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DEMOGRAPHICS

MOVING PEOPLE
CONNECTING PLACES



Forecasting population and employment growth for the region helps transportation planners understand what the potential impact of that growth will be on the regional transportation network. By getting a sense of future travel demand, planners can help policy makers make decisions about which projects may be needed to meet future demand. This chapter outlines the process used to develop demographic projections for this update of the MPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan, including basic assumptions.

Accomplishments Over the Past Five Years

Since the last MTP update, several partner agencies have been working to enact policies and initiatives that support the growth scenario adopted under Mobility 2040. The City of San Antonio embarked on a long range planning effort based on this scenario to develop SA Tomorrow, a three-pronged planning effort to guide the city toward smart, sustainable growth. SA Tomorrow was adopted on August 11, 2016, and consists of a Comprehensive Plan, Sustainability Plan, and a Multimodal Transportation Plan. Similarly, VIA Metropolitan Transit also developed their long-range plan using the growth scenario adopted in Mobility 2040. Their plan was adopted by the VIA Board on August 23, 2016. The City of New Braunfels is on track

to adopt Envision New Braunfels which is a city-wide effort to develop a vision and roadway for New Braunfels through 2030.

Background

The basis of any effective planning effort rests primarily on a determination of the area's demographics (population, household size, employment, household income, and land use) and future projections of these demographics.

The process for forecasting future growth in population and employment is not an exact science. What is needed for the transportation planning process is a "comfort level" with the demographic control totals used to predict future travel. The tendency is to be more comfortable with the recent trends. If the economy is doing well and jobs and housing are expanding, the tendency is to select an optimistic forecast. The tendency to select a conservative forecast usually occurs if the current or most recent trend is decreasing or if a flat economy exists. Upturns and downturns in the economy occur in cycles that, over a 20 or 30-year time span, tend to counteract each other.

If a conservative approach is taken and selected control totals are too low then the risk is to be behind in planning for needed infrastructure. If the control totals are too optimistic, this could result in a false or premature justification for roadway and/or transit infrastructure improvements.

Given 1) the amount of time and resources expended to develop the growth scenario adopted by the Transportation Policy Board under Mobility 2040, 2) the extent of other planning efforts conducted using this data, 3) the knowledge that forecasting future growth in population and employment is not an exact science, and 4) the MPO expected to be designated nonattainment for ozone in October 2017 and there was a need to expedite the planning process, the MPO opted to interpolate and extrapolate future milestone years from the adopted growth scenario and check for reasonableness rather instead of going through another scenario planning process.

Mobility 2040 used 2010 as the base year to include 2010 census data and workforce development data. The source of future year population control totals at the county level was the Texas State Data Center. The scenario was based on a five-year population trend that indicated a greater amount of infill development and growth in the Center City. Employment projections were calculated using a locally developed formula that more realistically linked population with employment data for both the urban, suburban and rural counties. Population and employment projections were made at ten year intervals: 2020, 2030 and 2040.

For Mobility 2045, population and employment data was interpolated from the previously adopted data points. The 2015 demographics were interpolated from the 2010 and 2020 data.

Similarly, the 2025 demographics were interpolated from the 2020 and 2030 data. The 2045 demographics were extrapolated beyond the 2040 data. These demographics were checked for their reasonableness given the extreme growth of the region.

Table 1 - Population Control Totals by County

Population	2015	2045	Growth	% Change
Bexar County	1,898,173	3,004,011	1,105,838	58%
Comal County	134,019	287,655	153,636	115%
Guadalupe County	165,183	365,048	199,865	121%
Kendall County	38,314	67,539	29,225	76%
Total Region	2,235,689	3,724,253	1,488,564	67%

Table 2 - Employment Control Totals by County

Employment	2015	2045	Growth	% Change
Bexar County	893,782	1,571,410	677,628	76%
Comal County	52,683	119,352	66,669	127%
Guadalupe County	41,862	102,824	60,962	146%
Kendall County	13,707	24,728	11,021	80%
Total Region	1,002,034	1,818,314	816,280	81%

Figure 1 Figure 2 show the 2045 population and employment density while Figure 3 through Figure 6 show the 2015 population, 2045 population, 2015 employment and 2045 employment distribution used for this update of the Plan.

