

# PART I

## FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE



# CHAPTER 1: POPULATION TRENDS

From 2000 to 2010, Fort Worth was the fastest growing large city of more than 500,000 population in the nation. Since 2010, Fort Worth has remained one of the fastest growing large cities in the country. Fort Worth's continued rapid population growth is due to immigration, an increased birth rate, longer average life expectancy, and domestic migration enhanced by a strong economy. It is important that the City of Fort Worth consider population trends in order to plan for the impacts of a larger population and increasing demands for public services. This chapter discusses ways in which population changes affect City services, followed by a general analysis of Fort Worth's population trends.

There are four basic reasons for studying population trends. First, the City must be able to predict the costs involved in providing services in the future. The demand for many services, such as water and wastewater, can be predicted by applying a formula to future population estimates. Other City services apply only to certain segments of the population, making it important to know the population's composition. For example, knowing a population's age distribution is helpful in determining demand for particular housing types.

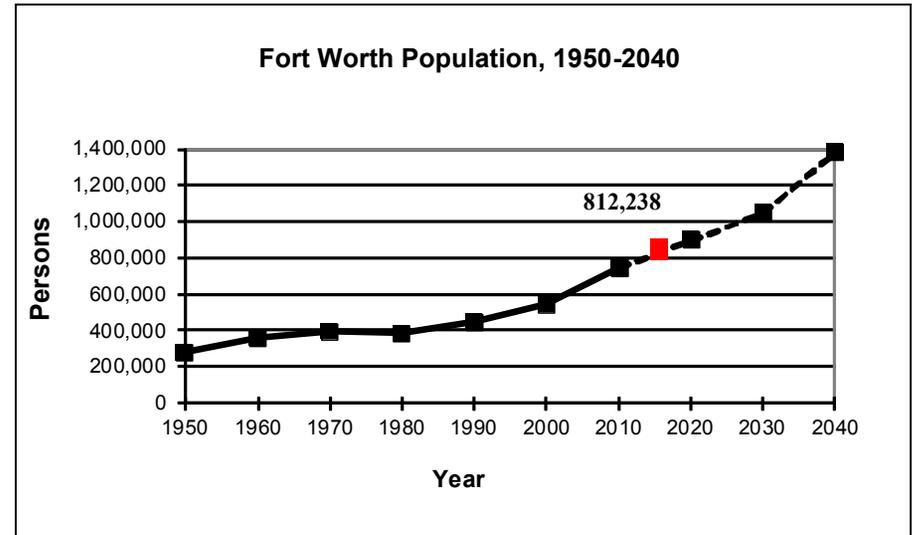
Second, the City must be able to forecast revenues from various sources to meet future public service costs. Fort Worth derives revenues from several sources, including property tax and sales tax. Future tax revenues can be estimated but are susceptible to economic fluctuations. Per capita sales tax is often used as a predictor. Conclusions can also be drawn about property tax based on development activity, which is directly related to population increases.

Third, knowing the spatial distribution of population within the City is important for determining the location of new community facilities and the strain that might be placed on existing facilities. Land uses are also determined by the population's spatial distribution. As population increases and shifts to different parts of the City, demand for certain types of land uses will also shift.

Lastly, population forecasts assist the City in determining the future land uses needed to support the predicted population. As the city's population grows, additional land is needed to accommodate new residences, retail and service businesses, and other types of land uses. Each person will require a certain amount of space for certain uses. For example, the Park and Recreation Department adopted the national standard of 21.25 acres of parkland per 1,000 persons to plan for future neighborhood parks. Similar predictions can also be made for other land uses.

## **Factors Affecting Population Change**

The increase in Fort Worth's population is generally the result of four key factors: 1) People are living longer, 2) Immigration has brought many new residents to the area, particularly from Mexico and other Latin American countries, according to the Texas State Data Center, 3) Fort Worth and Texas as a whole is experiencing relatively high birth rates, and 4) Domestic migration is also continuing, due in part to a robust



Fort Worth has an estimated population of 812,238 as of July 1, 2014, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Between 2010 and 2014 the city's population increased by 9.5 percent with an annual growth rate of around 2.1 percent. Local population forecasts released by the North Central Council of Governments (NCTCOG) project city's population will reach approximately 1.38 million by 2040 and is expected to exceed one million between 2025 and 2030. (Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 1950-2014 ; North Central Texas Council of Governments, 2015; Planning and Development Department, 2015.)

economy relative to other states, particularly in the high technology sector.

