

DEMOGRAPHICS & POPULATION

This analysis of demographics and population has been prepared utilizing two sources.

For the long-range population figures we have used data developed by the Economic Analysis Division of the Wyoming Department of Administration & Information. The data was published July 2008.

For the demographic data, along with some population information, we have utilized information provided by a California-based market research company, DecisionWhere, Inc. We have worked with the company for the past several years on numerous projects throughout the country.

POPULATION

The population projections prepared by the Economic Analysis Division looks forward to 2025, and starts with the 2000 US Census. For this report the consultants have used the Division’s data through 2029, and then projected forward to 2040 using the same percentage increase as the Division did for the period between 2019 and 2024.

Table 5.1
Population Projections

<i>year</i>	<i>Albany County</i>	<i>City of Laramie</i>
2000 Census	32,014	27,191 ¹
2010 estimates	32,300	27,310
2015	32,060	27,100
2020	31,930	26,900
2025	32,250	27,240
2030	32,850	27,680
2035	33,710	28,500
2040	34,400	29,200

It is interesting to note that there is a projected decline in population for the County between 2010 and 2025 and in the City between for the same span of time.

Over the 30-year span of time that this Needs Assessment Study is to consider there is projected to be very modest increases in population in Laramie and the County. For the City, a net gain of 1,890 between 2010 and 2040; for the County, a net gain of 2,100 for the same period of time.

In 2000, the City held 84.9 percent of the County population. Today, that percentage is slightly lower at 84.5 percent. By 2040, the percentage of the County population residing in the City of Laramie will still be 84.9 percent.

¹ In an interview with Janie Jordan, Laramie City Manager (July 29, 2009, 2:00 PM, Manager’s Office), Ms. Jordan stated that she and the City believe the 2000 Census “understated” the population for Laramie.

Age & Ethnicity of the Population

The median age of the population for both the County and the City is 28.6. The other age categories reflect a few slight differences, as shown next. The greatest difference, age range 15 – 24, is undoubtedly a reflection of the University of Wyoming (UW) student body population.

Table 5.2
Age Cohorts

<i>age range</i>	<i>Albany County %</i>	<i>City of Laramie %</i>
0 - 14	17.0	16.7
15 - 24	24.0	26.1
25 - 44	28.9	29.3
45 - 64	20.7	18.9
65 - 84	8.1	7.7
85 +	1.2	1.3

The female population in the primary child bearing age range, 25 to 44, is 27.7 percent in the County and 27.8 percent in the City.

The influence of the University is also apparent, although not in a dramatic way, when ethnicity is taken into consideration. Whereas the White, or Anglo, population of Albany County as a whole is 91.3 percent of the total in Laramie, the percentage drops a bit to 90.8. The percentage of the Albany County population comprised of persons of Hispanic Origin is 7.4 while in the City it is 7.7.

DEMOGRAPHICS

We at Godfrey’s Associates believe there are a select number of economic indicators that can be good “predictors” of library usage. We will show what the demographics say about these in the order of what we believe is the importance of each, starting with Educational Attainment Levels for the adult population, age 25 and above.

Educational Attainment Levels

The percentages presented for the County are based on a 25+ population of 17,575 and for the City a population of 14,612.

Table 5.3
Educational Attainment Levels

<i>educational attainment level</i>	<i>Albany County %</i>	<i>City of Laramie %</i>
No high school diploma	5.1	4.5
High school graduate	22.3	21.0
College, no degree	20.4	19.7
Associate’s degree	5.0	5.2
Bachelor’s degree	27.1	28.3
Graduate/professional degree	20.2	21.3

With nearly one-half of the adult population having a college degree or higher it would be reasonable to expect that usage of the local public library would be quite high.

Home Ownership

Past studies have shown that homeowners are public library patrons in higher numbers than are those who are in rental units.

Table 5.4
Home Ownership

<i>own/ rent</i>	<i>Albany County %</i>	<i>City of Laramie %</i>
Own	44.4	44.9
Rent	44.1	50.4
Vacant	11.5	4.7

These numbers reflect, without a doubt, the high percentage of university students living in rental quarters. This demographic matters less for Albany County and Laramie than it would be for other communities.

Households with Children Living at Home

Households with children living at home (generally children under the age of 18) tend to use the public library more than empty nesters.

