HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ECONOMY
OF THE
GEORGIA MOUNTAINS AREA

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INTRODUCTION

A forested highland region in which 10 of the 12 county seats lack any form of railroad service is an unlikely area for much industrial activity. However, the fact is that both manufacturing and construction employ larger proportions of the resident work force in the 12-county Georgia Mountains Area than in the state of Georgia or even in the nation.

This paradox is only one of the many interesting facets of the economy of the northeastern Georgia counties represented by the Georgia Mountains Planning and Development Commission. Referred to in this report as the Georgia Mountains Area, the study area includes the counties of Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union, and White.

This study analyzes recent trends and the present employment structure and reviews other highlights of the economy of the area. Its main purpose is to provide perspective for more detailed studies and for the establishment of active development goals and efforts.
POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN THE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS AREA

Map 1 (on the facing page) shows the 1960 population and resident employment in each of 12 Georgia counties forming the Georgia Mountains Area in the northeastern part of the state.

In 1960, population ranged from 3,590 in Dawson County (153rd among Georgia's 159 counties) to 45,739 in Hall County (10th in rank). Seven of the 12 counties had fewer than 7,500 residents each.

Resident employment in Hall County in 1960 was almost three times greater than in the next largest county. The remaining 11 counties fell into four employment-size groups: Dawson, Towns, and Union (between 1,000 and 2,000 employed); Lumpkin, White, Banks, and Rabun (between 2,000 and 3,000); Forsyth and Franklin (between 4,000 and 5,000); and Habersham and Stephens (between 6,000 and 7,000).
MAP 1
POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT IN THE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS AREA, 1960

P = POPULATION
E = TOTAL EMPLOYED
(by place of residence)
DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS AREA

Chart 1 shows the percentage distribution by industry of all resident employment in the 12-county area. The leading sector in 1960 was manufacturing, which employed 19,929, as compared with 6,979 in agriculture and 6,768 in retail trade. Sectors of intermediate importance include personal and recreational services (4,284), construction (4,018), and educational services (2,973). The combination of these six leading sectors represented 83.9% of the area's total employment in 1960.

1/ "Personal and recreational services" comprise repair services; employment in private households, hotels, and motels; laundry and dry cleaning services; and entertainment and recreation services. "Business and professional services" include advertising, accounting, auditing, and bookkeeping services; welfare, religious, and nonprofit membership organizations; hospitals; and other professional and related services (except educational).
CHART 1
DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS AREA, 1960

MANUFACTURING 37.2%
AGRICULTURE 13.0%
RETAIL TRADE 12.6%
PERSONAL AND RECREATIONAL SERVICES 8.0%
CONSTRUCTION 7.6%
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES 5.5%
TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATIONS, UTILITIES 3.8%
BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES 3.5%
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION 2.5%
WHOLESALE TRADE 2.3%
FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE 2.0%
FORESTRY, FISHERIES, MINING 0.4%
INDUSTRY NOT REPORTED 1.6%

SOURCE: U. S. Census of Population
DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT IN HALL COUNTY

Hall County's residents account for more than a third of total resident employment in the 12-county area. Chart 2 shows the distribution by industry of Hall's employment. The outstanding category in 1960 was manufacturing, employing 6,891. Retail trade was second with 2,411. Other sectors employing 1,000 or more include agriculture (1,525), personal and recreational services (1,491), and construction (1,338). Slightly fewer than 1,000 Hall County residents were employed in business and professional services. These six leading sectors accounted for over 80% of the county's total employment in 1960.
CHART 2
DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT IN HALL COUNTY, 1960

MANUFACTURING 37.8%

RETAIL TRADE 13.2%

AGRICULTURE 8.4%

PERSONAL AND RECREATIONAL SERVICES - 8.2%

CONSTRUCTION - 7.3%

MANUFACTURING - 4.8%

TRANSPORTATION, COMMUNICATIONS, UTILITIES - 4.3%

FINANCE, INSURANCE, REAL ESTATE - 2.9%

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION - 2.6%

WHOLESALE TRADE - 3.1%

FORESTRY, FISHERIES, MINING - 0.2%

INDUSTRY NOT REPORTED - 1.8%

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES - 4.8%

BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES - 5.4%

SOURCE: U.S. Census of Population
Chart 3 provides a comparison of the employment mix in the Georgia Mountains Area, Hall County, Georgia, and the United States as a whole.