The growth and economic vitality of the entire region continues to prompt corporate relocations to Fort Worth. Of course, actual population growth may be higher or lower than expected. Factors that could cause slower population growth might include a prolonged economic downturn that slows business expansion in the Metroplex or necessitates an increase in local tax rates. For example, the recession that began in 2008 impacted Fort Worth's population by slowing job creation and domestic migration. Conversely, factors that could cause a more rapid population increase might include build-out of neighboring suburban cities that shifts growth to Fort Worth, or aggressive annexation in response to developments in the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ).

**Total Population**

Fort Worth and its ETJ are home to almost 900,000 people, with approximately 70,000 people living in the ETJ outside the Fort Worth city limits. The ETJ is land located a certain distance beyond the city limit line that a city has authority under state law to annex. Chapter 43 of the Local Government Code, State of Texas, defines the size of a city's ETJ based on population. Cities that have a population of 100,000 or more have a five-mile ETJ. Because of rules governing the minimum lot size for individual septic sewers, residential growth in the ETJ will likely be limited to less than one unit per acre, except where municipal utility districts are established to fund sewer collection systems and supporting main extensions.

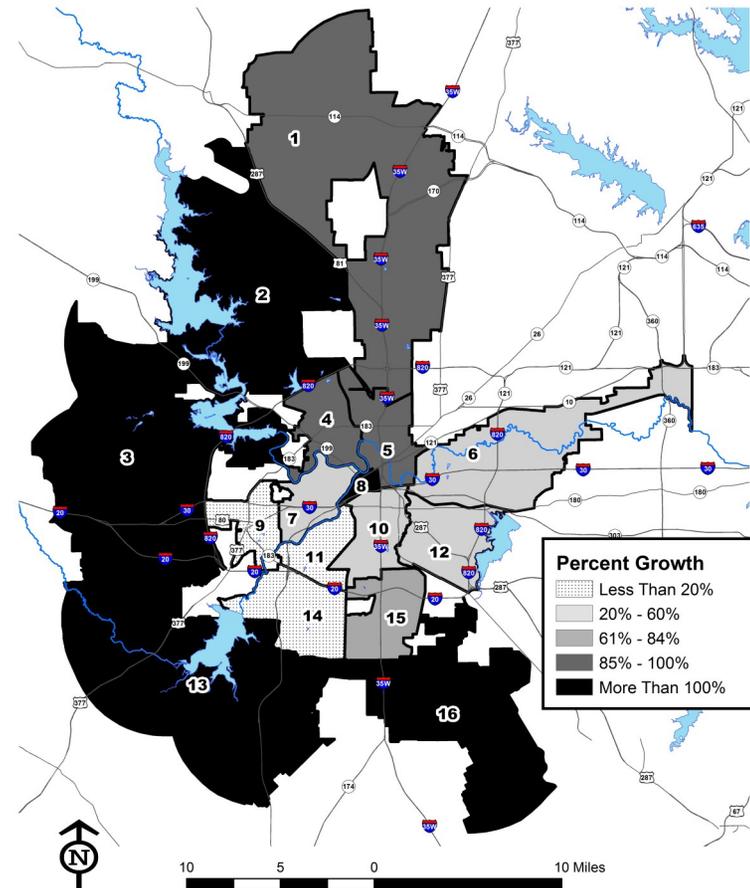
According to recent U.S. Census Bureau data, Fort Worth was the fastest growing large city of more than 500,000 population in the nation between April 1, 2000 and April 1, 2010. From 2000 to 2010, Fort Worth's total population increased by 206,512 persons. This represents an average annual increase of approximately 20,650 persons, a growth rate of 3.9 percent per year. This is a much faster growth rate than the City experienced during the 1990s. Fort Worth's total population increased from 447,619 in 1990 to 534,694 in 2000, an annual average growth rate of approximately 2 percent.

