A BRIEF STUDY OF BAPTISTS IN THE D. C. - MARYLAND AREA

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HOME MISSION BOARD, SBC
DEPARTMENT OF SURVEY AND SPECIAL STUDIES

# A BRIEF STUDY

OF

BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE D.C. - MARYLAND AREA May, 1970

Prepared by the

DEPARTMENT OF SURVEY AND SPECIAL STUDIES

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#### A BRIEF STUDY OF BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE D.C. - MARYLAND AREA

A Brief Recapitulation of Crucial Factors Affecting the Future Cooperation of Baptist Churches in the D.C. - Maryland Portion of the Washington, D.C. SMSA

#### INTRODUCTION

Baptists of Maryland and the District of Columbia have coexisted for many years. At different times tensions were noted, particularly as related to church extension. In recent years, as a result of the demographic dynamics operating within the area, several D.C. churches exercised their option and relocated into the adjoining Maryland counties. In several instances, the natural response to missionary concern within these congregations resulted in the founding of new churches in needy areas. However, in the process of this D.C. expansion, the missionary fervor of the Maryland churches also resulted in the founding of new churches. An examination of Figure 1 reveals the results of the lack of coordinative efforts. The most tension was experienced at those times when a relocation or a "new start" was made so close to one of the churches of the other convention that it was interpreted to be "competitive."

In recent years many efforts have been made to placate the tension. Possibly the most significant single work was the 126 page report prepared by Dr. Albert McClellan, Program Planning Secretary for the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee in Nashville, Tennessee. Dr. McClellan's report, entitled "The Relationship of Baptists in the District of Columbia, Montgomery County and Prince George's County" was subtitled "A Study of the History and the Problems of Baptists in the Greater Washington Region North of the Potomac River with the View to Discover a

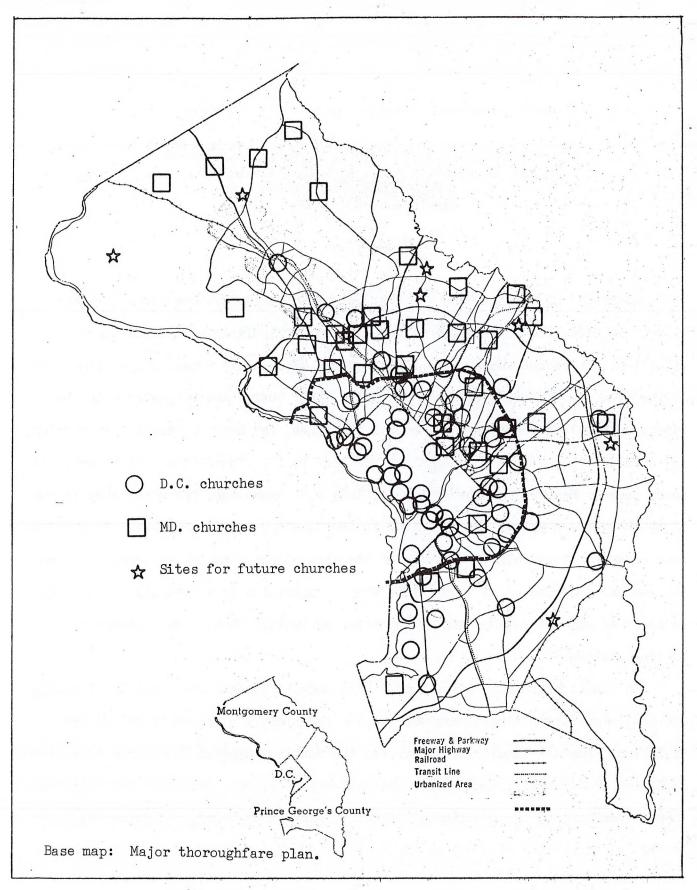


Fig. 1 -- Geographical distribution of D.C. and Maryland Churches, 1969

Basis for a Mission Strategy for the Future." The report, dated October 3, 1966, was the result of approximately two years of research. Since its issuance, several strides have been made in improving cooperation and coordination, the most important of which are the formation of the "Joint Committee on D.C.-Maryland Cooperation" and the joint employment of Rev. H. Wesley Wiley to act as laison and coordinator of joint endeavors among the several black and white Baptist bodies within the two states and the District.