The 12-county area has comparatively large proportions employed in manufacturing and agriculture. Its percentages employed in construction and educational services are higher than Georgia's and the nation's, but not by a substantial margin. It has comparatively small shares of its total employed in all other sectors, although its percentage in personal and recreational services is about the same as the national ratio.

Hall County's percentage in manufacturing is also relatively large. Its percentage in construction exceeds the all-Georgia and national ratios by small margins. The share of its residents employed in agriculture is larger than the national average, but smaller than the all-Georgia average. Its percentage in personal and recreational services is slightly higher than the national ratio, but much lower than the all-Georgia ratio. Hall's percentage in educational services is about the same as the Georgia and national ratios. In retail trade and all other sectors, its percentages are comparatively small.
CHART 3

DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS AREA, HALL COUNTY, GEORGIA, AND THE UNITED STATES, 1960

% OF TOTAL EMPLOYMENT IN AREA

- GEORGIA MOUNTAINS AREA
- HALL COUNTY
- GEORGIA
- U. S.
Map 2 compares agricultural and manufacturing employment by county in Georgia, by place of residence. Manufacturing leads agriculture in 104 of the state's 159 counties.

Within the study area, manufacturing employment is greater in nine of the 12 counties. The margins of difference are smallest in Lumpkin, where agriculture leads by 23, and Dawson, where manufacturing leads by 48. Agriculture leads by 125 in Towns and 312 in Union. In the eight other counties, manufacturing jobs predominate by substantial margins -- ranging from 434 in Rabun to 5,366 in Hall.
MAP 2
PREDOMINANCE OF MANUFACTURING OR AGRICULTURAL EMPLOYEES, 1960
(by place of residence)

AGRICULTURE

MANUFACTURING

GREATER BY

1 - 1,500

1,500 - 5,000

5,000 - 10,000

10,000 - 25,000

OVER 25,000
DISTRIBUTION OF MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

Table 1 compares the distribution of manufacturing employment in Hall County and the entire 12-county area with the all-Georgia and national distributions.

Almost 20,000 residents of the Georgia Mountains Area were employed in manufacturing in 1960. About 70% of these were in nondurable goods manufacture. This is somewhat higher than the all-Georgia percentage (66.4), and it far exceeds the national average (43.9%)

Leading industry groups in the study area include textiles (33.6% of total manufacturing employment), furniture and other wood products (16.1%), apparel (15.2%), and food products (15.1%). Each of these is more prominent in the study area's pattern than in the all-Georgia and national patterns.

Hall County's manufacturing employment is even more heavily concentrated in nondurables. Textiles and food products together account for almost 70% of the total. No other distinct industry group represents as much as 5% of Hall's total.

The Georgia Mountains Area contains three of Georgia's 50 leading manufacturing employment counties. Hall, with 6,891 residents employed in manufacturing, ranks 12th. Stephens and Habersham rank 31st and 33rd, respectively.