Since April 1, 2010, Fort Worth's growth rate has slowed compared with the rapid growth of the 2000s and is more in line with growth experienced in the 1990s. Between April 1, 2010 and July 1, 2014, Fort Worth added an additional 71,052 people for an estimated total population of 812,238 according to the U.S. Census Bureau. This represents an annual average growth rate of 2.5 percent.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, each area county (Collin, Dallas, Denton and Tarrant) added an average of 22 to 37 thousand new residents per year, between April 1, 2010 and July 1, 2014. Tarrant County increased by 136,326 persons with about 52% of that increase occurring within Fort Worth (71,052).

Without careful consideration of how and where such growth will be accommodated, the negative effects of rapid population growth (traffic congestion, pollution, costly and inefficient services, etc.) will likely be exacerbated. Chapter 4: Land Use

**Projected Population Growth, 2010-2040**



- |                  |                      |                          |                   |
|------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Far North     | 5. Northeast         | 9. Western Hills/Ridglea | 13. Far Southwest |
| 2. Far Northwest | 6. Eastside          | 10. Southside            | 14. Wedgwood      |
| 3. Far West      | 7. Arlington Heights | 11. TCU/Westcliff        | 15. Sycamore      |
| 4. Northside     | 8. Downtown          | 12. Southeast            | 16. Far South     |

The City and its extraterritorial jurisdiction are divided into 16 sectors for planning purposes. Growth has occurred at a faster percentage rate in outlying areas of the city. (Source: North Central Texas Council of Governments, 2015.)

promotes the development of mixed-use growth centers to accommodate increasing population and employment in areas that can be more cost effectively served by supportive infrastructure. Growth centers will have a high concentration of not only housing but jobs, services, and public facilities.

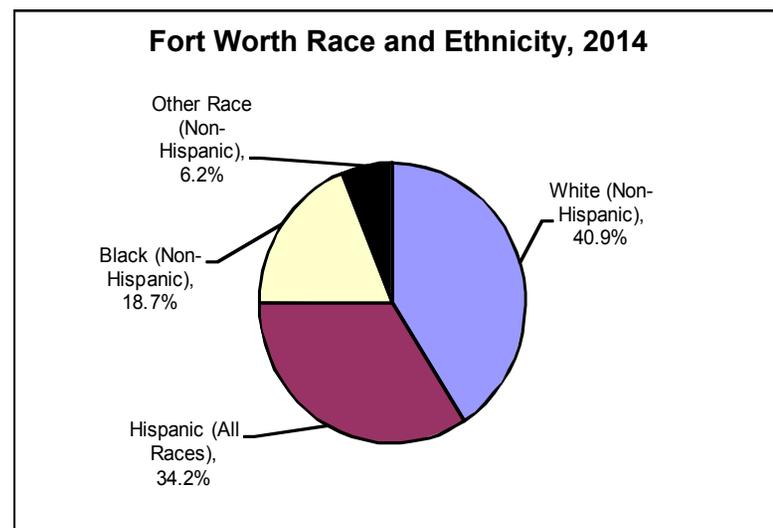
Chapter 10: Economic Development, discusses urban villages, which will accommodate increased density in the central city and encourage mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented environments. Similarly, the Comprehensive Plan promotes infill development, which is the use of vacant or underdeveloped sites for housing or commercial activity, rather than “leapfrogging” over the central city to the outskirts of town. Such efforts will guide a portion of rapid population growth to areas where population can be accommodated more efficiently and with less harmful effects.