This present report is a brief summary of many different studies and research projects that have been carried out over the past decade which give clues to what can be expected for the future. The report has been produced at the request of the "Committee on Relationships with the Home Mission Board" of the Joint Committee on D.C.-Maryland Cooperation. The original request was made by Rev. Horace E. Twine, February 27, 1970, chairman of that special committee. The author of this report spent several days in the area, May 4-6, to update the file which the Department of Survey and Special Studies of the Home Mission Board had begun back in 1964 when assisting Dr. McClellan in his early research.

#### PART I - Background Data on the Churches

Table 1 shows the approximate shift in number of churches by the two conventions over the past 20 years. These data are displayed to show only the general trend rather than for their precision. The figures can be assumed to be correct within one or two churches, plus or minus, and would require considerable research to refine the data further.

TABLE 1

NUMBER OF CHURCHES BY AREAS AND CONVENTION AFFILIATION 1949, 1959, 1969<sup>a</sup>

					Area				
Affiliation	D.C.			Montgomery Co.			Frince George's Co.		
	1949	1959	1969	1949	1959	1969	1949	1959	1969
D.C. Conv Md. Conv	28	27	18	4	8 15	11 25	3 7	19 13	30 17
Total	28	27	18	13	24	36	10	32	47

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup>Approximate number.

Table 2 shows the trends of the 18 churches presently located in the District.

This writer extracted the data on each from the 1955, 1960 and 1968 convention

minutes. The purpose of this table is to show what has taken place within the churches that are presently serving in the District.

TABLE 2

SELECTED DATA OF THE 18 CHURCHES PRESENTLY IN THE DISTRICT 1955, 1960, 1968

Dad -	-	Year	4.
Data	1955	1960	1968
Total members	20,877 14,133 953 927 45.5%	17,750 10,872 445 612 51.%	16,945 7,446 285 362 61.3%

From Table 2 we note only modest declines in total members have been experienced by the churches. The number of resident members were not displayed in the convention minutes and so. Sunday School enrolment was used because it generally approximates the number of resident members reported by Baptist churches. Thus we note that over the 13 year period Sunday School enrolment has been cut approximately in half.

From Table 2 we also note that both indicators of membership additions, baptisms and letters, have also shown severe declines. The combined number of baptisms reported by the 18 churches are about one-fourth of what they were in 1955 and the letters are about one-third compared to 13 years earlier. Perhaps even more significant is the radical change in age structure of the congregations as reflected in the percentage of the total Sunday School enrolment that are made up of adults. In 1955 less than half were adults while presently nearly two-thirds are adults. A quick check was made to estimate the age structure of the Sunday Schools in the suburban churches and the data revealed that approximately 30% of the enrolment were adults. This sharp contrast speaks volumes concerning the future of the churches within the District unless radical changes occur in the near future.

Table 3 extends the comparison begun in Table 1 for 1969. It reveals the strength of each convention according to the two counties in Maryland. The Maryland churches show the greater strength in Montgomery County in every category while in Prince George's County, the D.C. churches have the greatest strength.

TABLE 3
SELECTED DATA FOR CHURCHES IN MARYLAND BY CONVENTION AFFILIATION, 1969

	County		
Affiliation	Montgomery	Prince George's	
Total	Members		
D.C	6,870 8,729	15,122 7,962	
Total	15,599	23,084	
Sunday Sch	ool Enrolment		
D.C	5,349 7,100	12,685 7,721	
Total	12,449	20,506	
Bar	tisms		
D.C	146 421	698 377	
Total	567	1,075	
Le	tters		
D.C	327 506	965 576	
Total	833	1,541	

All three of the tables displayed in this section underline the urgency to:

1) maintain an openness for greater cooperation and coordination of work in the suburbs, and 2) Christian concern and support needs to be exemplified toward the churches within the District. "If we do not change, we will end up where we are heading" within the District. That is, there will be little or no Baptist witness among the white residents remaining in the Capitol within the next decade. More will be said about this in Part III.

### PART II - Background Data on the Population

Great volumes of important data will shortly be released as a result of the 1970 Federal Census. This writer regrets that this report cannot reflect the valuable insights that will be possible once those data are released. Nevertheless, the long term trends within the metropolitan area are believed to have continued throughout this past decade. In the Appendix seven plates have been included, six of which were directly reproduced from the publication of the Washington Center for Metropolitan Studies entitled "Understanding Washington's Changing Population" by Eunice S. Grier, 1961. The seventh plate was directly reproduced from the general plan of The Maryland-National Capitol Park and Planning Commission Report entitled ". . . on wedges and corridors", 1964.

