

PART I

FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE



# CHAPTER 1: POPULATION TRENDS

Since 2000, Fort Worth has been the fastest growing large city of more than 500,000 population in the nation. The city's population continues to grow and change. Growth today is due to immigration, an increased birth rate, longer average life expectancy, and domestic migration. 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.

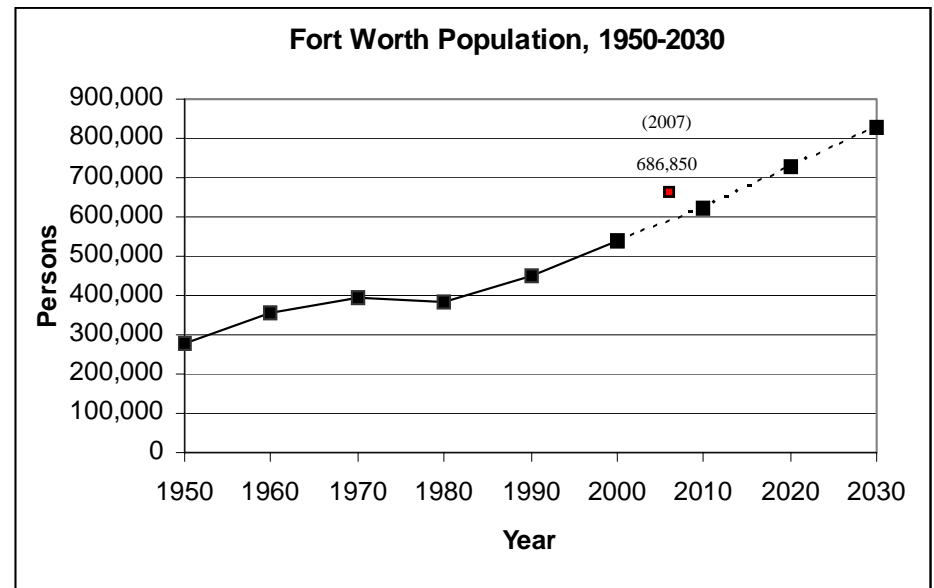
Third, knowing the spatial distribution of population within the City is important for determining the location of new community facilities and the strain that might be placed on existing facilities. Land uses are also determined by the population's spatial distribution. As population increases and shifts 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 Parks and Community Services 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 basic factors:

1) People are living longer; 2) Immigration has been steady for many years, particularly from Mexico and other Latin American countries, according to the Texas State Data Center; 3) Fort Worth and Texas as a whole are experiencing high birth rates; and 4) Domestic migration is also continuing, though at reduced rates from the 1980s. A robust economy, particularly in the high technology sector, continues to



In 2003, the North Central Texas Council of Governments projected that Fort Worth's population would reach 784,300 by 2025. However, Fort Worth's population increased at a faster rate between 2000 and 2007 than NCTCOG's projections anticipated. If growth continues at the current accelerated rate, Fort Worth's population will surpass the NCTCOG projection, exceeding one million by 2030. The Council of Governments will adjust their projections based on recent trends in 2009. (Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 1950-2000, North Central Texas Council of Governments, 2007; Planning and Development Department, 2007.)

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 or necessitates an increase in local tax rates. 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 over 700,000 people. The ETJ is land located a certain distance beyond the city limit line that a city has a right 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.