The 12-county area has some 60 factories employing 100 or more persons each. These are distributed among 18 towns and cities in the area -- Baldwin, Blairsville, Carnesville, Clarkesville, Clayton, Cleveland, Cornelia, Cumming, Dahlonega, Dawsonville, Flowery Branch, Gainesville, Lavonia, Lula, Mountain City, Rabun Gap, Royston, and Toccoa. Recent expansions have occurred at four textile plants, three poultry processing plants, a shoe factory, a furniture plant, four apparel plants, a machinery plant, a metal stampings plant, and at two plants manufacturing zippers.
Table 1
DISTRIBUTION OF MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
IN THE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS AREA, HALL COUNTY, GEORGIA, AND THE U. S., 1960
(By place of residence)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manufacturing Category</th>
<th>Georgia Mountains Area</th>
<th>Hall County</th>
<th>State of Georgia</th>
<th>U. S. Totals (000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number employed:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing, total</td>
<td>19,929</td>
<td>6,891</td>
<td>364,621</td>
<td>17,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durable goods</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture, lumber, wood products</td>
<td>5,966</td>
<td>1,090</td>
<td>122,565</td>
<td>9,829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary metals</td>
<td>3,201</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>45,565</td>
<td>1,067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricated metals</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5,278</td>
<td>1,225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery, nonelectrical</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9,451</td>
<td>1,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical machinery</td>
<td>697</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>10,236</td>
<td>1,568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor vehicles and equipment</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>7,300</td>
<td>1,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation equipment, except motor vehicles</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>11,781</td>
<td>842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other durbles</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>15,640</td>
<td>977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>879</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>17,314</td>
<td>1,371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nondurable goods</td>
<td>13,963</td>
<td>5,801</td>
<td>242,056</td>
<td>7,684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and kindred products</td>
<td>3,012</td>
<td>1,915</td>
<td>44,650</td>
<td>1,822</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles</td>
<td>6,691</td>
<td>2,872</td>
<td>94,614</td>
<td>954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel</td>
<td>3,026</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>46,902</td>
<td>1,159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing, publishing</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>14,159</td>
<td>1,141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical and allied products</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>13,966</td>
<td>865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other nondurbles</td>
<td>824</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>27,765</td>
<td>1,743</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Per cent of total employment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Georgia Mountains Area</th>
<th>Hall County</th>
<th>State of Georgia</th>
<th>U. S. Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Durables, total</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>56.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture, lumber, wood products</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary metals</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricated metals</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinery, nonelectrical</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical machinery</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor vehicles and equipment</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation equipment, except motor vehicles</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other durbles</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nondurables, total</td>
<td>70.1</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>43.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and kindred products</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textiles</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing, publishing</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical and allied products</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other nondurbles</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U. S. Census of Population
Major products or product classifications of the area's largest manufacturing employers are listed below. This list is illustrative rather than exhaustive.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Group</th>
<th>Product(s) or Product Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food Products</td>
<td>Poultry processing, including dressed poultry and frozen poultry products; feed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textile Mill Products</td>
<td>Cloth drill, twill, sateen, drapery and upholstery materials, industrial fabrics, woven plastic yarns, surgical gauze and sutures, worsted fabrics, nylon hosiery, tufted carpets, cotton and synthetic tufting yarns, other cotton yarns, synthetic fabrics for curtains, sewing thread, tobacco cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel</td>
<td>Men's and boys' shirts, trousers, and sportswear; women's dresses, dusters, blouses, sportswear, and other apparel; crib sheets, diapers, and infants' wear; children's outerwear; ski clothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Products, Furniture</td>
<td>Hardwood lumber, dining room and bedroom suites, chests, other furniture and upholstered frames</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leather Products</td>
<td>Shoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabricated Metals</td>
<td>Metal stampings, textile and poultry equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonelectrical Machinery</td>
<td>Power lawn mowers, implements, towel dispensers for commercial buildings, earth-moving and construction machinery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Machinery</td>
<td>Automotive generators and regulators; small electric motors; assembly of switches and resistors for autos, trucks, and tractors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>Nuclear research laboratory products, zippers, and caskets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Chart 4 shows employment by industry in the 12-county area for 1950 and 1960. Each sector except agriculture has gained since 1950, both relatively and in absolute terms. Agriculture now accounts for 13% of the area's total employment, down from about 32% only 10 years earlier. The combination of manufacturing, trade, finance, public administration, and services rose from 57% to almost 74% of the total during the same period.

The Georgia Mountains Area had a net gain of 6,228 jobs from 1950 to 1960. This represented a 13.2% increase in total employment, as compared with 10.4% for all of Georgia and 14.5% nationally. Its over-all job growth was somewhat less favorable than the nation's, primarily because of its loss of almost 8,000 agricultural jobs. It was better than the all-Georgia performance because of much stronger gains in most nonagricultural sectors.

The area's job increase rates during the 1950's were far superior to both national and all-Georgia rates in nine economic sectors. These include manufacturing, retail trade, construction, wholesale trade, transportation, business and professional services, finance, personal and recreational services, and forestry. The area's rate of gain in public administration was also superior to the nation's but less than the state's.

The Georgia Mountains Area's favorable percentage gains were made upon comparatively weak 1950 bases, except for manufacturing and construction. Nevertheless, these gains in several of its "weak base" sectors were better than the increases the area would have enjoyed had it started with the national average proportion and advanced at the national rate -- notably in transportation, business and professional services, public administration, wholesale trade, and finance. Furthermore, the totality of changes brought more strength and balance to the area's 1960 employment structure.

