



Theme - Social Demography

Sub Theme - Population Growth

Indicator - Population Growth

Population Growth is one of the indicators of urban successes in the United States (Linneman & Saiz, 2005). Municipalities compete for population growth in different ways: ensuring adequate housing supply; quality schools; or funding beautification projects for an enhanced quality of life (Hill & Brennan, 2012). Some suggest that Houston's population growth is based on its ability to provide an affordable lifestyle for middle-class people, primarily due to low cost housing (Glaeser, 2011). Population growth has an essential impact on sustainability in that the per capita demand on non-renewable resources should be monitored to ensure supplies are available for present and future generations. Houston is the 4th largest city in terms of both population and land area and the 25th most densely populated among the 63 largest cities in the country (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011).

Sustainability Benefit: Houston is attracting new residents, which suggests that these new residents perceive living in Houston as advantageous over other places to live.

Sustainability Issue: More residents require more resources. Sustainable management of natural resources in Houston is critical to ensure that the supplies are sufficient to accommodate the needs of increasing population levels.

The following figures and tables represent different metrics to measure the indicator *Population Growth*:

Figure 1: City of Houston Population Growth

Figure 2: Harris County Population Count

Figure 3: City of Houston Average Annual Growth

Figure 4: Harris County Average Annual Growth

Figure 5: City of Houston Race and Ethnicity

Figure 6: Harris County Race and Ethnicity

Table 1: Growth comparison of White and Hispanic populations

Figure 7: Population Density

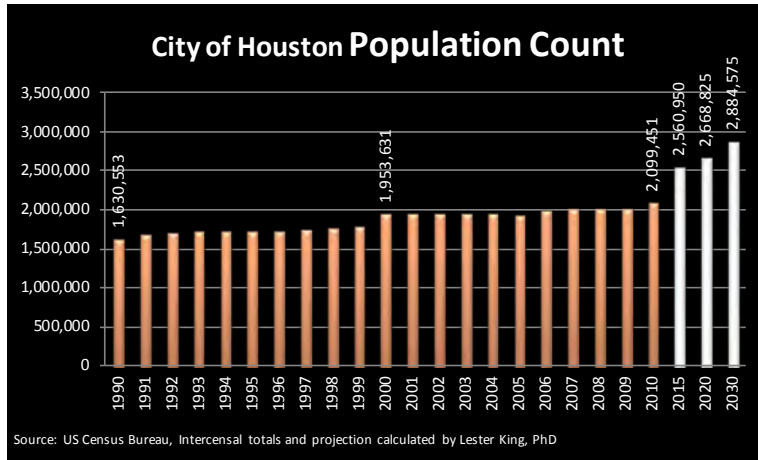


Figure 1: City of Houston Population Growth

- In 2010 Houston is the fourth largest city in the United States with 2,099,451 people (Census 2010).
- Based on the population growth trend between 1990 and 2010, the City of Houston will gain over 500,000 persons by 2020.
- The 2030 population is projected to be 2,884,575 persons within the city limits (Figure 1).

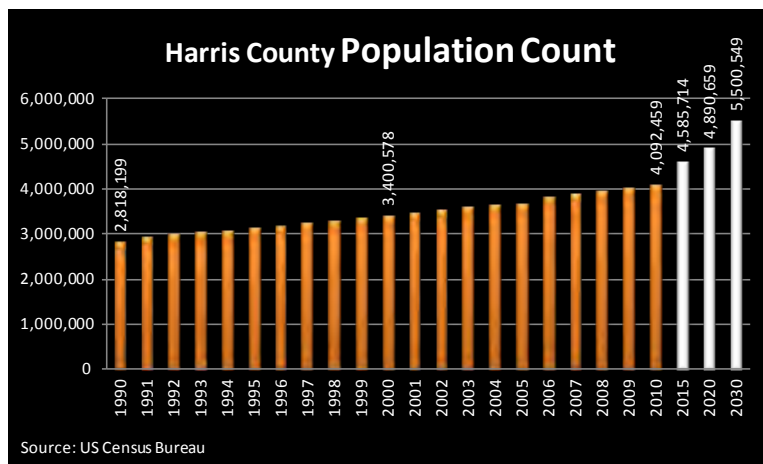


Figure 2: Harris County Population Count

- The City of Houston is located in Harris County, Texas. Harris County is the most populated county in the state of Texas with 4,092,459 persons as of the 2010 Decennial census.