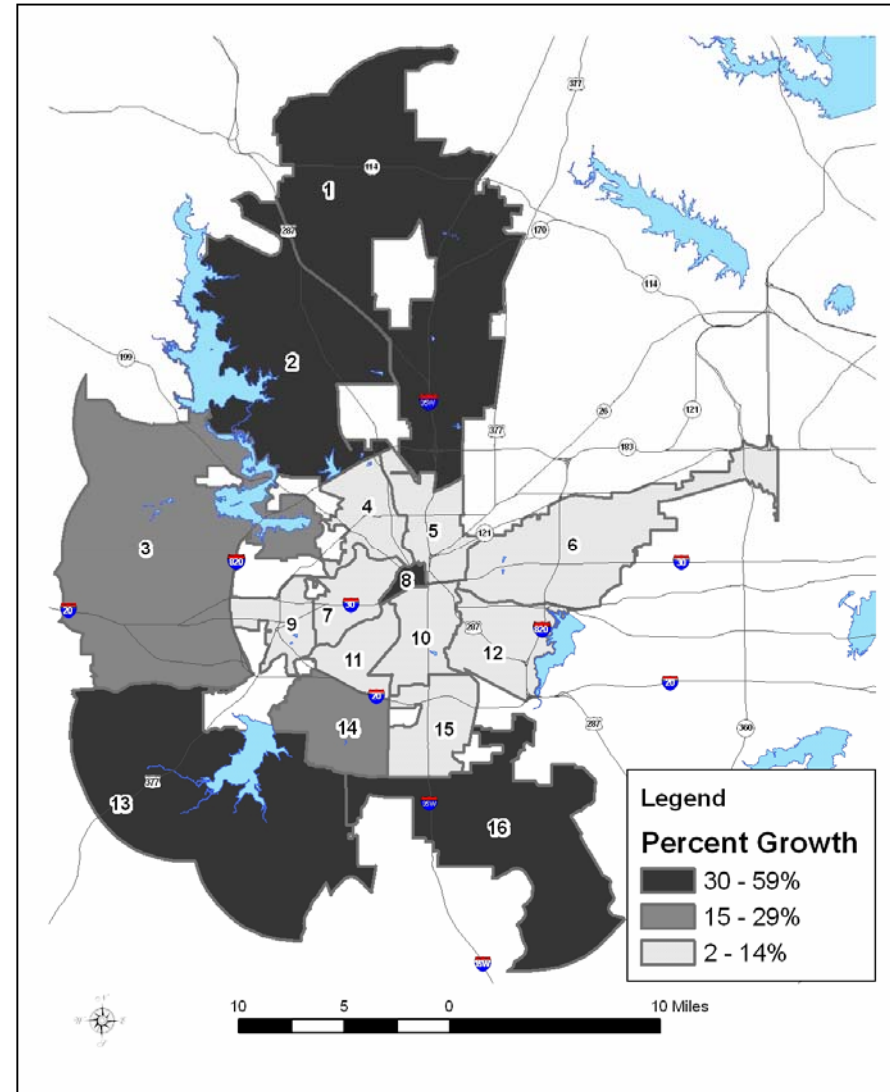
According to the most recent U.S. Census Bureau data, Fort Worth has been the fastest growing large city of more than 500,000 population in the nation since April 1, 2000. Fort Worth's total population increased from 447,619 in 1990 to 534,694 in 2000, an annual average growth rate of approximately 2 percent.

Since the 2000 Census, the population has increased at a faster rate than it did during the 1990s. The North Central Texas Council of Governments estimated Fort Worth's population at 686,850 persons as of January 1, 2007. From 2000 to 2007, Fort Worth's total population increased by 152,156 persons. This represents an average annual increase of nearly 22,000 persons since the 2000 Census, a growth rate of approximately 4 percent a year. Fort Worth has already grown 28 percent this decade, with an increase of 22,750 just in the past year. If Fort Worth continues to grow at the same rate it has since 2000, the city's population could exceed a million people by the year 2030.

The North Central Texas region has continued to experience population growth. The region increased by 135,300 persons in 2006 for a total estimated population of 6,406,450 as of January 1, 2007. Last year was the eleventh consecutive year the region has added over 100,000 persons. Most of the region's growth in 2006 occurred in the five cities of Fort Worth, McKinney, Dallas, Frisco, and Allen. Fort Worth led the region by adding 22,750 new residents.