### **Race and Ethnicity**

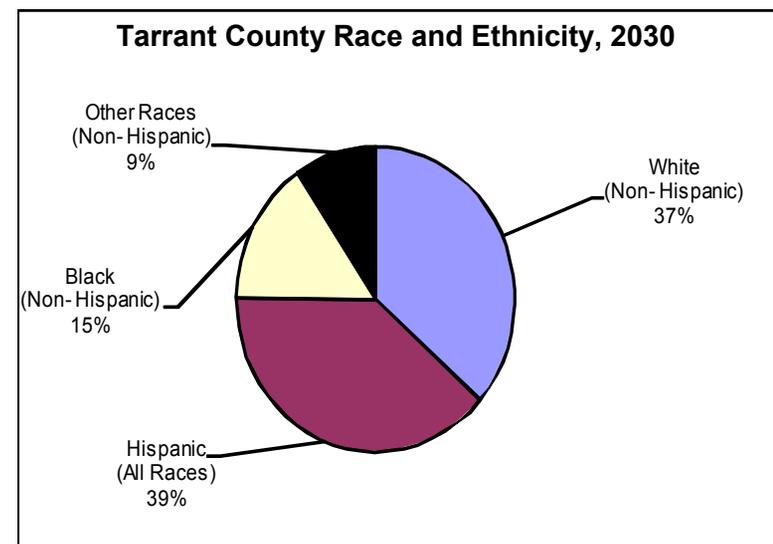
According to a Texas State Demographer’s report released in 2015, one of the largest drivers of population growth in the State are foreign-born migrants. “The foreign-born population of Texas, in total numbers and share of the overall population, is greater than at any point since statehood in 1845. One in six Texas residents was born in a foreign country, and roughly 40 percent of them moved from somewhere else in the U.S.” (*The Foreign-Born Population in Texas: Sources of Growth, October 2015*)

Although Hispanics are expected to make up 39 percent of Tarrant County’s population by 2030, if current trends continue, the State Demographer’s report indicates a decline in Latin-American migration and an increase in foreign-born Asian migrants coming to Texas. According to this report, between 2005 and 2013, Latin-American migration decreased by almost 25% and migration of persons of Asian origin doubled. Asians are projected to become the largest immigrant group by 2055. This shift is reflected in Texas demographics, with foreign-born professionals continuing to arrive in Texas from California, Illinois, Florida, and New York. Although most of these persons are well-educated and high-income professionals, this shift poses significant policy implications for the state, particularly for education and health care. According to the report, services to support Spanish-language speakers are very common, but agencies are finding it increasingly difficult to accommodate Asian language speakers. Three Buddhist temples constructed since 1990, and a new Hindu temple built in 2014, are reflective of Asian community growth in Fort Worth.

Currently, minorities collectively make up the majority of Fort Worth’s population. Fort Worth’s racial and ethnic minorities are concentrated in certain areas of the city (see map on page 13). African Americans are concentrated inside Loop 820 to the east of Interstate 35 and mostly to the south of Interstate 30. These areas contain many neighborhood associations, such as West Meadowbrook and Stop Six. Hispanics are more concentrated on the north side, in the Diamond Hill-Jarvis and Far Greater Northside historical neighborhoods, as well as in south central Fort Worth. Since 2000, racial and ethnic minorities have become the majority population in east Fort Worth along IH30 and in portions of Southwest Fort Worth. For more information on neighborhoods, see Chapter 9: Neighborhood Capacity Building.



Minorities collectively made up the majority of Fort Worth’s population in 2014. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2010-2014 5-Year Estimate.)



The Hispanic population is projected to be the fastest growing segment of Tarrant County’s population, comprising 39 percent in 2030. This increase in the proportion of Hispanics is likely to be even greater for the City of Fort Worth. (Source: Texas State Data Center, 2014.)

In its efforts to minimize racial segregation in communities, the Fort Worth City Council has proposed several ways to deconcentrate poverty. In April 2006, the Council passed Resolution 256, which serves “to Affirm and Promote That the Dispersion of Quality, Affordable Housing into Neighborhoods throughout the City of Fort Worth is Essential to a Well-Balanced Community.” The Neighborhood Services Department is working to increase the quality of life in inner city, minority neighborhoods through home ownership assistance and other programs. For more information, see Chapter 5: Housing.

**Age**

While the aging baby boom generation (those born between 1946 and 1964) is expected to increase demand on social services, Fort Worth is a relatively young city compared to national and state demographics. The 2014 American Community Survey reported a median age of 31.8 in Fort Worth, 33.9 for the State of Texas, and 37.4 for the United States. There were an estimated 67,280 persons over 65 in the city in 2014.