Table 4, below was also taken from the report, "Understanding Washington's Changing Population." On it we can note the way in which suburbanization has radically redistributed the population of the metropolitan area.

TABLE 4

Percent Distribution of Metropolitan Washington Population by District of Columbia and Suburbs 1900-1960

	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960
Washington, D. C.	73.6%	74.4%	76.5 %	72.4%	68.5 %	54.8 %	38 2 %
Montgomery Co., Md.	8.1)	7.2	6.1	7.31	8.7	11.2	17.0)
Prince Georges Co., Md.	7.9 { 16.0	8.1	7.6	8.9 { 16.2	9.2	13.3	17.9 34.9
Arlington Co., Va.	1.7	2.3	2.8	4.0 \	5.9	9.3	8.21
Fairfax Co., Va.	4.9	4.6	3.8	3.8	4.2	6.7	13.7
Alexandria, Va.	3.8 10.4	3.4	3.2	3.6711.4	3.5	4.2	4.5 26.9
Falls Church, Va.	* )	*	*	* )	**	0.5	0.5
TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100,0%	100.0%

SOURCE: Data for 1900 to 1950 compiled by the Office of Planning, Arlington County, Virginia; taken from Population—Arlington County, Virginia. Report Number 2, Master Plan Study, March 1956.

1960 data from U. S. Bureau of the Census. 1960 Census of Population. General Population Characteristics. State reports. U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1961.

Source: Washington Center for Metropolitan Studies, "Understanding Washington's Changing Population," 1961.

The plates in the Appendix have been carefully selected to illustrate the population factors discussed in the introduction. There, four population factors were mentioned concerning the District: losses in white population, growth and territorial expansion in the Negro population, the predominance of elderly, and the predominance of single, divorced, widowed, or otherwise separated females. The first factor is so obvious that little needs to be said except that the data on plates I, II, III, IV, and VI illustrate the problem. The second factor, regarding the growth and territorial expansion of the Negro population also goes without comment except to note that the data on the first factor apply to an analysis of this factor also.

The third factor, the predominance of elderly persons in the District, is aptly illustrated on Figure 16 of Plate IV and Table 9 of Plate VI. In the two Maryland suburban counties about half of the population are under 25. Approximately the same is true for the non-white population of the District but for the whites in the District less than 30% are under 25. This indicates a much older white population. In fact the median age for white males in 1960 was around 36 and for females around

<sup>\*</sup>Included in Fairfax County and Arlington County percentages. \*\*Included in Fairfax County percentage.

43. The age differences of the elderly are so much in contrast that it was noted that 25% of the white males were 55 and older and nearly one-third of the white females fell in this age group while less than 12% of the non-white population in the District and in the Maryland suburbs were 55 and older.

The fourth factor, the predominance of single, divorced, widowed or otherwise separated females, especially among the white population can be studied on Plate V, Figure 18. In fact the single, widowed and divorced white females within the District outnumber the married white females. Traditionally Protestant churches have been geared to the married and widowed adults but the single and divorced have generally been a part of the unreached masses. What little research has been done in the District seems to confirm that this is also the case there.

On the other extreme, the churches in the Maryland suburbs are confronted with a different combination of population factors: gains in white population, growth in territorial expansion of the Negro population, the predominance of families with children, the development of large apartment complexes, and the growing heterogeneous nature of the population. Only the mention of the second and fifth factors need to be made. The others can be amply substantiated by a review of plates V, VI, and VII: however, the expansion of Negro population and the heterogeneous nature of the population are more crucial to the future of the Baptist churches. Plates II and III illustrate the percentage distribution of Negro population and the fashion in which it has expanded within the District. An examination of the data by census tracts concerning the value of property has been frequently pointed out by the planners to be indicative of the trends of the future. Those planners which would spectulate concerning the future anticipate the expansion of the Negro population into the suburbs, especially Prince George's County. They anticipate two types of redistribution: 1) a block by block spread to the east and south, and 2) the "salt and pepper" integration of those sub-divisions which have an open policy. A quick

referral back to Figure 1 and the geographical distribution of D.O. and Maryland churches suggest the possibility of ten or more churches located between the District line and the Beltway may likely be confronted with a racial change in their community. Some of these churches relocated from the District and will probably seek new sites further into the suburbs. Others, tired of the prospect of changing again, may attempt to integrate while others will likely "stick it out until they die."