- It is also the third most populous county in the country according to the 2010 census, behind Los Angeles County, CA - 9,818,605 persons; and Cook County, IL - 5,194,675 persons (US Bureau of Census 2011).
- The City of Houston comprises roughly half of the population of Harris County.
- Harris County is projected to add almost 800,000 persons by 2020 and almost 1.5 million persons by 2030. The 2030 population is projected to be 5,500,549 persons (Figure 2).

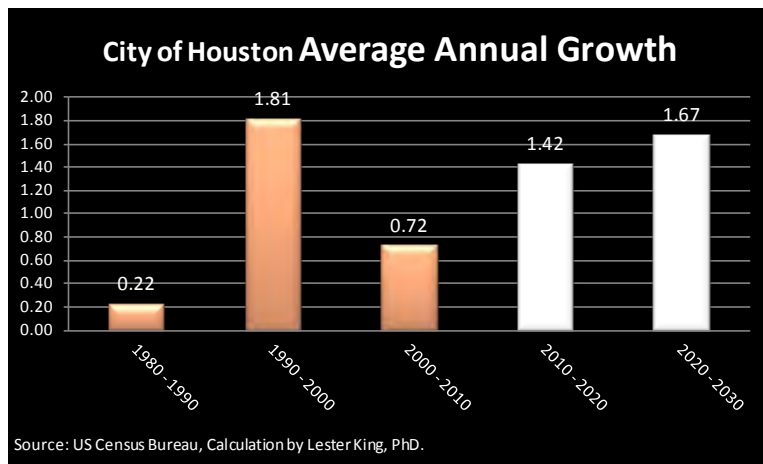


Figure 3: City of Houston Average Annual Growth

- The average annual percentage growth rate in Houston fluctuated between 0.22% per year from 1980 to 1990 and 1.81% per year between 1990 and 2000.
- Based on the linear trend between 1980 and 2010, the average annual percentage rate of growth is not expected to climb above the levels seen between 1990 and 2000 over the next 20 years (Figure 3).

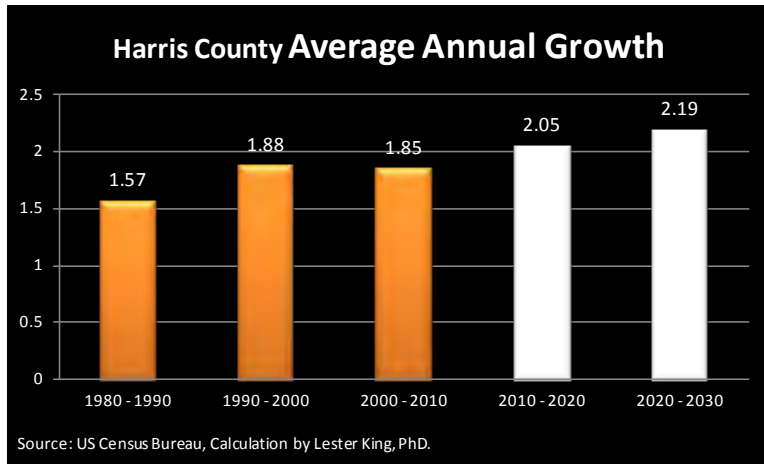


Figure 4: Harris County Average Annual Growth

- Figure 4 shows that the average annual percentage rate of growth is higher in Harris County than it is in Houston.
- Population is increasing in Harris County, in areas outside of Houston, faster than within the city limits of Houston.

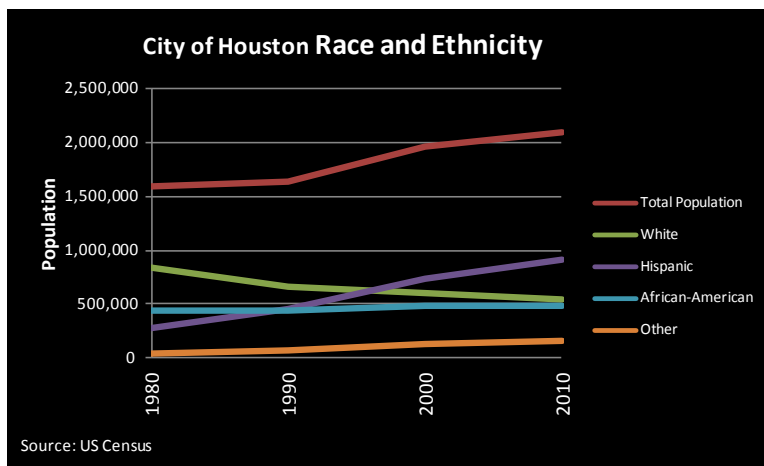


Figure 5: City of Houston Race and Ethnicity

- The race and ethnicity composition of the city is as follows: Hispanic 43.8%, White 25.6%, Black 23.1%, All others 7.4%.



