 percent), and the growing presence of Hispanic, Asian, and other minorities is becoming discernible. In 2040, Metroplan projections estimate that 54.8 percent of the region’s population will be non-Hispanic White, 26.1 percent will be Black/African-American and the remaining 19.1 percent will be Hispanic, Asian or Other.

Table 3. Population by Race/Ethnicity (2000 and 2010) for the Region

		Population in 2000	Population in 2010	2000-2010 Change	Percent Change 2000-2010
Hispanic		12,300 (2.1%)	32,900 (4.9%)	20,600	167.0%
Non-Hispanic	White	429,100 (73.5%)	460,400(68.6%)	31,300	7.3%
	Black/African American	127,200 (21.8%)	153,700 (22.9%)	26,500	20.9%
	Asian	5,700 (0.9%)	10,100 (1.5%)	4,400	76.9%
	Other	9,400 (1.6%)	14,200 (2.1%)	4,800	50.5%
<b>Total Population</b>		<b>583,845</b>	<b>671,459</b>	<b>87,614</b>	<b>15.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (rounded to the nearest hundred)

Figure 5. Ethnic Composition of Four-County Region (2010)



\*Denotes Non-Hispanic  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

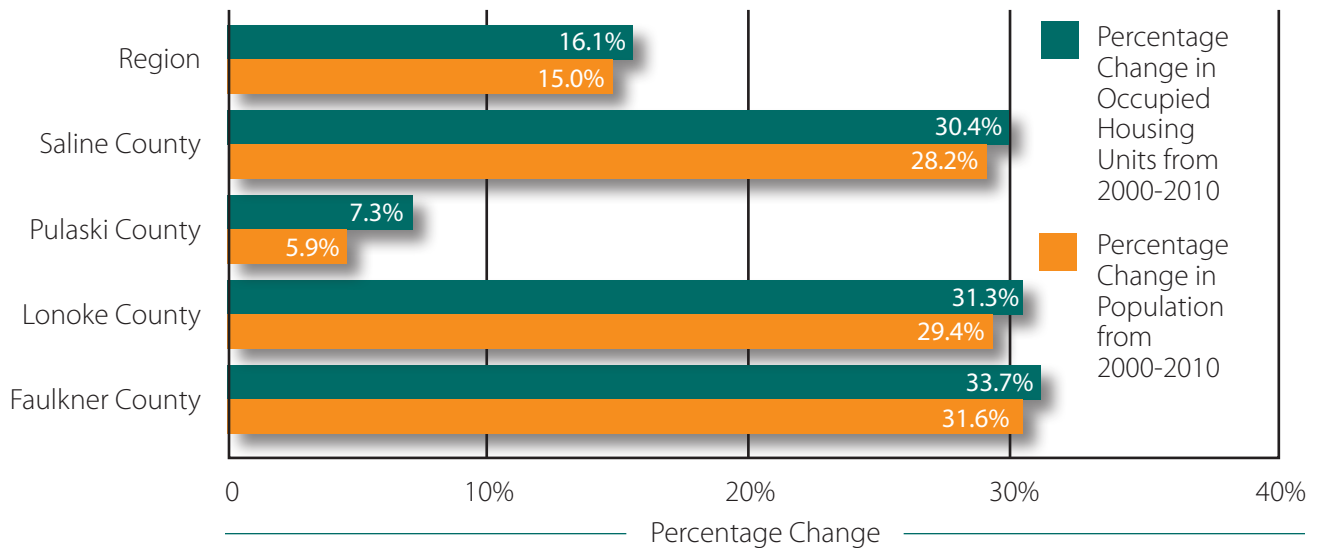


Population distribution by ethnicity in 2010 varies among the counties in the region. The proportionally higher concentration of non-Hispanic White population can be found in Saline County (89.0%) and the lowest in Pulaski County. Pulaski County has the largest concentration of the Hispanic population (5.8%), the non-Hispanic Black population (34.8%), and the non-Hispanic Asian population (1.9%).

## Housing Composition

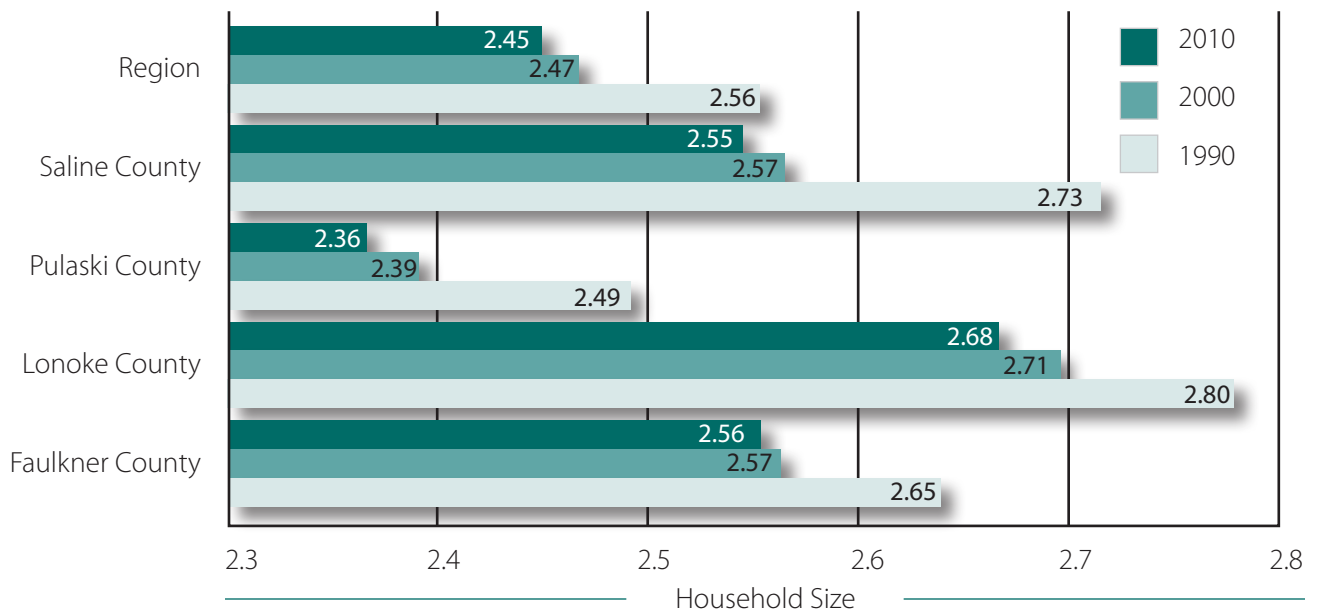
Households in central Arkansas increased from a total of 230,800 to 268,000 units between 2000 and 2010 (a 16.1 percent increase). Faulkner County's rate was twice the region-wide growth rate. The County had the highest rate of population increase (31.6 percent), and also had the largest percent gain in households (33.7 percent).