The fifth factor which is significant for the suburban churches is the heterogenizing of the population (the opposite of the homogenizing). Most of the large cities of the Eastern Seaboard have been characterized by a highly heterogeneous society. Such a characteristic has long been the case for most areas of the District; however, as the population dynamics continue, these characteristics will become dominant features of the entire metropolitan area to a greater degree than ever experienced before. This will call for a new openness on the part of the churches toward persons of differing life-styles and value systems.

#### PART III - Implications for the Future

Numberous implications have already been outlined and should be briefly reviewed here: 1) maintain an openness for greater cooperation and coordination of work in the suburbs; 2) Christian concern and support needs to be exemplified toward the churches within the District, or else little or no witness will exist among the white residents at the end of the next decade; 3) the white population is certain to decline unless a large inmigration occurs because very few married females remain within the child bearing ages; 4) the trends would indicate that fewer white families will remain in the District and those whites who will reside there will be the single, widowed or divorced, at both extremes of the adult ages with the great majority being females; 5) several of the Baptist churches in Prince George's County will likely be faced with the racial change of their community; and 6) the close-in

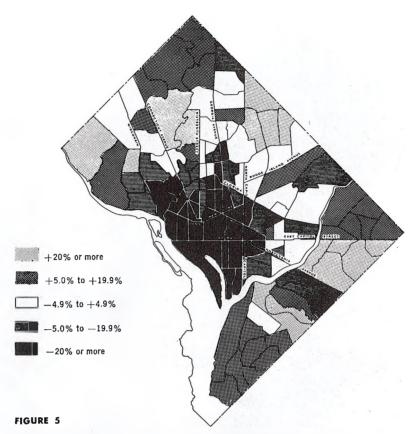
suburban areas will become more urbanized and therefore the churches will either adapt their style to reach a broader spectrum of social classes and ethnic groups or there will be further proliferation of sect-type churches.

Several other implications are crucial in the future planning: 7) avenues of cooperation among whites and blacks are needed for at least three reasons: (a) to gain the wisdom of the Negro leaders in helping white churches either integrate or leave the community, (b) to help those black churches in committees where white churches have left to minister to the remaining white population, and (c) to help the black churches which either must relocate because of redevelopment or who wish to start new Negro churches in areas along the paths of the black tide which expands into the suburbs; and 8) to strive for even more viable structures for cooperations between the two white conventions overlapping in the Maryland suburbs.

#### CONCLUSION

It has not been the purpose of this writer to recommend any course of action such as merger or formation of specific types of committees or sub-committees to bring about any stated objectives. The alternative courses of action have been clearly outlines in the report prepared by Dr. McClellan. The purpose of this report has been merely to summarize the most relevant data and draw from them the implications which are most crucial to the future of the Baptist witness in the area. The last item in the Appendix is a list of the most relevant documents which the persons who are responsible for planning might use as references.

PLATE I



Change in Population by Census Tracts in District of Columbia 1950 to 1960

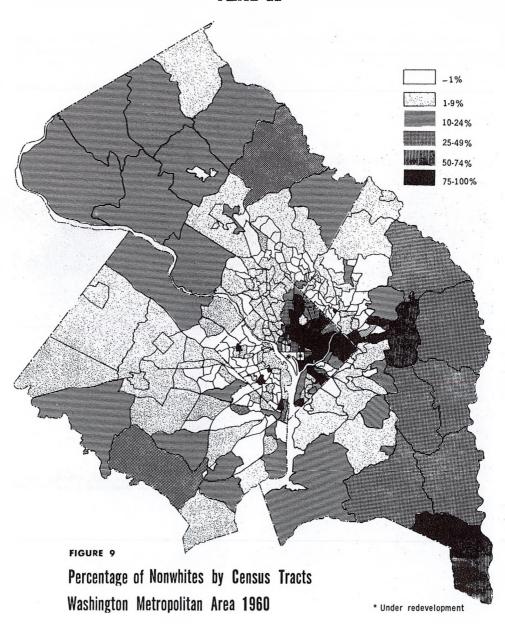
Population of Metropolitan Washington by Race 1960

	Number	Percent of Total
White	1,502,429	75.1
Negro	487,183	24.4
Indian	1,016	*
Japanese	2,599	0.1
Chinese	4,156	0.2
Filipino	2,109	0.1
Other	2,405	0.1
	2,001,897	100%

SOURCE: Based on U. S. Bureau of the Census. 1960 Census of Population. General Population Characteristics. District of Columbia. U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1961.