Absolute job gains from 1950 to 1960 were greatest in manufacturing. The area also had substantial increases in retail trade and construction. These three economic sectors combined accounted for about two-thirds of the total gross increase of 14,220 jobs. Absolute changes by sector are shown on the following page.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Total Net Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>6,869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
<td>1,485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>1,151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational services</td>
<td>969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and recreational services</td>
<td>867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and professional services</td>
<td>861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, insurance, real estate</td>
<td>610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trade</td>
<td>452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation, communication, utilities</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration</td>
<td>366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous (industry not reported)</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry, fisheries, mining</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>-7,992</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within the 12-county area, Hall County's 1950 employment structure was strongly biased toward manufacturing, agriculture, and retail trade, in the order named. These three categories combined represented about 65% of its 1950 total. By 1960, the same combination accounted for less than 60% of the total because of the absolute decline in agriculture and the relatively slow growth in retail trade.

Employment trends in Hall County diverged from area trends in other respects, too. Although absolute gains were made in every sector except agriculture, they were very slight in several instances. Relative gains were made in manufacturing, transportation, finance, business and professional services, educational services, public administration, and miscellaneous employment. Sectors with declining percentages included wholesale trade, personal and recreational services, and construction, as well as agriculture and retail trade.

Hall County's increase of 23.2% in total employment from 1950 to 1960 was better than the state's and the nation's. This favorable showing is largely attributable to its strong gains in manufacturing (2,184) and in business and professional services (601). Its loss of 1,174 agricultural jobs reflected a loss rate that exceeded the nationwide rate but was much less than the all-Georgia and area loss rates. Except for manufacturing, Hall's most impressive percentage gains were made in some of the sectors that were weaker in Hall's 1950 pattern than in the Georgia and U. S. patterns -- business and professional services, finance, transportation, and public administration.
CHART 4
EMPLOYMENT TRENDS IN THE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS AREA, 1950–1960

EMPLOYMENT (000)

1950

1960
Hall County's gross increase of 4,612 jobs over the 10-year period represented 32.4% of the Georgia Mountains Area's gross increase. Analysis by sector shows that Hall's growth accounted for about 70% of the 12-county gain in business and professional services, 55% in public administration, 50% in finance, and 49% in transportation, communications, and utilities. Hall's proportions of total area gains were lowest in personal and recreational services (8%), retail trade (16%), and wholesale trade (19%).
A PRELIMINARY EVALUATION OF THE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS AREA ECONOMY

The 12-county Georgia Mountains Area is still a low-income, thinly populated section of Georgia. It represents 5.4% of the state's land area, but has only 3.9% of its residents and less than 3.2% of its total income. Median family income is highest in Hall County -- $4,027, or about 96% of the all-Georgia average ($4,208). It is lowest in Union County ($1,885), where over two-thirds of the families have incomes under $3,000.

The area's shares of Georgia's total factories, manufacturing jobs, retail stores, housing units, and high school enrollment are larger than its shares of the state's resident population and civilian labor force, but its shares of sound housing units, bank deposits, and retail sales are disproportionately low.

Between 1950 and 1960, five area counties experienced absolute declines in population -- Banks, Dawson, Franklin, Towns, and Union. In five others, increases were below the Georgia and national average increases -- Forsyth, Habersham, Lumpkin, Rabun, and Stephens. The rate of population gain in White County exceeded the state average, but fell short of the U. S. average increase. Hall County alone among the 12 showed an above-average population growth rate for the decade.

Three counties had absolute declines in total resident employment from 1950 to 1960 -- Franklin, Towns, and Union. Franklin also experienced a decline in per capita income (measured in constant dollars) from 1956 to 1960, as did six other area counties -- Banks, Forsyth, Habersham, Hall, Stephens, and White.

Analysis of per capita income trends in the 12 counties, Georgia, and the U. S. shows that each county has made substantial gains since 1939. Per capita income ranged from 9% to 23% of the national average in eight of the counties in 1939 and from 31% to 49% in the other four. In 1960, it was between 42% and 68% in 11 of the counties and 29% in the 12th. During this same period, Georgia's per capita income rose from 56% to 73% of the U. S. average.

These percentages, however, can give a misleading impression. In actual dollars, Georgia and the area counties are falling behind. Georgia's per capita income rose from $660 in 1939 (adjusted for price changes to 1960 dollar...
values) to $1,610 in 1960, as compared with U. S. figures of $1,183 in 1939 and $2,215 in 1960. In 1939 the Georgia per capita income was $523 below that of the U. S., and by 1960 the gap had increased to $605.