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 introduces the idea of mixed-use growth centers in these areas. 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 increase

**Population Growth, 2000-2005**



- |                  |                      |                          |                   |
|------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 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 have been divided into 16 sectors for planning purposes. Growth has occurred at a faster rate in outlying areas of the city. (Source: Planning and Development Department, 2006.)

density in the inner city and encourage mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented environments. Similarly, the Comprehensive Plan promotes infill development, or 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 rapid population growth to areas where population can be accommodated with less harmful effects.

**Race and Ethnicity**

According to the 2006 American Community Survey, Hispanics accounted for 32 percent of Fort Worth’s total population. This ethnic group is the fastest growing population group in Fort Worth and Texas. Races categorized as “other,” primarily Asian and Pacific Islander, are also gaining, while white and black percentages are declining in share. Currently, minorities collectively make up the majority of Fort Worth’s population. By the year 2025, Hispanics are expected to make up 36 percent of Fort Worth’s population, if current trends continue.

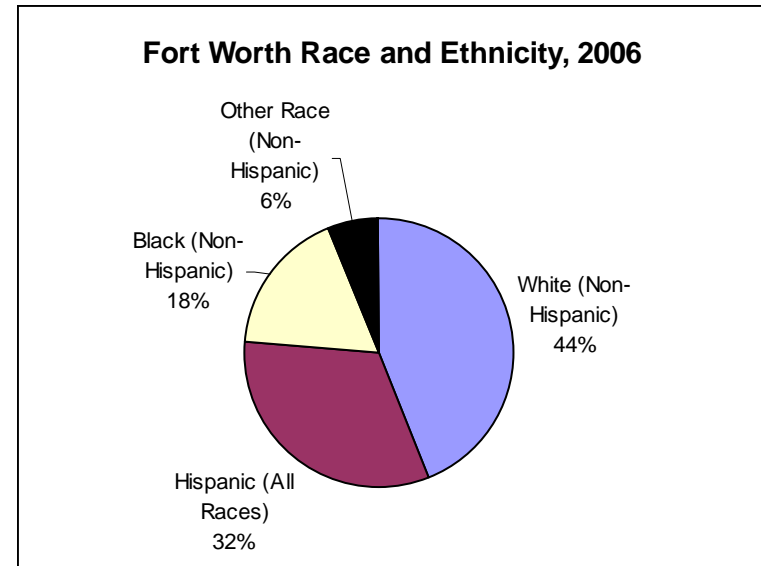
Fort Worth’s racial and ethnic minorities are concentrated in certain areas of the city (see map on page 13). African Americans are concentrated inside Loop 820 to the east of Interstate 35 and mostly to the south of Interstate 30. These areas contain many neighborhood associations such as West Meadowbrook 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. For more information on neighborhoods, see Chapter 9: Neighborhood Capacity Building.

The Fort Worth City Council has proposed several ways to deconcentrate poverty, which will also have an effect on racial segregation. 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 Housing Department is working to increase the quality of life in inner city, minority neighborhoods through home ownership assistance and programs like Model Blocks. For more information, see Chapter 5: Housing.