<sup>\*</sup>Less than 0.1 percent.

#### PLATE II

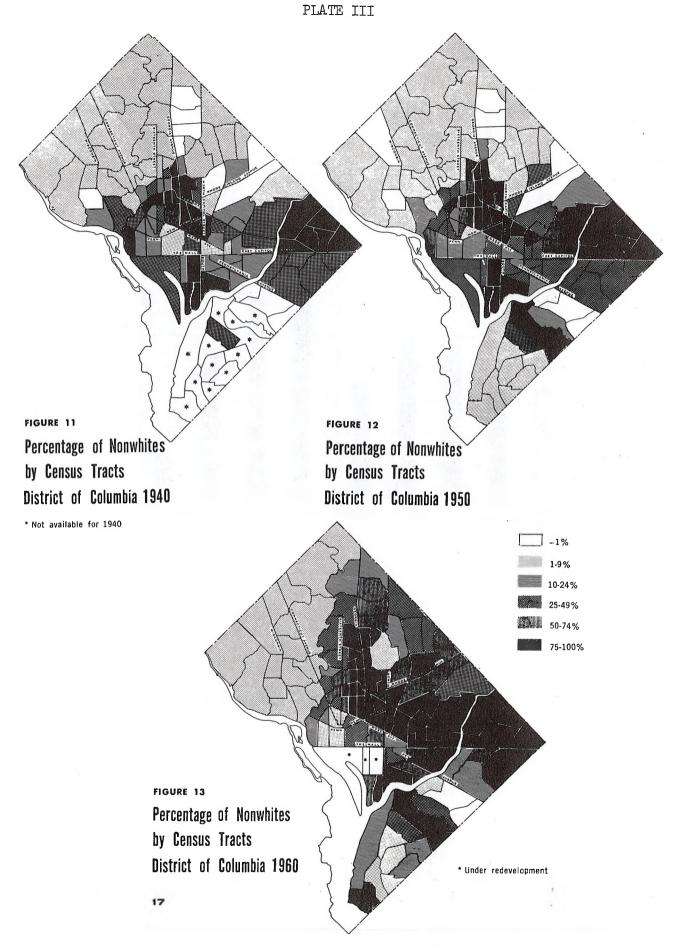


# Percent of Population Nonwhite in Suburban Jurisdictions of

Metropolitan wasnington 1940-1960	1940	1950	1960
Montgomery County, Md	11	6	4
Prince Georges County, Md.	19	12	9
Arlington County, Va.	9	5	6
Fairfax County, Va.*		10	5
Alexandria, Va.	16	12	12
Falls Church, Va.	*	2	2

SOURCE: (1940 and 1950 data) Office of Planning, Arlington County, Virginia. Population—Arlington County, Virginia. Report Number 2, Master Plan Study, March 1956. (1960 data) U. S. Bureau of the Census. 1960 Census of Population. General Population Characteristics. State reports. U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1961.

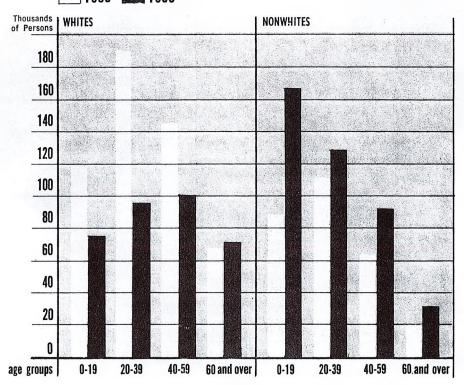
\*Falls Church included in Fairfax County in 1940.



SOURCE: Washington Center for Metropolitan Studies "Understanding Washington's Changing Population," 1961.