Figure 1 – 2045 Population Density Map

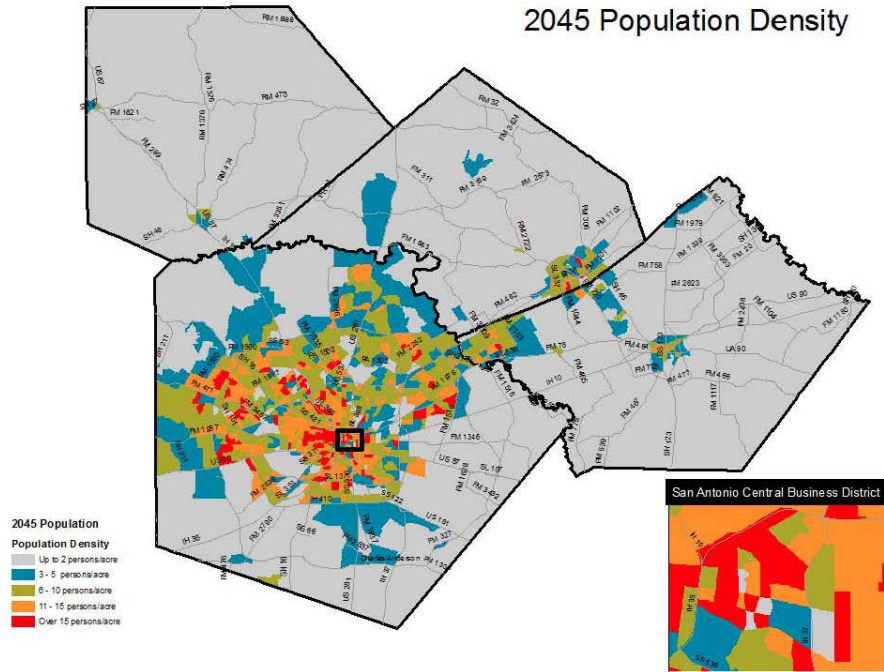


Figure 2 – 2045 Employment Density Map

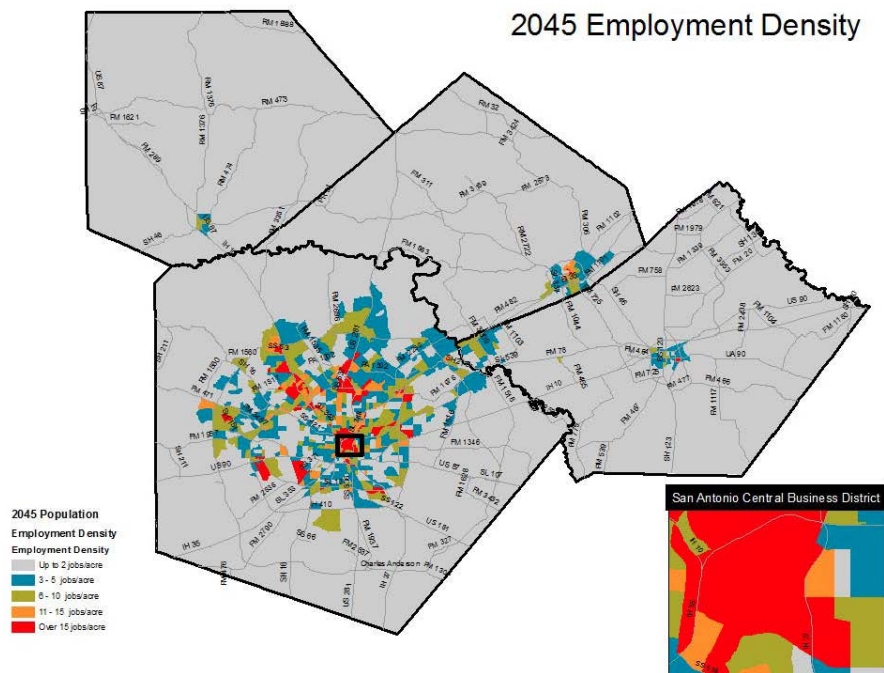


