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**METROPLAN RELEASES 2021 METROTRENDS DEMOGRAPHIC REVIEW AND OUTLOOK
The 2020 Census**

LITTLE ROCK, AR, December 20, 2021 — Metroplan announces the release of the *2021 Demographic Review and Outlook*, which chronicles demographic trends for the Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The 2021 edition focuses on the 2020 Census.

The U.S. Bureau of the Census released local-area census results during August 2021. The region continues growing. Little Rock's population now exceeds 200,000. A few small Central Arkansas cities, like Austin, Ward, Shannon Hills, Bryant, Wooster and Greenbrier grew by rates exceeding 20 percent. Despite fast growth in some areas, the figures point to slowing growth at regional, state and national levels. Overall state population grew, as did the state's top two metro areas. The biggest population loss was in the state's rural counties.

While the regional core is still the most diverse portion of the region, Saline County saw the most change with both black and Hispanic populations doubling from 2010 to 2020.

Nationally and locally, growth in population of two or more races was a big headline-grabber. Population in this group tripled in the region. By 2020 4.7 percent of the area's population described themselves on the Census as belonging to two or more races. While demographic change is substantial, it is also possible that cultural and political factors may be influencing people when they self-describe their racial identity to the Census Bureau.

Additional highlights from the publication include:

- The Little Rock region's unemployment rate runs below state and national averages in good times and bad, signifying reliable demand for workers.
- Little Rock, North Little Rock and Conway account for 46 percent of the region's population and about 70 percent of regional jobs.
- Saline County gained about 16,000 people over the decade (+15 percent), fastest among the region's counties.
- U.S. and regional housing construction sagged briefly in early 2020 and has been mostly running above average since. Multi-family construction is also up.
- The region's death rate from Covid-19 remains slightly below the U.S. average but has been catching up.

Read the full publication by visiting:

<https://metroplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/DemographicReview2021.pdf>

Metroplan publishes *Metrotrends* twice yearly. All articles, tables and figures are available for republishing with credit. Further information on this issue may be obtained in the new *2021 Demographic Review and Outlook*, available as a PDF or paper copy from Metroplan.

Metroplan is the federally designated metropolitan planning organization for the four-county region of Faulkner, Lonoke, Pulaski and Saline counties. It is a voluntary association of local governments that has operated since 1955.

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