

# 1

# Demographics

## VISION

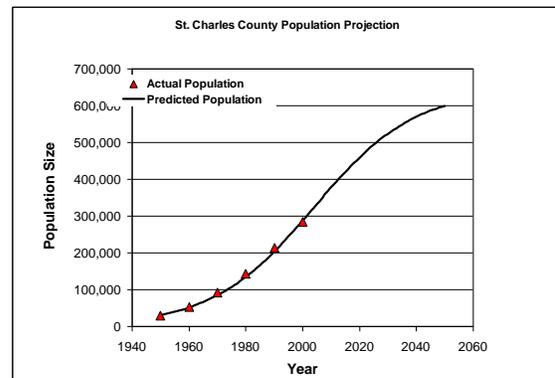
*Our population is diverse and growth is managed in a coordinated and sustainable manner.*

## SUMMARY

St. Charles County is located in the St. Louis Metropolitan Statistical Area, adjacent to the inner ring of the metropolitan area that consists of the city of St. Louis and St. Louis County, the two jurisdictions that contain approximately half the population of the metropolitan area. While St. Louis County continues to develop, only a limited number of undeveloped areas remain in the western and southwestern areas of the county, placing St. Charles County in the path of the western expansion. Due to these facts and others, St. Charles County has been the fastest growing county in the metropolitan area for three decades and will remain at a substantial pace for the foreseeable future.

Chart 1-1

Today, St. Charles County is the fourth largest county in the state of Missouri with a population of 343,952 in 2007 as projected by the Bureau of the Census. It underwent a rapid population increase between 1950 and 2000, approximately 853 percent. The estimate between the years 2000 and 2007 would present a rate of growth of 21.1 percent.



During this same time period the population of the state of Missouri increased by 5.06 percent, and the population of the United States rose by 7.9 percent, making St. Charles County one of the larger numerical population increases in the nation.

This increase in population and residential development was fueled by an abundance of relatively inexpensive acreage, an expanding utility system, the availability of relatively inexpensive gasoline and a good transportation network. The result of the continuing in-migration of population to St. Charles County will have a direct correlation to land use planning for the county. This is especially true regarding the allocation of areas to accommodate future residential development. At first, the incoming population occurred along the Interstate 70 corridor, then also along State Route 94 corridor in leap-frog patterns. The most noticeable population growth was within the Golden Triangle Area (the area bounded by I-70, Highways 40/61 and the Missouri River) with the most substantial increases occurring south of Highway 94 and south of Highway N. A substantial



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Chart 1-2

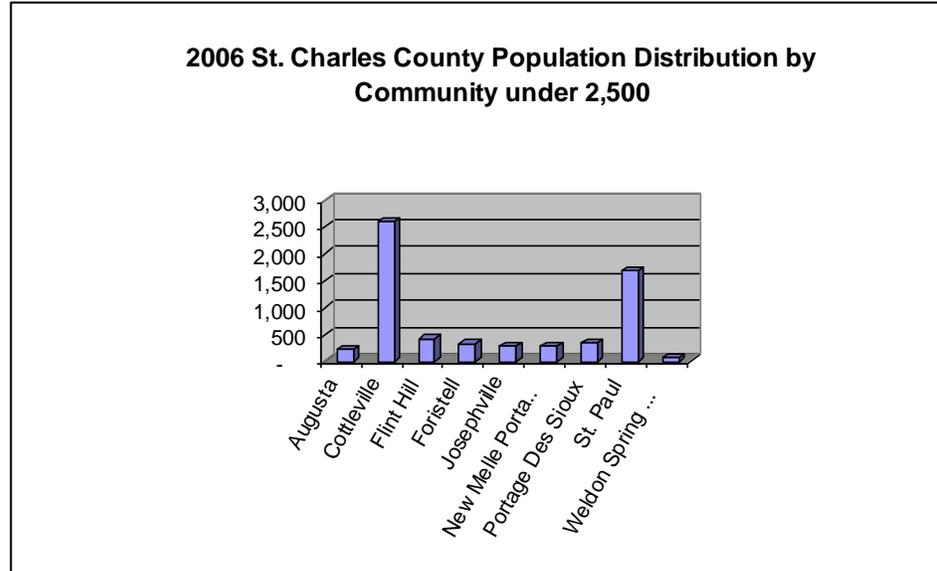
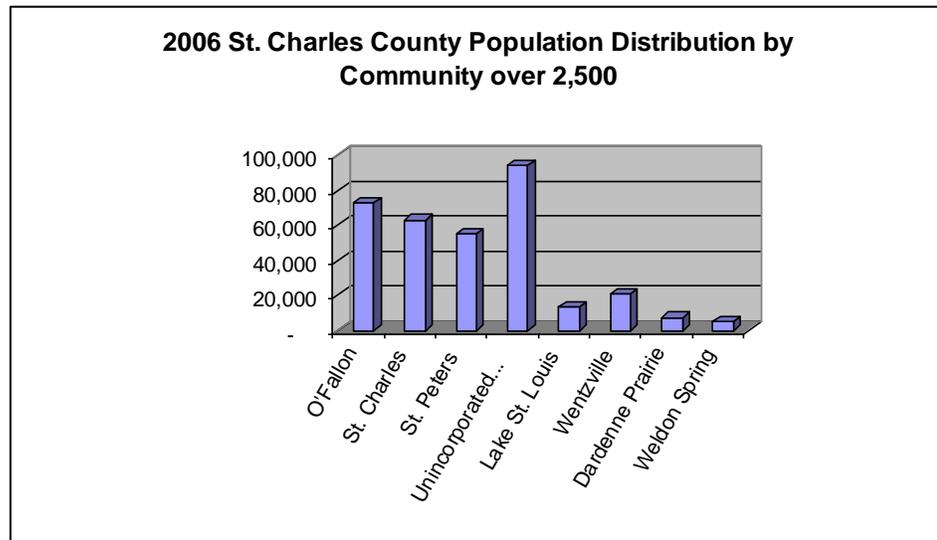


Chart 1-3



increase was also registered on either side of Highway K, and north of Highway N.