According to City of Fort Worth projections, this figure will increase between 2010 and 2020, as the first members of the baby boom generation began reaching the age of 65 in 2011. According to the Texas State Data Center, the elderly (65+) will make up about 15 percent of the county’s population by 2030. This age group will continue to grow through 2030 as the remaining portion of the baby boom generation reaches 65.

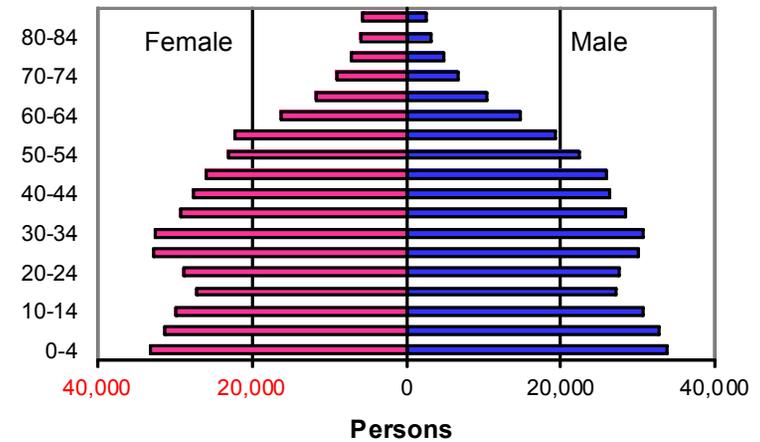
There were 179,275 children between 5 and 19 years old in 2014, making up 23.0 percent of the population, a higher percentage of children than the U.S. as a whole, which was 18 percent, and Texas, which is 22.2. The adult population between the ages of 20 and 64 was 464,955, making up 59.7 percent of the population. Fort Worth’s population percentage in the 20-64 age category mirrored that of the Texas, and was slightly less than the U.S. with 62.1 percent.

Between now and 2030, the greatest growth will occur in the general working-age adult population, which will help to offset the increases in young and elderly populations. If current trends continue, there will be more working adults per dependent population in 2030 than in 2010.

Increases in various segments of the population will create needs for various types of services. An increase in school-age children necessitates new classroom space and more teachers. Changes in age groups also will change new development. Young families often choose to live further out in the suburbs, while many retirees and young people in their 20s and 30s are choosing to live close to downtown in walkable urban areas. Responding to this changing housing market, new housing units continue to be added in the central city.

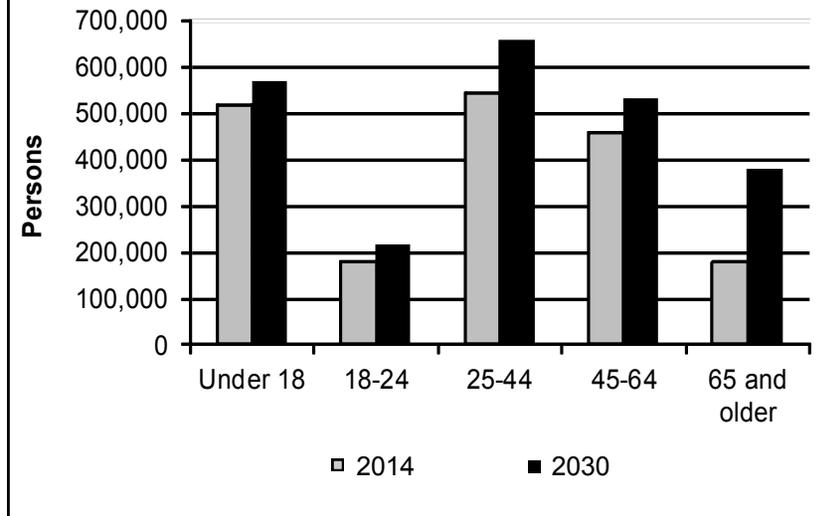
It is also important to consider the needs of the elderly in long-range planning. This

**Fort Worth Age Groups, 2014**



The number of persons 65 and older was 67,280 in 2014, while the number of school-age persons (ages 5-19) was 181,379. (Source: American Community Survey, 2014.)

