

# CITY OF PORT ISABEL

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### PLANNING PERIOD 2005-2015

APRIL, 2005

#### A. 3. POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The Office of Rural Community Affairs in conjunction with the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development furnished financial support to the Activity described in this publication which does not necessarily indicate the concurrence of the Office of Rural Community Affairs or of the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development with the statements or conclusions contained in this publication

The data, information, analysis, and recommendations presented herein are exclusively for planning and budgeting purposes and do not constitute engineering analysis or detailed cost estimates. Engineering for each of the recommended tasks are beyond the scope of these studies and should be performed in the customary fashion as projects are defined and implemented.

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### **A.3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In planning for its future, the single most important element a City must consider is population growth. It is both a target for maintenance of a community's livelihood and the basis from which a City must plan the expansion of its resources. Population growth can occur organically, that is, from within a City must plan the expansion of its resources. Population growth can occur organically, that is, from within a City's existing boundaries, and through external sources, such as annexations. Both of these sources are impacted by the availability of infrastructure, housing and other community assists described in this Plan. Therefore, population growth is not a simple function but instead one that is impacted by many factors and is difficult to model. Due to this complexity, a common modeling method is to base population growth and demographic projections on historical records. The leading authority on population growth and decline is the U.S. Census Bureau. The population statistics and projections presented in this Plan are therefore based on U.S. Census Bureau data for population trends through 2000.<sup>1</sup> The infrastructure capacity projections and facility planning are sensitive to timing and distribution patterns. Applied in context to the subject of this Plan, this data will be the basis for the development of processes to provide the necessary housing, public facilities, and infrastructure for servicing the community and improving the quality-of-life. Along with the population projections, Map A.3 depicts the conditions used as the basis for the Plan.

### **A.3.2. CENSUS DATA BASIS**

The Census data used in this report was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau publications from 1990 and 2000.<sup>2</sup> When a census is recorded for a city, the Census Bureau breaks down the city into blocks that work to increase the validity of the related demographics. These blocks are generally divided by subdivisions or other existing

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder; Port Isabel, Texas, General Population and Housing Characteristics: 1990 and 2000.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder; Port Isabel, Texas, Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000.

partitions in the land. Since the year 2000, the City has annexed several large unpopulated areas which did not have any significant change in population.

The primary data used to analyze the population trends and forecast growth were General Population and Persons Per Household for the adjusted areas. The census data shows that for the ten year period between 1990 and 2000, the total population of the City grew from 4,467 to 4,865, or by 398 persons. This is an average annual growth of 3.98 persons per year. This amounts to less than 1% or approximately a .85% annual growth increase. The following Table A.3.1 shows the existing populations for prior ten year periods from 1950 to 2000.

<b>TABLE A-3-1 Existing Population per 10 year periods.<sup>3</sup></b>		
<i>Year</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>% of Change</i>
1950	2,372	n/a
1960	3,575	+50.7
1970	3,076	-14.0
1980	3,769	+22.5
1990	4,467	+18.5
2000	4,865	+8.9

As noted in Table A.3.1, population variations have been quite inconsistent over the past fifty years. Most Valley Cities have produced a sustained increase from small to very large. Port Isabel's population, which has doubled in the last fifty years, has increased at a much smaller percentage rate than the rest of the surrounding area, which average approximately a 2.5% population annual increase.<sup>4</sup> Cameron County's annualized growth rate over the last decade was 2.6%.<sup>4</sup>

For comparative purposes the census data with regard to growth rate for Cameron County was also analyzed and compared to the City of Port Isabel's. The annual growth rate for both Port Isabel and Cameron County can best be compared using Table A.3.2, which summarizes the results.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau

<sup>4</sup> ORCA Comprehensive Plans for Primera, Rio Hondo, Los Indios and Lyford.

**TABLE A-3-2**  
**Existing Population per 10 year periods.<sup>5</sup>**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Port Isabel Population</i>	<i>Cameron County Population</i>
1990	4,467	260,120
2000	4,865	335,227
Gain	398	75,107
Total Growth	8.9%	28.8%
Avg. Annual Growth Rate	.85%	2.6%

### **A.3.3. POPULATION ESTIMATES**

A method of compounded growth was used for estimating the population trends through the year 2020. The growth rate is the percent change in population each year. As detailed in the previous section, Port Isabel’s past 10-year growth rate yielded a .85% growth rate.