#### PLATE IV

Population Change by Age Groups in the District of Columbia
1950 1960

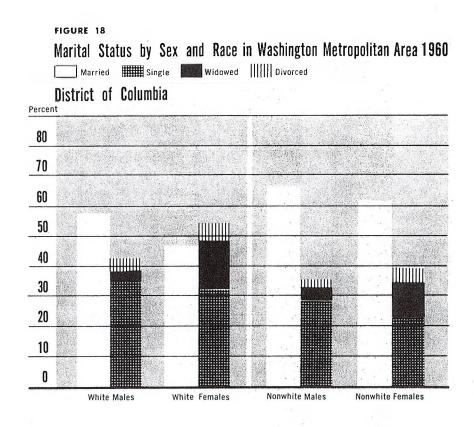


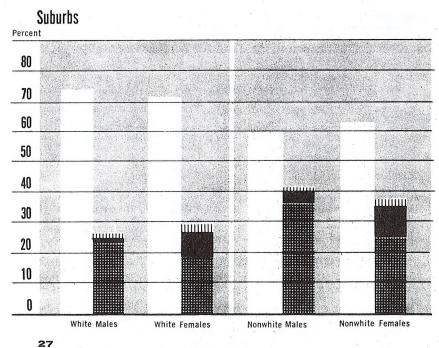
Changing Ratio of Males Per 100 Females in the District of Columbia

Whites Non-	vhites
1900 94.8 8	0.2
1910 94.9 8	3.0
1920 87.0 8	7.0
1930 91.4 8	9.8
1940 92.4 9	0.7
1950 88.2 9	),6
1960 84.5 9	1.5

SOURCE: U. S. Bureau of the Census. 1960 Census of Population. General Population Characteristics. District of Columbia. U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1961.

#### PLATE V





### PLATE VI

TABLE 9

# Change in White and Nonwhite Populations by Five-Year Age Groups, District of Columbia 1950 to 1960

		W	hite		Nonwhite					
Age	1950	1960	Numerical Change	Percent Change	1950	1960	Numerical Change	Percent Change		
0-4	41,042	21,388	-19,654	<b>-48%</b>	30,311	56,707	26,396	87%		
5-9	28,115	16,042	-12,073	<b>-43%</b>	21,354	47,308	25,954	122%		
10-14	21,713	16,033	<b>- 5,680</b>	-26%	18,326	36,194	17,868	98%		
15-19	27,529	23,016	-4,513	-16%	17,882	26,366	8,484	47%		
20-24	46,577	30,242	-16,335	<b>-35%</b>	25,144	29,527	4,383	17%		
25-29	53,096	23,303	-29,793	<b></b> 56%	31,453	31,895	442	1%		
30-34	45,975	20,998	-24,977	<b>-54%</b>	28,402	33,255	4,853	17%		
35-39	43,383	21,676	-21,707	<b>50</b> %	28,310	33,683	5,373	19%		
40-44	40,647	22,244	-18,403	-45%	22,613	28,980	6,367	28%		
45-49	36,813	25,391	-11,422	-31%	17,979	26,121	8,142	45%		
50-54	35,821	27,469	- 8,352	-23%	13,857	20,971	7,114	51%		
55-59	30,117	25,365	- 4,752	16%	9,207	16,193	6,986	76%		
60-64	23,135	23,360	225	1%	6,690	11,086	4,396	66%		
65-69	17,577	18,929	1,352	8%	5,761	8,282	2,521	44%		
70-74	12,208	13,532	1,324	11%	3,543	5,641	2,098	59%		
75-79 <u>]</u> 80-84 \	12,117	8,516 4,800	1,199	10%	2,900	3,593 1,729	2,422	84%		
85 ±	2,000	2,959	959	48 %	581	1,162	581	100%		

SOURCE: Based on U. S. Bureau of the Census. 1960 Census of Population. General Population Characteristics. District of Columbia. U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1961.