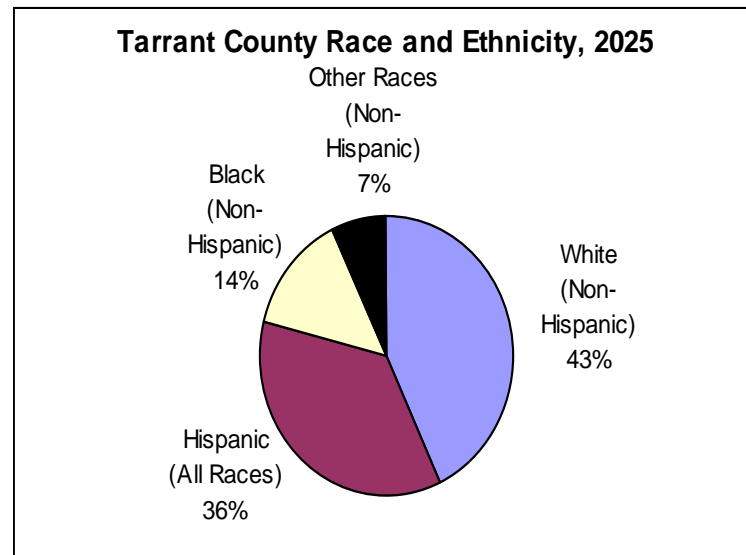
**Age**

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 2006 American Community Survey reported a median age of 32.3 in Fort Worth, 33.2 for the State of Texas, and 36.4 for the United States. There were 52,848 persons over 65 in the city in 2006.

According to City of Fort Worth projections, this figure will decline in the next few years, but will increase again between 2010 and 2020 as the first members of the baby boom generation reach the age of 65 in 2011. According to the Texas State Data Center, the elderly (65+) will make up about 14 percent of the county’s population by 2025. This age group will continue to grow beyond 2025 to 2029, when the remaining portion of the baby boom generation reaches 65.



Minorities collectively made up the majority of Fort Worth’s population in 2006. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007.)



The Hispanic population is projected to be the fastest growing segment of Tarrant County’s population, comprising 36 percent in 2025. This increase in the proportion of Hispanics is likely to be even greater for the City of Fort Worth. (Source: Texas State Data Center, 2006.)

There were 124,841 children between 5 and 19 years old in 2006, making up 21 percent of the population, the same percentage of children as the U.S. as a whole. In Texas, children make up 23 percent of the population. The adult population between the ages of 20 and 64 was 367,942, making up almost 61 percent of the population. This was slightly more than in the U.S., which is 60 percent adults 20 to 64 and Texas, with 59 percent.

Between now and 2025, 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 2025 than in 2006.

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 at the same time young people in their 20s and also retirees are choosing to live downtown, and new housing units continue to be added in the central city. It is also important to consider the elderly in long-range planning. This 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. Services for the elderly are discussed in this plan in Chapter 8: Human Services.

**Population by Sector**

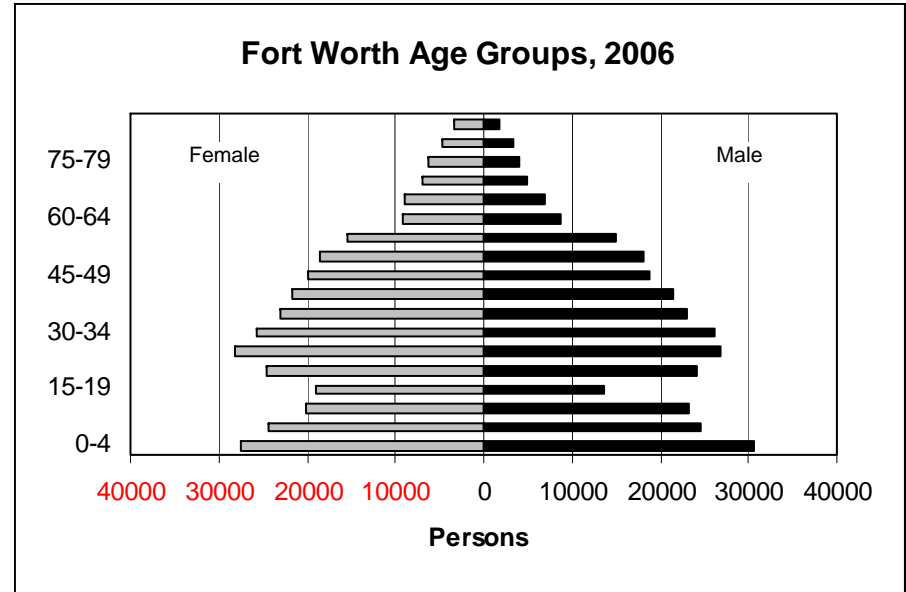
Sector populations are estimated based upon the most closely matching census geography. Five of the 16 planning sectors include areas outside the city limits in the ETJ (see map on page 13).