As shown on Table A.3.2, the City’s growth rate is significantly lower than that of the rest of Cameron County. Two highly probable reasons are 1) most of the vacant undeveloped land surrounding Port Isabel is owned by one or two families or entities and 2) a severe lack of annexations. The City has just recently taken steps to address the issue of land annexations. With this new political approach setting the mood for future development in the City, and with the anticipated development of a new bay bridge, it can be concluded that a substantial growth rate will take place in the near future. Accepting this as a hypothesis, this Plan will conclude that the average growth rate for Cameron County for the past decade should set the trend for what should be expected for Port Isabel. However, realizing that population trends take time to adjust, for the proposes of this Study the average rate has been reduced in half for the five ten years of projections and increased to the full 2.6% County annual growth rate for the remainder of the estimated period. Refer to Table A.3.2. Using Census generated averages versus the accepted conclusion mentioned above, the population for the City of Port Isabel in the year 2015 will be approximately 5,524 compared to an estimate of 6,612, respectively.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census Bureau

<b>TABLE A-3-3 Population Projections for Port Isabel</b>		
<i>Year</i>	<i>Census Based Population</i>	<i>Planning Study Projections</i>
2000	4,865	4,865
2005	5,075	5,319
2010	5,295	5,815
2015	5,524	6,612
2020	5,762	7,517

**A.3.4. DEMOGRAPHICS**

Census data utilized for this study includes race data obtained from the General Demographic Characteristics section of the Census Reports. Although many factors are presented in the census reports, this analysis is limited to those that could reasonably have an impact on the Master Plan and/or assist in projecting the need for various services. The demographics of race, age and household makeup are deemed the most influential in the planning process.

**A.3.4.1. Race Demographic Data**

An analysis of changes in race characteristics over the 10-year base period is of limited benefit due to the lack of detail provided from previous censuses. However, it can be concluded that the percentage of persons who identified themselves as Hispanic has slightly declined from 87.7% to 74.4%, while the percentage of those persons who identified themselves as White increased from 75.0% to 96.9. Blacks amounted to about 1%, Asians equaled about .2%, American Indians and Alaska Natives equaled .3% and those persons who identified themselves as ‘some other race’ equaled 15.5%. Table A.3.4. summarizes the race characteristics of the City.

**TABLE A-3-4  
Race Characteristics for Port Isabel**

DEMOGRAPHIC	1990 <sup>6</sup>		2000 <sup>2</sup>	
	Population	%	Population	%
Hispanic	3,919	87.7	3,619	74.4
White	3,352	75.0	3,876	96.9
Black	48	1.0	50	1.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	6	.10	18	.03
Am. Indian/Alaskan Native	6	.10	16	.03
Female Heads of Household	209	4.7	274	16.6
Population Total	4467	n/a	4,865	n/a

### **A.3.5. FINDINGS**

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The population projections presented considers the following assumptions:

- 1) The national economy will generally continue at its current pace with no major depression or significant negative change in nature.
- 2) The local economy will generally continue at its current pace and remain stable with no significant changes due to major economic development nor any significant shifts in agricultural production.

Further, the following assumptions specific to the City were also made:

- 1) The City will continue to enjoy a symbiotic relationship with its neighboring cities and reach mutually beneficial agreements on water supply and wastewater treatment or other resources needed.
- 2) The City's commercial and industrial base will increase only slightly over the planning period and continue to a large extent depend on commercial on industrial sources in adjacent areas for services and jobs.
- 3) The City will continue to have a population growth resulting from its proximity to South Padre Island and Mexico.

The general population trend for the City during the decade of 1990 through 2000 showed a much lower growth than that of Cameron County for the same period. The Census growth rate for the County was 28.8% as opposed to the decade growth rate of

