

## INTRODUCTION

One of the most important parameters of the planning process is the analysis and projection of the population in the planning area. After estimating the size and density of the future population, it becomes possible to determine the future level of demand for facilities and to develop indices for a large number of problems which typically confront those persons who are actively involved in making decisions related to the planning process. If the Center Community Development Plan is to provide the City Council with a realistic guide to the future development and redevelopment of the City, then it is necessary that the analysis of past population trends and projection of future population levels be as accurate and realistic as possible.

The amount and general type of potential growth and/or improvement for Center is mostly predicated on its population size, composition, and spatial distribution. The population size expresses the overall dimensional requirements of the physical environment, and serves as a basic benchmark by which to estimate and categorize the spatial demands for various land uses. When the element of time is introduced, and future trends in population size are estimated, a rational basis is formed for approximating the timing, sizing, and extent of future public and private improvements. It is especially important to emphasize that holding capacity projections and facility planning require an understanding of the timing and distribution of future population patterns. In short, projected population demand is the rational basis for sizing infrastructure and establishing the timing of capital expenditures. Suffice it to say, cities cannot properly budget for service delivery without a basic knowledge of its population trends.

## PAST POPULATION TRENDS

Center has experienced a continuous growth in population with some moderate increases between 1970 and 2000. The 2003 population estimate of 5,785 persons is based on an assumed average household size of 2.92 persons which is applied to the community-wide household survey conducted in November 2003 showing 1,981 housing units. Details regarding population growth and distribution in Center are shown in Table 2.1.

TABLE 2.1  
CITY OF CENTER  
POPULATION GROWTH

YEAR	POPULATION	PERCENT CHANGE
1970	4,989*	NA
1980	5,827*	16.8
1990	4,950*	-17.7
2000	5,678*	14.7
2003	5,785	1.85

\* Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

The age composition of a population provides a profile, illustrating when and where the greatest need for various types of public expenditures will be required in order to meet citizen demand. Based upon the 2000 Census, the median age of the population of Center is only 35.6 years. The census also indicates that 53.5 percent of the total population is female, compared to 46.5 percent on the male side of the equation. Since 19 percent of Center population is over 64 years of age and 29 percent is under 19 years old, the demand for City services will be diverse and must meet the needs of the elderly with consideration also for younger age groups.

In 1990, the census indicated that over 61 percent of the population was White, 37 percent Black with the remaining consisting of other races of which Hispanic origin accounted for 3.6 percent. In 2000, the population composition of Center was somewhat more diversified. This trend will probably continue in the future as out-migration occurs from the larger cities and outlying populations become less homogeneous.

TABLE 2.2  
CITY OF CENTER

1990 vs. 2000 POPULATION COMPOSITIONS

CLASSIFICATIONS (Hispanics included in all races)	1990		2000	
	AMOUNT	PERCENT	AMOUNT	PERCENT
WHITE	3,044	61.4	2,904	51.1
AMERICAN INDIAN	2	0.04	13	0.22
ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER	10	0.2	26	0.46
BLACK	1,853	37.4	1,943	34.2
OTHER RACE	41	0.8	792	14
TOTAL	4,950	100	5,678	100
HISPANIC ORIGIN	179	3.6	1,026	18

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population projections provide the most basic planning assumptions required for strategically meeting future public needs. Any change in population trends is affected by birth rates, death rates, and migration. Because an accurate manner of recording this data has not yet been devised, population projections must be based on potential for growth, local and regional trends, and economic conditions. Four significant assumptions specific to Center help form the basis from which to project the 2005, 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025 populations, and are listed below:

- 1 . Center will continue to exist as a viable community.
2. Center commercial/industrial base will remain stable or increase slightly.
3. Center will provide an appropriate level of basic services to its existing and future citizenry, such as water, sewer, and community facilities.
4. Center will realize some out migration from large urban areas causing the population to realize some increase.

The population projections for Center are contained in Table 2.3. In addition to the assumptions mentioned earlier, these projections were based on the five general assumptions listed below:

1. *There will be no major depression, war, or plague.*
2. *There will be no great discovery of natural resources in the area or a change in producing presently discovered resources in such a way that will affect the economy and natural growth of the community.*
3. *The fertility rate will remain consistent with the present figures.*
4. *The age at first marriage will not significantly change relative to the present averages.*
5. *The form of government, economy, and social organization in the city, county, state, and nation will not change considerably.*

County population projections are important variables for cities to consider. Population trends within a county usually have a corresponding effect on population trends within a city. Therefore, analyzing Shelby County's population trends are key to understanding future growth anticipated for Center. Population projections for Shelby County were prepared by the Texas State Data Center and are shown in Table 2.3. Shelby County's population is expected to grow at a 0.58 percent annual compounded rate over the next 5 years.

TABLE 2.3  
**SHELBY COUNTY**  
 POPULATION PROJECTIONS

YEAR	POPULATION
2000	25,224
2005	25,845
2010	26,531
2015	27,395
2020	28,248
2025	28,999

Source: Texas State Data Center

In developing the population projections for Center, past population data and current population trends were utilized (in addition to the assumptions and analysis above) to project anticipated future population levels. According to the Texas State Data Center, Shelby County’s average growth rate is approximately 2.9 percent each decade over the next 20 years. In comparison, between 1970 and 2003, the population of Center increased by 796 persons for an average growth rate of about four percent. Combining this information, along with the importance of Center’s prominence in the County, it is anticipated that moderate growth will continue at a rate of at least 4.5 percent each decade. Based upon an analysis of these assumptions, together with the fact that continued in-migration will occur, the future population of Center is projected to increase on average by approximately 0.45 percent per year. As such, the year 2005 population is estimated at 5,859 persons, year 2010 population will be 5,990 person, the 2015 population is expected to be 6,124 persons, 2020 is expected to be 6,261 person, and the year 2025 is expected to be 6,402 persons.

TABLE 2.3  
**CITY OF CENTER**  
**POPULATION PROJECTIONS**

YEAR	POPULATION
2003	5,807
2005	5,859
2010	5,990
2015	6,124
2020	6,261
2025	6,402

It should be understood that regardless of population, the principals of good on-going planning should still be applied. The changing society, migration, and birth control can change immensely in 20 years; however, the projected population, whether reached 5 years early or 10 years late, will require basically the same number of facilities for the projected number of people. The City should set and strive to achieve goals for both the desired population levels and the facilities necessary to accommodate the resultant population demands.

Population density is important to numerous facets of the planning program - - land use projection, utility projection, schools and parks - - all require a knowledge of population density. The demand for public facilities is sometimes created by population location, and other times the population may be the result of the presence or availability of public facilities. The Population Distribution Map, depicted in Figure 2.1, identifies the location of the existing and projected populations. The number of future residences which will locate in specific areas is unknown due to individual preference. Therefore, the location of population densities shown could change. The total growth of the City will still require a specific amount of land area