Table 5.5
Households with Children

<i>type of household</i>	<i>Albany County %</i>	<i>City of Laramie %</i>
Married couples w/ children	37.7	38.1
Female w/ children	70.2	69.9
Male w/ children	53.7	52.1

Again, the presence of such a large student body population suggests that this demographic is not quite as strong here as in other locales.

The Female with children and Male with children percentages are based upon the number of Female No Husband and Male No Wife households.

Labor Force

This demographic takes into account the population age 16+. In Albany County that number is 24,248; in Laramie it is 20,814.

Table 5.6
Labor Force

<i>status</i>	<i>Albany County %</i>	<i>City of Laramie %</i>
Employed	66.4	66.1
Unemployed	2.6	2.6
Not in labor force	31.0	31.1
White collar workers	63.6	64.1
Blue collar workers	36.4	35.9

The UW supplies a great number of jobs, and a high percentage of those would be classified as white collar. The UW is also, in most times, a stable employer and an employer that typically raises its employment numbers each year. The economic downturn being experienced everywhere has – or will – have a negative impact on employment figures for the UW and the region as a whole for the next year or two.

Vehicles Available

How many vehicles in a household can have a bearing on library usage, especially in a city with limited public transportation and only one public library facility.

Table 5.7

Vehicles Available

<i>demographic</i>	<i>Albany County</i>	<i>City of Laramie</i>
Total vehicles	32,460	27,193
Households w/no vehicles	538 (3.5%)	493 (3.7%)
w/1 vehicle	4,871 (31.6%)	4,523 (34.1%)
w/2 vehicles	5,669 (36.8%)	4,872 (36.7%)
w/3+ vehicles	4,335 (28.1%)	3,386 (25.5%)
Average vehicles per household	2.1	2.0

A vehicle is as close to a necessity in Albany County as one thing can be.

Income Levels

Income levels can be measured by total income, by average family income, by median family income, and for the latter two measurements also by non-family income levels. Income levels are generally stated in increments of \$10,000. For this report we have developed fewer groups - nine instead of 16.

Most studies show that persons at both the low and high end of the economic ladder are less likely to use the public library than those in the middle.

Table 5.8

Income Levels

<i>income level</i>	<i>Albany County %</i>	<i>City of Laramie %</i>
< \$10,000	13.8	14.8
\$10,000 - \$24,999	23.1	23.8
\$25,000 - \$34,999	12.5	12.5
\$35,000 - \$49,999	14.3	14.3
\$50,000 - \$74,999	16.5	15.9
\$75,000 - \$99,999	9.7	9.3
\$100,000 - \$149,999	7.2	7.0
\$150,000 - \$249,999	1.6	1.3
\$250,000 +	1.4	1.2
Average Household Income	\$50,420	\$47,464
Median Household Income	\$35,614	\$34,019
Average Family Income	\$66,346	\$64,346
Median Family Income	\$53,678	\$53,176
Average Non-Family Income	\$33,467	\$31,321
Median Non-Family Income	\$22,389	\$21,800
Per Capita Income	\$27,369	\$26,106

What we see in the County is that nearly one-half of the household incomes, 49.4 percent, range between less than \$10,000 to a high of \$34,999 or less. The City percentage is even higher at 51.1 percent. These numbers are influenced to some degree – and perhaps by a large degree – by the college-age population.

At the high end, \$100,000 and above, 10.2 percent of County households have incomes of \$100,000 or more and 9.5 percent of City households have the higher incomes.

Therefore, the number of households in both jurisdictions that are in the lower middle to higher middle income brackets, \$35,000 - \$99,999, is 40.55 percent in the County and 39.5 percent in the City.

SUMMARY

When studying all of the demographics and the population projections, we do not see significant shifts on the horizon. The population is projected to slowly increase. Due to the presence of the University of Wyoming, the demographics are not likely to change in any dramatic way.

What is untold are other economic issues that may develop and are either unknown or unrealized at this time. If, as was mentioned by Mayor Jodi Guerin and Gaye Johnson of the Laramie Economic Development Corporation, wind power becomes a growth industry in the County and the region experiences an increase in well-paying jobs related to the industry, then the area could see an influx of persons to staff and support the industry. The same could be said about other possibilities – especially if the UW should develop a focus on entrepreneurial activities, e.g. start-up businesses. Furthermore, the recently opened Convention Center may also spur some growth, although not necessarily at the higher income levels.