Figure 3 – 2015 Population Dot Map

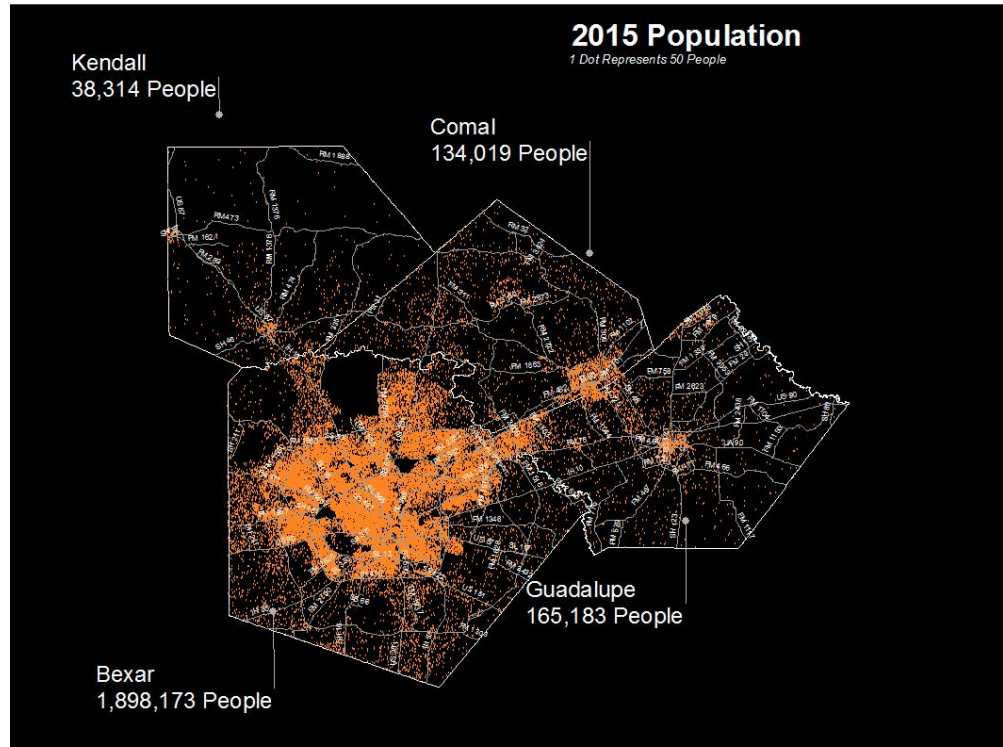


Figure 4 – 2045 Population Forecast Dot Map