TABLE 10

# Change in White and Nonwhite Populations by Five-Year Age Groups Suburban Washington 1950 to 1960

	White				Non	white		
Age	1950	1960	Numerical Change	Percent Change	1950	1960	Numerical Change	Percent Change
0-4	81,482	145,615	64,133	79 %	7,011	11,463	4,452	64%
5-9	57,376	134,347	76,971	134 %	5,632	10,070	4,438	79%
10-14	36,507	115,542	79,035	216 %	5,031	7,966	2,935	58 %
15-19	33,661	78,239	44,578	132 %	4,830	6,184	1,354	28 %
20-24	47,746	73,430	25,684	54 %	5,612	5,920	308	5 %
25-29	62,803	77,973	15,170	24 %	5,714	6,052	338	6%
30-34	63,465	89,811	26,346	42 %	4,871	6,155	1,284	26%
35-39	55,853	104,247	48,394	87 %	4,536	6,056	1,520	34%
40-44	45,908	92,358	46,450	101 %	3,730	5,048	1,318	35%
45-49	32,780	72,610	39,830	122 %	2,913	4,444	1,531	53 %
50-54	26,308	54,832	28,524	108 %	2,410	3,434	1,024	42 %
55-59	19,287	37,977	18,690	97%	1,545	2,752	1,207	78%
60-64	14,307	28,062	13,755	96%	1,365	1,794	429	31%
65-69	10,652	20,510	9,858	93 %	1,063	1,311	248	23 %
70-74	7,401	14,323	6,922	94%	793	1,000	207	26%
75-79 } 80-84 \	7,229	9,091 5,083	6,945	96%	651	610 317	276	42 %
85+	1,300	3,116	1,816	140%	139	199	60	43 %

SOURCE: Based on U. S. Bureau of the Census. 1960 Census of Population. General Population Characteristics. District of Columbia. U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1961.

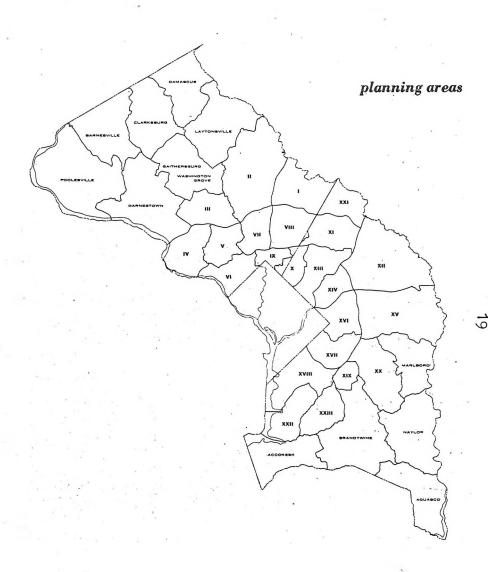
# POPULATION, BY PLANNING AREA MONTGOMERY AND PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTIES 1960, 1980, 2000

### MONTGOMERY COUNTY

	PLANNING AREA		POPULATION	V
NO.	NAME	1960	1980	2000
 	Burtonsville Olney Rockville Potomac North Bethesda Bethesda Kensington-Wheaton Four Corners-Colesville Silver Spring Takoma Park Barnesville Clarksburg Damascus Darnestown Gaithersburg-Washington Grove Laytonsville Poolesville	5,302 18,015 28,055 2,700 32,875 60,862 72,129 27,063 42,066 24,826 2,071 3,136 4,488 4,100 9,187 2,133 1,920	22,631 48,565 75,316 21,782 66,889 81,165 85,362 59,605 47,009 27,275 2,200 9,829 11,822 6,699 67,050 6,339 3,900	37,681 83,463 106,867 39,846 97,120 104,105 98,098 80,542 59,575 32,188 8,296 41,448 25,188 12,471 139,185 22,550 6,377
	Total County	340,928	643,438	995,000

#### PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

	PLANNING AREA		POPULATION	V
NO.	NAME	1960	1980	2000
X	Takoma-Langley Park	49,255	75,719	86,457
XI	Beltsville	8,830	21,789	39,979
XII	Lanham-Bowie-Belair	12,911	66,518	131,683
XIII	Hyattsville-College Park	74,260	111,597	127,853
XIV	Bladensburg-Defense Heights	43,191	80,457	98,153
XV	Largo-Belair	3,962	37,472	82,072
XVI	Seat Pleasant	37,729	72,373	89,622
XVII	Suitland-District Heights	38,884	77,426	100,028
XVIII	Oxon Hill	42,763	122,067	148,213
XIX	Andrews A.F.B.	3,428	3,428	3,428
XX	Largo, South	3,840	5,824	8,204
XXI	Laurel	11,276	44,186	106,674
XXII	Fort Washington	4,788	20,095	31,674
IIIXX	Clinton	3,913	20,880	63,710
	Marlboro	3,305	9,708	13,703
4	Brandywine	8,084	14,094	41,041
	Accokeek	3,448	5,507	14,565
	Naylor	1,910	1,961	2,580
	Aquasco	1,618	1,784	2,348
	Total County	357,395	792,885	1.191.987



SOURCE: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, ". . . on wedges and corridors," 1964.

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