Figure 6. Households are Increasing More Rapidly than Population (2000-2010)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 7. Range of Average Household Sizes (1990, 2000 and 2010)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The number of housing units grew at a slightly faster rate than population, indicative of declining household sizes across the region. The average household size (persons per household) in central Arkansas is now 2.45, a decrease from 2.47 in 2000 and 2.56 in 1990. The largest household size in the region is in Lonoke County at 2.68, and the smallest is 2.36 in Pulaski County.

## Household Income

Household incomes are growing in central Arkansas. Between 2000 and 2010, median household income in the four county region increased by 20 percent, from \$39,100 to \$47,000. The median household income figures in 2010 range from a low of \$43,000 in Faulkner County to a high of \$52,700 in Saline County. Lonoke County also has a median income value above the regional average. Saline County's median income experienced the largest percentage of growth at 23.7 percent (increasing by \$10,100).

## Conclusion

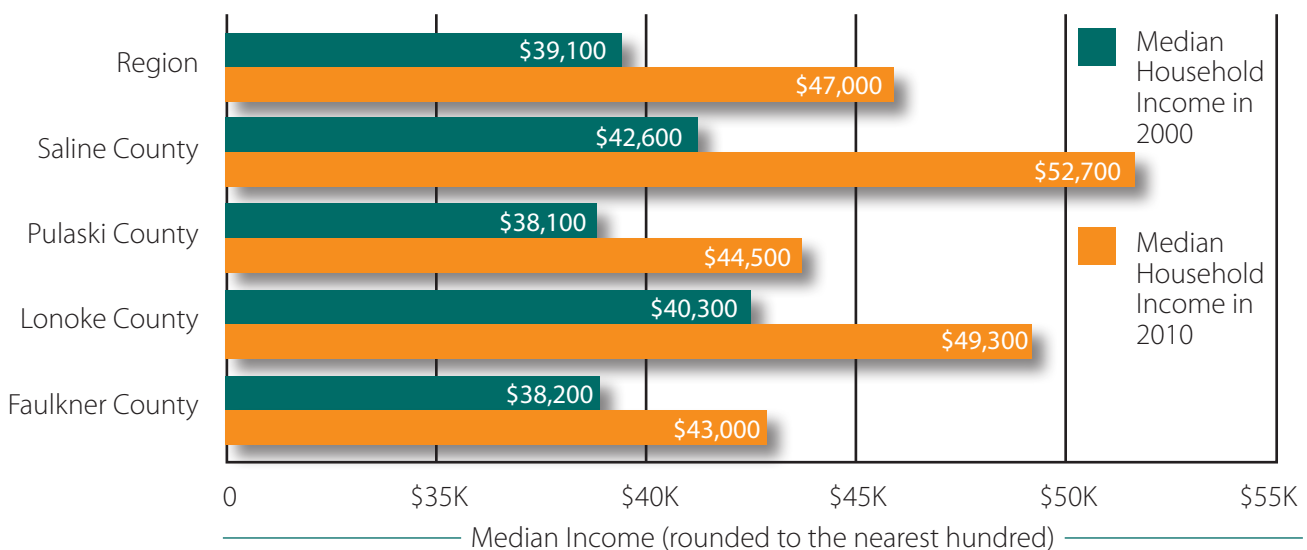
Central Arkansas has a growing population, adding almost 100,000 people (a 15 percent increase) in the decade between 2000 and 2010. The region's population is expected to reach almost one million by the year 2040. This growth means more demand will be placed on the central Arkansas' natural and

built systems. For example, increased patterns of suburbanization, as evidenced by a majority of growth occurring outside of Pulaski County, means longer commute patterns, more demand placed on transportation systems and increased transportation cost. Additional demands will also be placed on the region's water and energy supplies, health care services, available land, etc.

The region is also experiencing a shift in demographics. Central Arkansas is getting steadily older and becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. This shift can have an impact on the choices residents make in the future. For example, an aging population could mean that more individuals will have difficulty driving to access daily needs and an alternative means of mobility may be necessary. Shrinking average household sizes means that people will make different housing choices, including household size and location. Since labor force participation diminishes after age 55, retirements will shrink the sizeable Baby Boom workforce cadre and Generation Y (young adults under age 35) will comprise a growing share of the working-age population and hit its maximum income-earning years.

These growth and demographic trends are likely to influence the region for decades to come. The implications of these trends must be taken into consideration as Imagine Central Arkansas moves forward.

Figure 8. Median Household Income



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000, American Community Survey 2010