- In 1980 there were at least 500,000 more Whites than Hispanics in the City of Houston. The exact counts were 834,061 White and 281,331 Hispanics.
- The population counts for Whites and Hispanics were approximately the same around 1996.
- The latest decennial census results show that there are almost 400,000 more Hispanics in the City of Houston than Whites. Exact counts are 537,901 Whites and 919,668 Hispanics.
- In 1980, the African American population was almost half that of the White population. In the 2010 census the African American population was estimated at just over 50,000 persons less than the White population.
- The City of Houston is losing population among the White cohort.
- Most of the growth in the City of Houston can be attributed to the Hispanic population. A look at figure 5 shows that the trend for the Hispanic population almost exactly matches the trend for the city as a whole after the 1990 census.

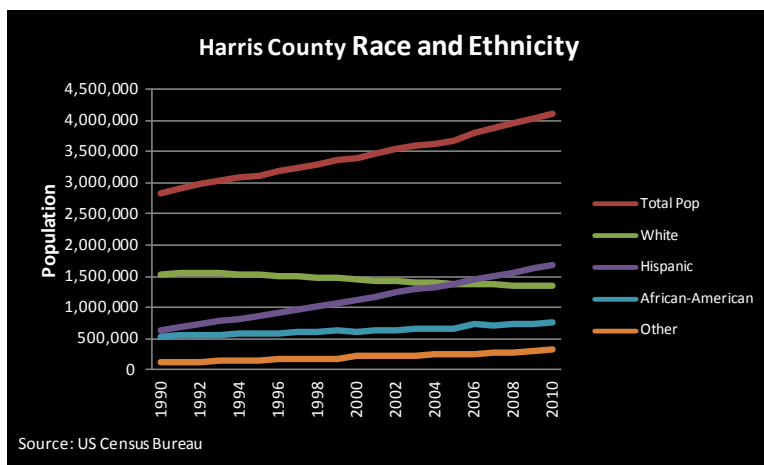


Figure 6: Harris County Race and Ethnicity

- In comparison to the City of Houston, the Hispanic population only overtook the White population after the 2000 census around 2005. However, since the Hispanic population and the total population for the county have similar trends, we can say that most of the growth in Harris County is also attributed to the growth in the Hispanic population.
- The White population in the county is also declining, but the rate is not as steep as in the City of Houston.



- The Hispanic population accounts for the largest population group, both in Harris County (1,671,540 persons, 41%) and the City of Houston (919,668 persons, 44%) (Figure 6).
- The race and ethnicity composition is as follows: Hispanic 40.8%, White 33%, Black 18.4%, All others 7.7%.

	1980	2010	Percentage Average Annual Growth
White COH	834,061	537,901	-1.46
Hispanic COH	281,331	919,668	3.95
White Harris	1,509,430	1,349,646	-0.37
Hispanic Harris	369,077	1,671,540	5.03

Source: US Census, Calculation by Lester King, PHD.

Table 1: Growth comparison of White and Hispanic populations

- Table 1 compares the average annual percentage growth in the Hispanic and White populations between the City of Houston (COH) and Harris County (Harris). The table shows that Hispanics are increasing in Harris County at a faster rate than in the City of Houston.
- Additionally the White population is decreasing at a slower rate in Harris County than in the City of Houston.
- The results suggest that living in Harris County beyond the City of Houston city limits is more desirable to Hispanics looking for a new home in the region.
- Since the White population is declining, data suggests that whites leaving the area are more inclined to leave the City of Houston than Harris County.
- Further research into the composition of the population groups would reveal whether those leaving were attributed to deaths or migration or other factors.