**Tarrant County Age Groups, 2014 - 2030**



The elderly will make up a greater proportion of our population in 2030 than in 2014. (Sources: Texas State Data Center, 2012 (2030), American Community Survey, 2014)

group will create a demand for housing near hospitals and on public transportation routes, as well as supportive housing such as retirement communities and nursing homes. See Chapter 8: Human Services.

### **Population by Planning Sector**

Many central city sectors experienced a population decline in the 1980s but are now gaining population, as the City's Urban Village Development Program and form-based zoning districts change expectations and resulting development activity in targeted central city areas. From 2001 to 2014, approximately 1,146 new housing units were added in Downtown Fort Worth. The economic downturn that started in 2008 slowed construction project schedules for several years, impacting the rate of development. However residential development activity has picked up significantly since the recession ended, particularly in mixed-use districts such as the Near Southside and the West Seventh Urban Village. In 2015 alone, over 400 new residential units were added near Downtown. For more information on mixed-use and form-based zoning districts see Chapter 14: Urban Design.

Sector population forecasts are estimated based upon the most closely matching Traffic Survey Zones (TSZs) used by the North Central Council Governments (NCTCOG) for transportation planning. Five of the 16 planning sectors include areas outside the city limits in the ETJ (see map on page 10).

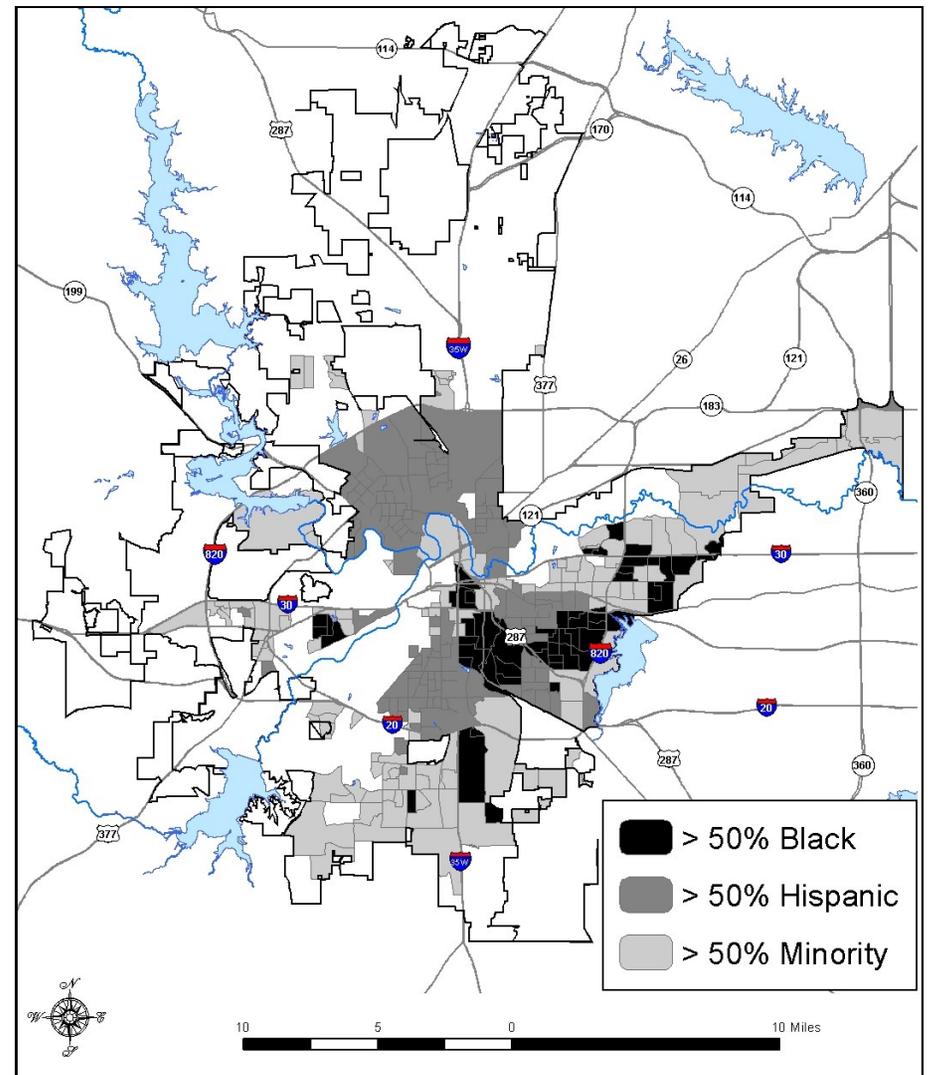
New population forecast figures for 2040 were released by the NCTCOG in 2015. Between 2010 and 2040, population is projected to grow by 85% or more in the Far North, Far Northwest, Far South, Far West and Downtown sectors. In addition, new development is rapidly occurring along the Chisholm Trail Parkway, impacting the Far Southwest sector. Vision Plan implementation in areas around Lake Worth and Lake Arlington will impact growth in the Far West and Southeast sectors. Continued mixed-use development in the West Seventh Urban Village, Panther Island (formerly Trinity Uptown), and Downtown areas will keep growth trending upward near the city center.