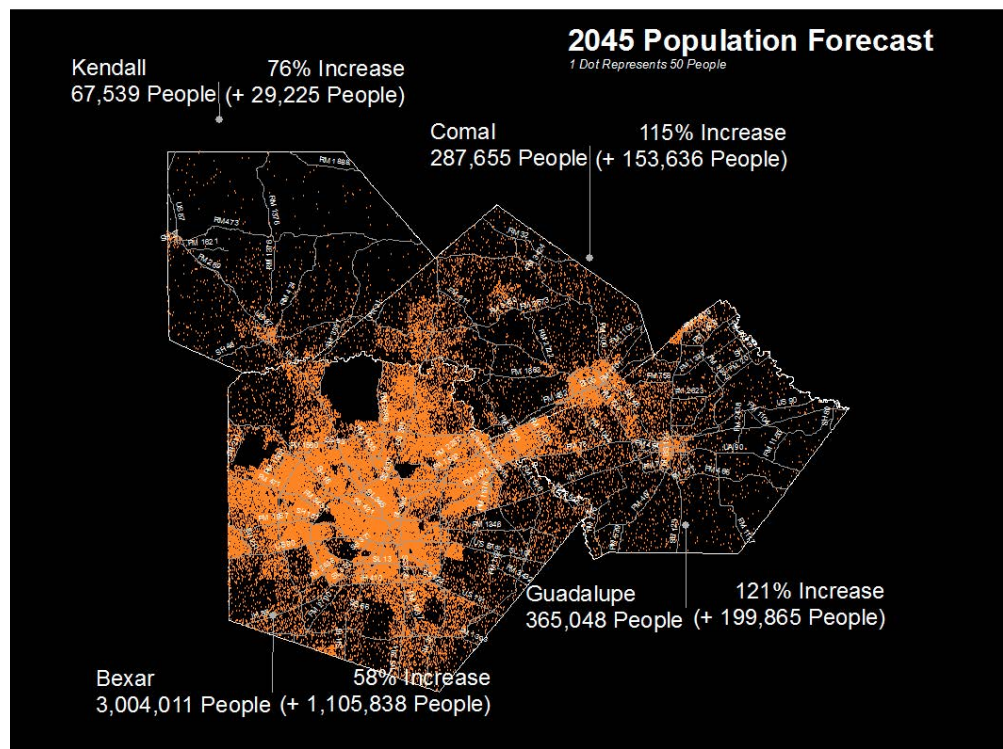


Figure 5 – 2015 Employment Dot Map

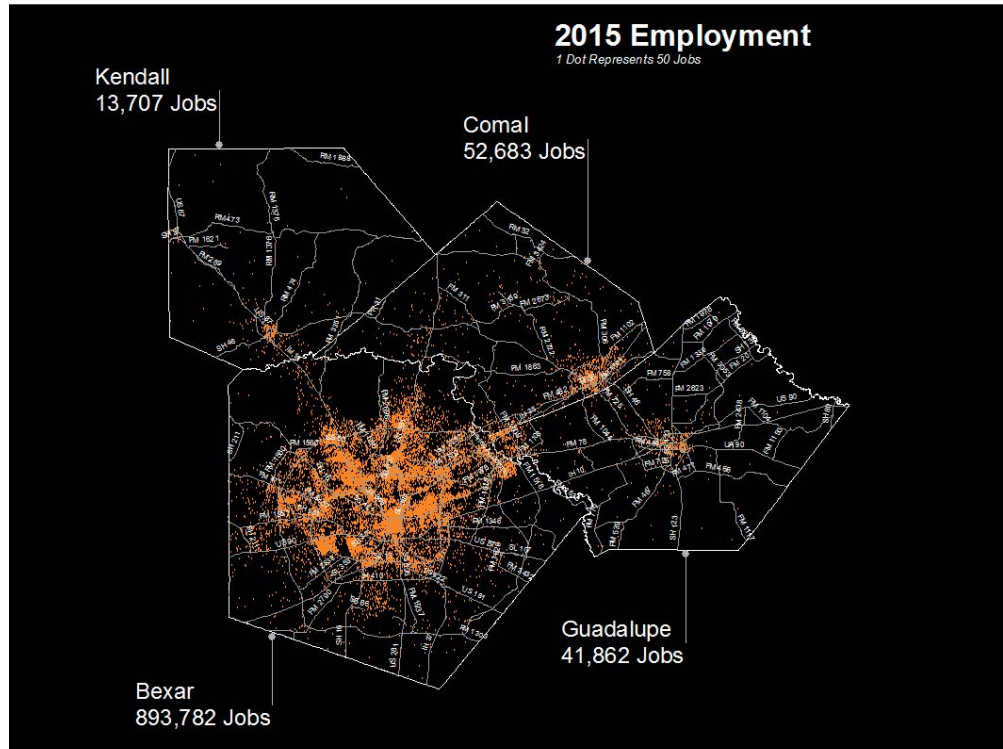


Figure 6 – 2045 Employment Forecast Dot Map