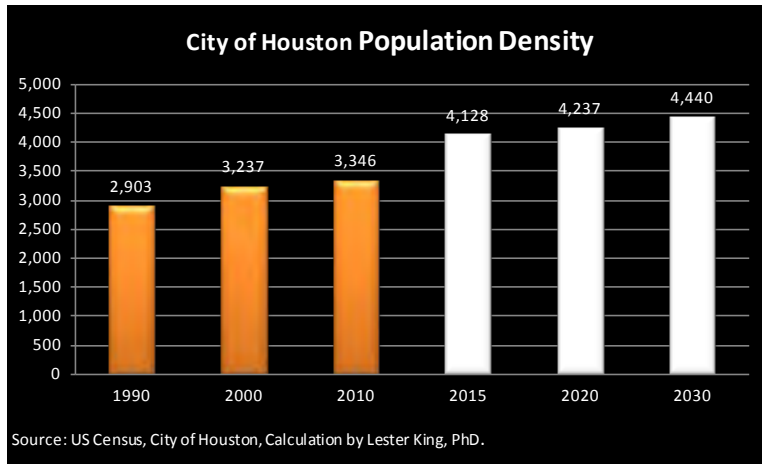


Figure 7: Population Density

- Houston’s Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) is a five mile area surrounding the city limits. The State of Texas devolves to cities rights and responsibilities to manage property within the city limits and limited rights and responsibilities to property within this ETJ. One of the rights is that of annexation.
- After 1999 the City of Houston has primarily enacted limited annexation of property therefore the size of the city is not expected to increase by a considerable amount over time.
- The population density projection assumes the percentage increase in square miles between 2000 and 2010 would continue; and that the average growth population growth between 1980 and 2010 would continue. By 2030 the density of the City of Houston will increase by 1,094 persons per square mile more than 2010 (Figure 7).

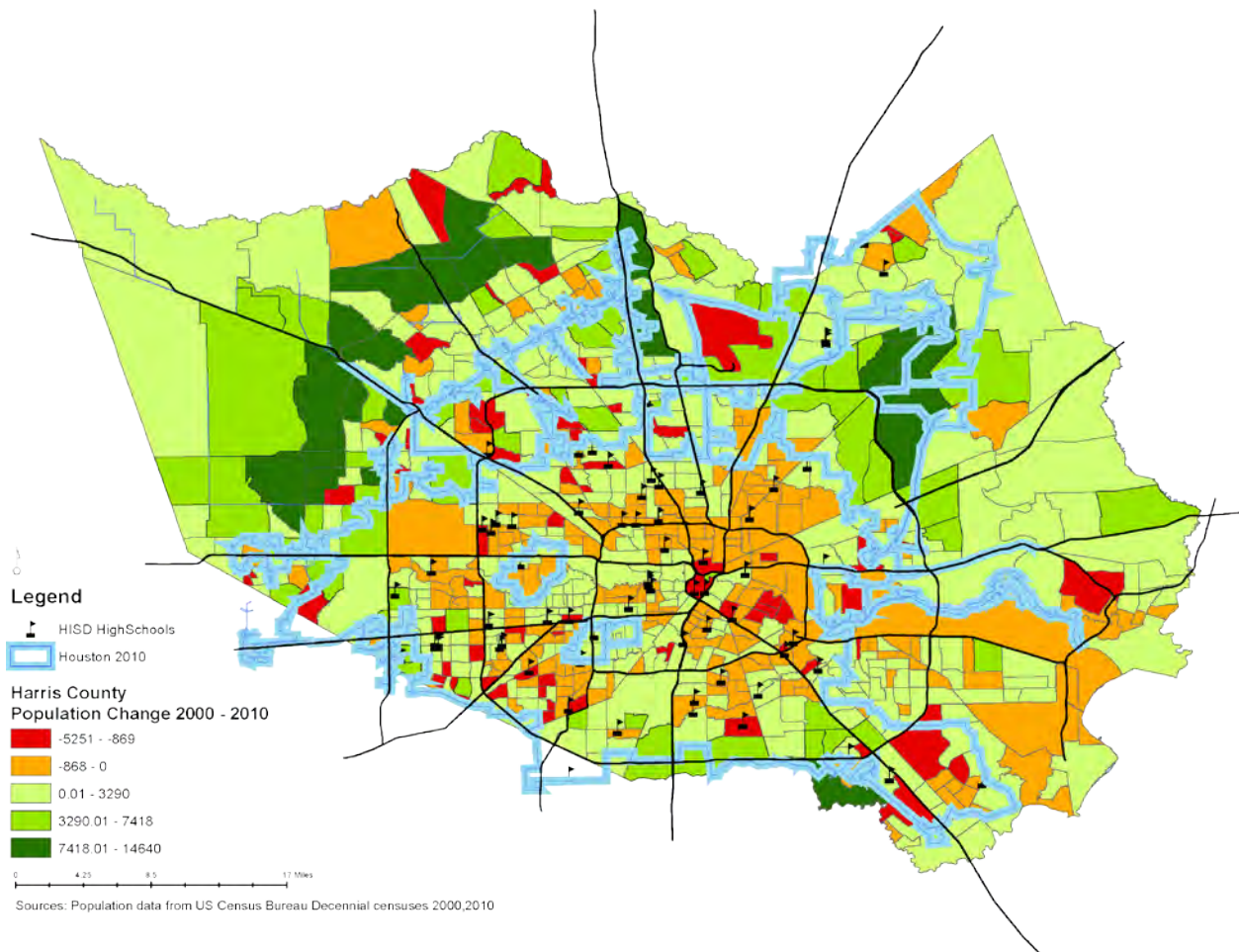


Figure 8: Population Change 2000-2010

- Houston gained 145,820 people between 2000 and 2010. However many areas within the city border actually lost population.
- This is a major problem, since as the map above illustrates, many of these areas losing population correlate with areas where the public high schools are located.

