

Lenoir County CTP Socio-Economic Data: 2015 Estimates and 2045 Projections

In the development of the Lenoir County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP), existing and anticipated deficiencies were determined through an analysis of the transportation system looking at both current and projected future travel patterns. For this CTP, the majority of travel demand in the north and central areas of Lenoir County, including the City of Kinston and the Town of La Grange, was projected from 2015 to 2045 using the computerized Kinston Travel Demand Model (TDM). This TDM was developed in 2011 and approved by the Lenoir County Commissioners in 2012 for use in evaluating alternatives to the Kinston Bypass as well as other projects within the area.

An updated version of the Kinston TDM is currently being developed for the Lenoir County CTP. Travel demand models are developed to simulate travel patterns on the existing transportation system as well as to project travel patterns for 2045. Additionally, travel demand models require a broad range of socio-economic input data such as population and employment.

Travel demand outside the Kinston TDM area, including extreme northeast Lenoir County and Grifton, as well as southern Lenoir County and Pink Hill, will be projected from 2015 to 2045 using a regression analysis model based on previous economic and traffic growth in the area.

On the next pages are the 2015 estimated and 2045 projected population and employment data for Lenoir County. This data has been vetted through the Lenoir County CTP Steering Committee and Lenoir County Transportation Committee (LCTC). The LCTC approved this data though requested a slight decrease in near-term (year 2020) growth. That is reflected in the near-term population and employment growth in the tables on the following page. The employment data has been revised since these committees approved the projections as there has been an increase in total employment within the area.

The Lenoir County CTP Steering Committee and the NCDOT – Transportation Planning Branch is requesting that the Lenoir County Commissioners endorse these 2015 base-year estimates and 2045 future-year projections for these population and employment control totals.

Population

After comparing the past growth rates and projections for the county and its municipalities, as well as previous Kinston Travel Demand Model and rural area estimates and projections, an overall growth rate of **0.4% per year** was agreed upon for the entire county and future year projections are calculated in Table 1 on the following:

Table 1: Lenoir County Population Projections

Population Projection	2015	2020	2030	2035	2045	Total Growth
Lenoir County	58,338	58,500	61,307	62,791	65,760	7,422

The modeled area is assumed to grow slightly faster than the rest of the county due to existing and projected population and employment within the Kinston area (shown in Table 2 below).

Table 2: Kinston Travel Demand Model Data

Year	Total Model Population	Lenoir County Model Population	Percentage Lenoir County TDM/TDM Population	Total Lenoir County Population	Percentage Lenoir County TDM/Total Lenoir County Population
2015	52,165	46,408	89.0%	58,338	80.0%
2045	59,147	52,937	89.5%	65,760	80.5%
Total Growth	6,982	6,529		7,422	

Employment

Comparing to previous studies and information, employment has held relatively steady while there has been a slight decrease in total population. This could be explained by the increasing amounts of employees commuting to Lenoir County from surrounding counties.

Assuming growth in keeping with the agreed upon rates, the employment to population ratio and total future employment are shown in Tables 3 and 4 below:

Table 3: Lenoir County Population to Employment Ratio

Year	Population	Employment	Employment/Population Ratio
2015	58,338	33,434	0.57
2020	58,500	33,678	0.575
2030	61,307	36,171	0.59
2035	62,791	37,675	0.60
2045	65,760	40,442	0.615
Total Increase	7,422	7,008	

Table 4: Lenoir County Portion of the Travel Demand Model Population to Employment Ratio

Year	Population	Employment	Employment/Population Ratio
2015	46,408	31,050	0.67
2020	46,600	31,455	0.675
2030	49,135	33,657	0.685
2035	51,670	35,911	0.695
2045	52,937	37,585	0.71
Total Increase	6,529	6,535	