### **Race by Planning Sector**

The Southeast sector has the largest percentage of minority residents, with 93 percent of its total population comprised of black, Hispanic, and other, according to the 2010 U.S. Census. Northside, Southside, and Northeast sectors followed with 86, 83, and 83 percent minority populations, respectively. Minority populations have grown in all sectors since 2000 except for the Downtown sector. The Far South, Wedgwood, Far Southwest, Far Northwest, and Sycamore sectors experienced the greatest percentage growth of minority residents since 2000.

Data from the Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD) indicate that the percentage of Hispanic students has increased in almost every elementary school in the FWISD since 1990. The highest percentage of Hispanic student population growth has been in schools located in the Northeast and TCU/Westcliff sectors. All elementary schools in these sectors have shown substantial increases in the Hispanic

## **Minority Population, 2010 by Census Block Group**



The Northside, Southside, and Southeast sectors of the City have the highest concentrations of minority population. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.)

student population since 1990.

### **Age by Planning Sector**

Based on the 2010 Census Data, the Downtown sector had the highest percentage of persons aged 65 and older, at 14 percent. The Arlington Heights, Wedgwood, and Western Hills/Ridglea sectors had the next highest percentages; falling between 12 and 13 percent. The Far North sector had the smallest percentage of persons 65 and over at only four percent. Since the baby boom generation began turning 65 years old in 2011, it is likely that the percentage of seniors in all planning sectors will increase proportionately. Downtown also has the highest percentage of younger adults, ages 18 to 34, with 46% of the Downtown residents falling in this age group. This is likely due to the completion of a number of residential developments that appeal to young professionals. The TCU/Westcliff sector has the highest percentage of younger adults with 36 percent of residents in the 18 to 34 age group, largely due to Texas Christian University, which is located in this sector.

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

Fort Worth's population is expected to exceed one million by 2030. Increased population will place additional demands on existing community facilities and infrastructure, and will result in the need for additional and expanded facilities. Shifting populations within the city will result in changing land use patterns and will help determine the location of new facilities.

While Fort Worth's total population grows, there will also be changes in the composition of the population. Collectively, minorities have become the majority. The percentage of the population over the age of 65 will continue increasing through 2020. Changes in age composition will result in a need for different types of housing and services.

Today, foreign-born migrants are one of the largest drivers of population growth in this, the nation's second most populous state. The foreign-born population of Texas, in total numbers and share of the overall population, is greater than at any point since statehood in 1845. One in six Texas residents was born in a foreign country, and roughly 40 percent of them moved from somewhere else in the U.S., according to the Texas Demographer report cited in the section on Race and Ethnicity. This shift has significant policy implications for the state, particularly for education.

Accommodating population growth in a more sustainable way is an important challenge facing communities across the country, and Fort Worth is working to meet the challenge. This Comprehensive Plan contains many goals, objectives, policies, and strategies that will help the City of Fort Worth attain a more sustainable future.