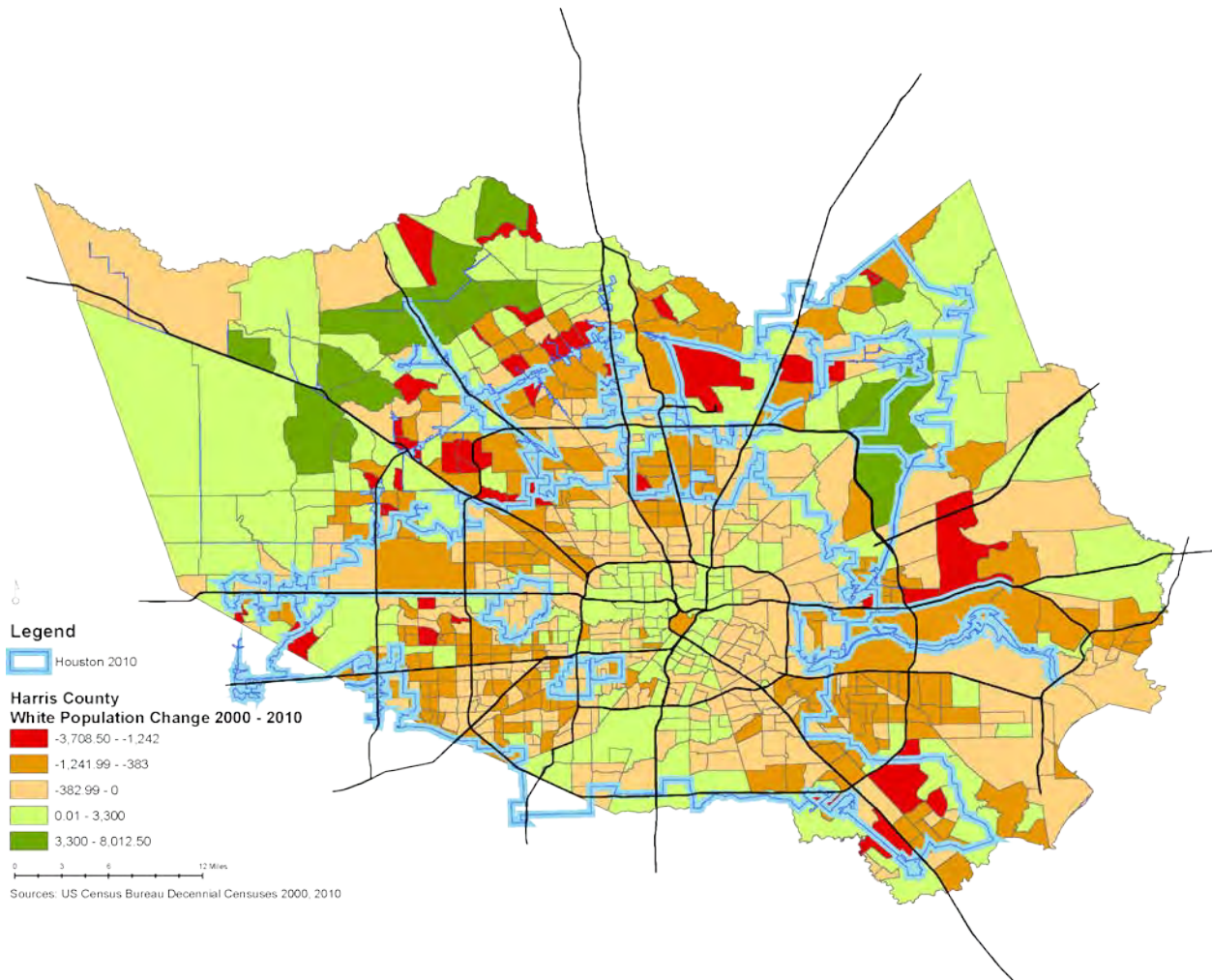


Figure 9: White population change 2000 – 2010

- The City of Houston lost 63,950 persons from the White population between 2000 and 2010.
- The map above shows that the population loses were greater in the central city and the outer edges of the city. Population increase were recorded in the central loop.