Between 2000 and 2005, population growth was greatest in the Far North, Far Northwest, and Downtown sectors. This growth is attributed to the availability of large tracts of developable land in these outer sectors, and the increasing availability of housing options downtown.

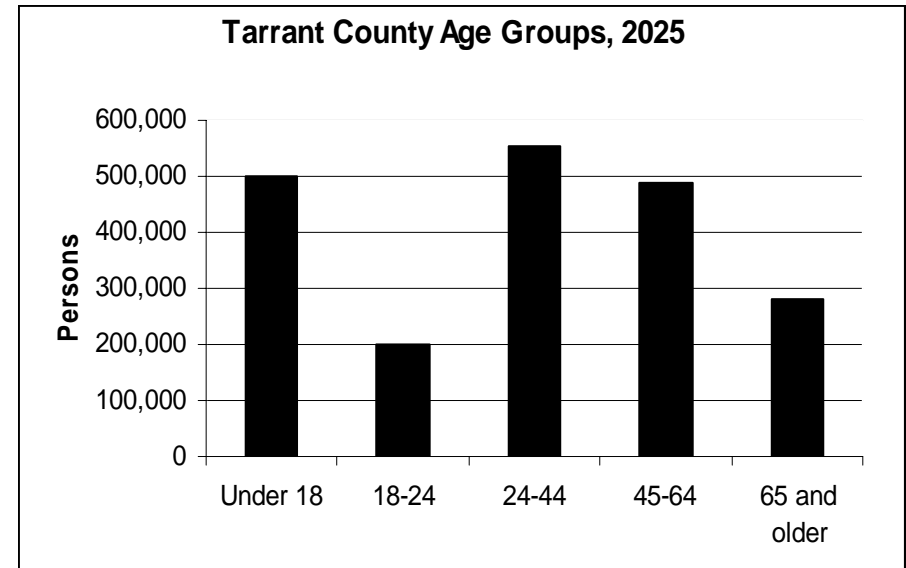
The Far Northwest and Far North sectors exhibited the largest volume of growth due to residential developments. The greatest percentage of growth between 2000 and 2005 occurred in the Far North sector, which added almost 60,000 residents at an annual growth rate of nearly ten percent.

This trend is expected to continue as large residential developments expand beyond North Tarrant Parkway. The Wedgwood, Far West, and Far Southwest sectors will also experience a high percentage of growth as new subdivisions expand.

Since 2000, an estimated 1,350 people have been added in Downtown Fort Worth. A 2006 study by Downtown Fort Worth, Inc. and M/PF Research concluded that the market can absorb an additional 7,300 housing units downtown in the next 11 to 15



The number of persons 65 and older was 51,274 in 2006 while the number of school-age persons (ages 5-19) was 124,841. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007.)



Children and the elderly will make up a greater proportion of our population in 2025 than in 2006. (Source: Texas State Data Center, 2007.)

years. Other central city sectors have exhibited much slower growth rates than the Downtown sector, primarily due to their older housing stock and lack of large tracts of developable land. Many central city sectors experienced a population decline in the 1980s, but are now gaining population.

### **Race by Sector**

The Southeast sector has the largest percentage of minority residents, with 87 percent of its total population comprised of black, Hispanic, and other. Northside, Southside, and Northeast sectors follow with 82, 80, and 74 percent minority populations, respectively. All five of the outlying sectors are less than 20 percent minority. The TCU/Westcliff sector has the lowest percentage of minorities of any sector inside Interstate 820 Loop, with 22 percent.

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 a 15 percent average increase in the Hispanic student population since 1990.