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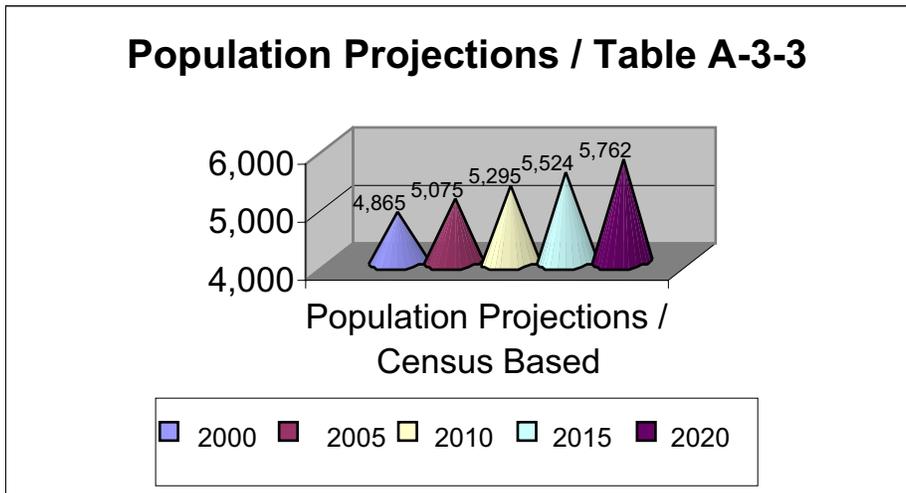
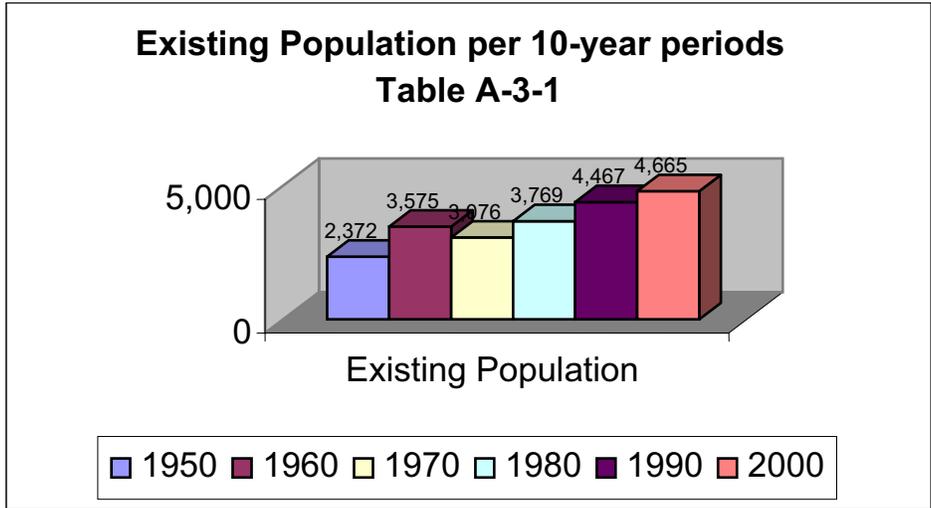
<sup>6</sup> Port Isabel Comprehensive Plan, 1994

8.95% for Port Isabel. Stated in annual amounts, Cameron County had an average annual growth rate of 2.6% and the City of Port Isabel experienced a annual growth rate of .85%.

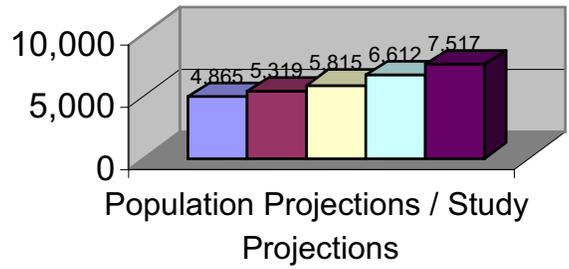
The current population is projected and estimated to be 5,075 using Census based data or 5,319 using conventional planning principals. The Census based 2010 and 2020 population to be projects and estimates the population at 5,295 and 5,762, respectively. The 10-year annual growth rate as published by the Census is .85%. Subsequent chapters in the Plan will address municipal services to be provided for the anticipated growth.

**Map A.3** illustrates the existing and future population distributions. The existing population is most dense around the old town site with an additional high population concentration in the ‘Derry’ area and in the ‘projects’ area. The growth is projected to be in areas with existing subdivisions that are planned or recently annexed and in areas expected to develop during the planning period, primarily in the western parts of town. The location and number of future residences are subject to personal preference and the projected growth areas are estimates based on current growth patterns and planned developments. Adjustments to the population distribution may be necessary to account for shifts due to new annexations and personal preferences as the planning period progresses.

The following are graphic illustrations of Table A-3-1, Table A-3-3 and Table A-3-4.



### Population Projections / Table A-3-3



### Race Characteristics / Table A-3-4