Similarly, the gap between the U. S. average and the Georgia Mountains Area's highest income county, Hall, widened from $604 to $716 between 1939 and 1960. The spread between national per capita income and that in the area's lowest county increased from $1,079 in 1939 to $1,569 in 1960. This margin of difference is larger than the actual per capita income in the area's top county.

The Georgia Mountains Area still has a somewhat higher proportion of agricultural employment than does Georgia. Its share of the state's total farm products sales receipts (almost 10% in 1959) is substantially greater than its share of Georgia's land in farms (3.9%). This reflects the predominance of poultry and other cash-producing components of the area's agricultural output. Nevertheless, in 1960, manufacturing employees outnumbered agricultural workers in nine of the 12 counties and, by almost three to one, in the area as a whole.

Manufacturing employment is concentrated largely in nondurable goods industry groups -- primarily textiles, apparel, and food products. Nondurables as a class have tended to be less vulnerable to recessions and sharp layoff rates than durables, although some nondurables have layoff rates higher than those of some durables.

Examination of the nationwide layoff rates by industry shows that the Georgia Mountains Area's industry mix, on balance, has a lower rate than manufacturing employment generally. However, one of the area's prominent industries -- poultry dressing -- has an above-average layoff rate, as do several of the area's smaller "growth" industries -- metal stampings, lawn mowers, and zippers. Also, two labor market areas within the area are currently classified by the U. S. Department of Labor as areas of "substantial and persistent unemployment." As such, they are eligible for special assistance under the Public Works Acceleration Act, Public Law 82-658. The two labor market areas (and counties encompassed) are Home (Banks) and Young Harris (Towns).

The area's resident manufacturing employment is heaviest in industry groups that, in the national manufacturing context, pay low wages and are
prone to slow growth. The outlook for nationwide employment growth in textiles, apparel, food products, lumber and wood products, and leather products is less favorable than in manufacturing as a whole, according to recent forecasts by the National Planning Association. Conversely, most industries with superior nationwide growth prospects -- such as chemicals, electrical machinery, and instruments -- are either missing from the area's mix, or they are less prominent there than in the national pattern.

The 12-county area's aims and plans for future development give high priority to tourism. Extension of the Blue Ridge Parkway into Georgia is one of many proposals being actively promoted. An official tourist development agency is now in being, a result of years of effort by members of an informal organization, the Georgia Mountains Association. The new body was created early in 1963 by the Georgia legislature for the specific purpose of developing the tourist industry. Composed of a policy-making board of state officials, the Georgia Mountains Commission is empowered to furnish financial aid to public or private projects. For example, it could support the establishment in the area of a recreation experiment station, as proposed by the head of the Georgia Center for Continuing Education, Dr. Hugh Masters.1/

Inter-area competition for business and industry can be expected to continue and intensify in the years ahead. The increasing importance of technical skills and of basic educational preparation for specialized training will have a crucial bearing on the study area's ability to compete for many types of industry.

The state-owned North Georgia Technical and Vocational School at Clarkesville (Habersham County) offers six-month to two-year courses in 23 different building and technical trades, such as electronics, machine shop, medical laboratory, and electric appliance servicing. In addition, the nearest area vocational-technical schools planned or being built under Georgia's current program are at Marietta (about 34 miles from Cumming) and Athens (about 39 miles from Gainesville).

1/ The Georgia Mountains Commission should not be confused with the similarly named Georgia Mountains Planning and Development Commission. The latter is concerned with all aspects of economic development and with planning activities related thereto.
Each county of the study area falls below the state as a whole in the average educational level of the resident population. Comparisons based on the educational status of residents 25 years old and over reveal that six of the counties have percentages of those completing less than five school years which are lower than the all-Georgia ratio. However, all 12 are sub-average in the percentage completing high school or more and the median number of school years completed.

In 1960, the Georgia Mountains Area had a higher share of the state's total high school enrollment than of its population. Although all counties of the area made gains from 1950 to 1960 in the median number of school years completed, 11 of the counties fell farther behind the national and all-Georgia norms. In contrast, Lumpkin County kept pace with the national advance and decreased slightly the gap between its median and the Georgia average. Its median rose from 6.4 to 7.7 school years completed, while Georgia's went from 7.8 to 9.0 and the national average from 9.3 to 10.6.