### **Age by Sector**

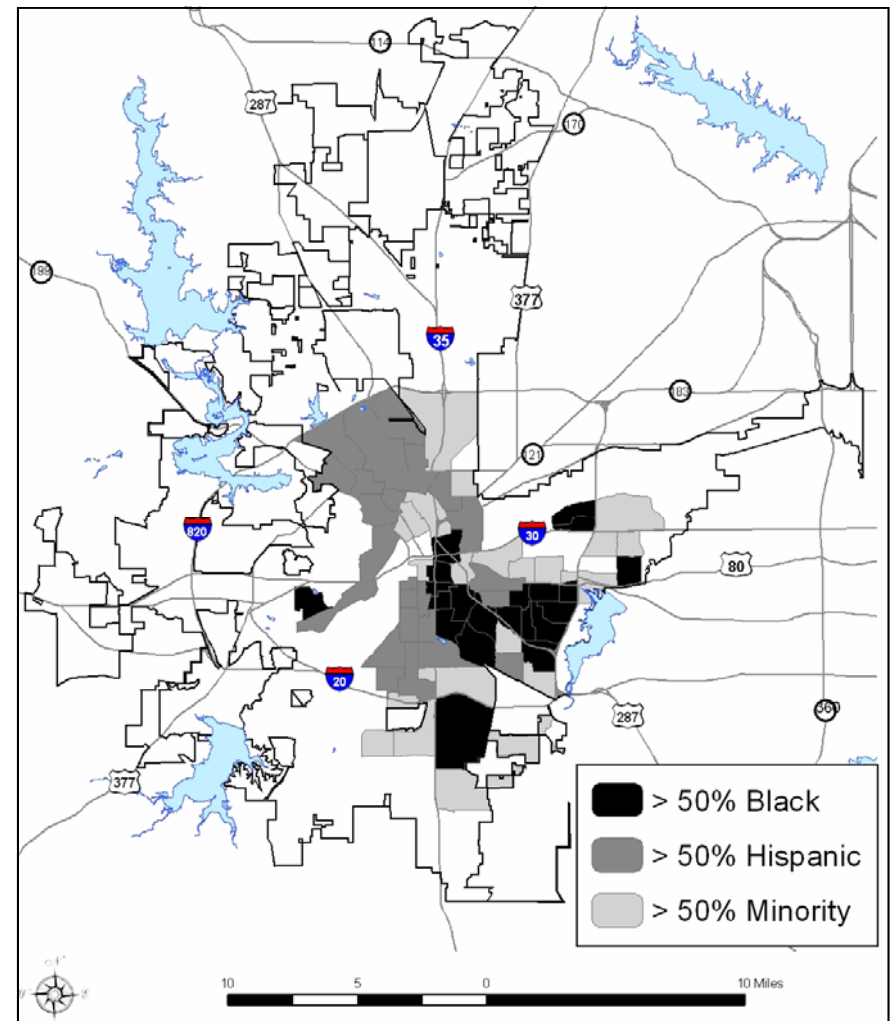
In 2000, the Downtown sector had the highest percentage of persons aged 65 and older, at 36 percent. The Arlington Heights and TCU/Westcliff sectors both had 14 percent. The Far North sector had the smallest percentage of persons 65 and over at only three percent. Downtown saw an increase in younger adults from 1990 to 2000. This could be due to the completion of a number of residential developments that appeal to young professionals. Since the baby-boom generation is projected to begin turning 65 years old in the year 2011, it is likely that the percentage of seniors in all sectors will increase proportionately.

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

The total population of Fort Worth will continue to grow each year. In 2007, the city's population was 686,850 with the potential to exceed a 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. Minorities, collectively, have become the majority. The percentage of the population over the age of 65 will increase between 2010 and 2020. Changes in age composition will result in a need for different types of housing and services.

**Minority Population, 2000  
by Census Tract**



The Northside, Southside, and Southeast sectors of the City have the highest concentrations of minority population. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.)