Sizeable population increases were also recorded within various census tracts south of Interstate 70 between the cities of St. Charles and Lake Saint Louis. Despite the population increase throughout the county, the northeastern section of the county primarily between the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers saw a decrease in population.



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Almost all of this decrease can be attributed to the 1993 flood which destroyed hundreds of homes, and culminated in the buyout of over 700 homes by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Charts 1-2 and 1-3 show the population distribution throughout the county based on the 2006 population estimate.

The population of St. Charles County is relatively young, with an estimated median age of 35.3 years in 2006, compared to 37.2 years in the State of Missouri, and 36.4 for the United States. The population 65 years of age and over is relatively low, accounting for approximately 9.8 percent, compared to 13.3 percent in the State of Missouri, and 12.4 percent in the United States. Due to the fact that the median age of residents has stayed relatively young through the succeeding decades, the number of resident live births has consistently far exceeded the number of resident deaths; thus sizeable population gains through natural increases will surely continue into the future and will have a direct relationship to the planning for future governmental services, such as schools, parks and recreation facilities. At the other end of the age spectrum, a substantial number of baby boomers will enter into retirement over the next fifteen years. This could impact decisions on housing size, the development of more retirement based housing and neighborhoods, and the expansion of services geared toward this age group.

As shown in Chart 1-1 page 1.1, the population projection for the county is projected to continually grow, reaching a population of approximately 457,446 by the year 2020. Chart 1-4 depicts the population growth in the county by area between 2010 and 2020 which is expected to be approximately 128,000. The population is distributed east and west of the line depicted by Highway 40/61, I-70 and Highway 79. These projections indicate that the county could surpass the 500,000 population mark between 2025 and 2030. The 128,000 additional residents will occupy new homes and utilize services distributed east and west of the line of Highway 40/61, I-70 and Highway 79. The available land in this area that could be developed over the next 15 years is expected to produce 12,735 housing units for a population increase of 33,875 in the eastern area, and 35,325 housing units for a population increase of 93,965 in the western area.

Because St. Charles County is located in the path of western expansion, it has for fifty years and will continue to benefit from rapid growth insuring a strong and viable future for the county. As the rapid population increase will necessitate additional homes and amenities, it is important that planning for future governmental services be tailored towards the needs of incoming residents as well as ensuring that sensible development and sustainable growth decisions are made.

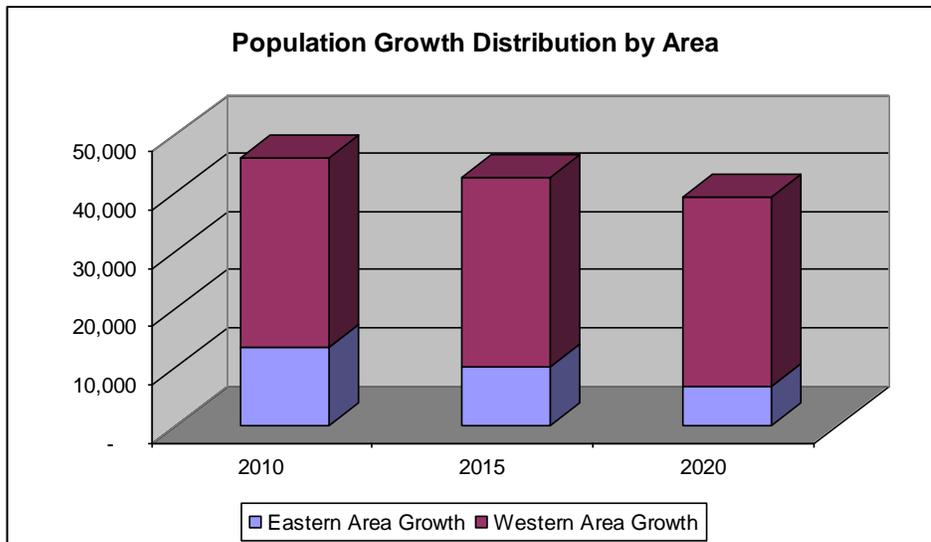


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## SUMMARY

Chart 1-4



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## ISSUES

- Additional growth will create new and expanded service needs.
- Seventy four percent of the population growth is expected to occur in the western area of the county and services will need to be provided to these areas.
- As the number of school age children increases or slows down in parts of the county, school districts will need to adjust and plan accordingly for these changes.
- A young median age will have a direct relationship on planning future governmental services such as schools, parks and recreational facilities.
- An increase in the number of people in older age groups will result in different housing and service needs.

## GOALS & STRATEGIES

**GOAL** Population growth is directed and coordinated to areas that have the essential infrastructure and public services available.

### STRATEGIES

- Land uses should be compact and located where essential infrastructure and services can be provided.
- All jurisdictions collaborate on planning for and providing essential infrastructure and utilities as the growth continues.
- Create a unified plan to provide essential services to match the demographics of the region.

**GOAL** Population growth and demographic forecasts are continually evaluated and updated to assure that an adequate level of service is maintained for the county's diverse population.

### STRATEGIES

- Utilize population projections and forecasts to ensure that necessary services can be planned for and made available.

