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“The purpose of gathering, organizing, and analyzing information for the management of planning is to provide data that will help achieve objectives.”

- Management of Local Planning

The Studies



Population

2008
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
ANNUAL REVIEW - FINAL

CHAPTER 2 - POPULATION

BY THE ST. MARYS PLANNING COMMISSION

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Population

INTRODUCTION

Understanding population is essential in planning for the future of St. Marys. Analyses of population trends and characteristics for St. Marys, Pottawatomie County, and the State of Kansas provides City Commissioners and residents with information to assist them during the decision-making process. The study of population is especially important when determining the need for changes in infrastructure and land uses necessary to meet the needs of current and future residents. Therefore, this chapter provides the foundation for the consideration of changes in population and their affect upon St. Marys in this Comprehensive Plan Update.

The St. Marys planning area consists of the city and its extra-territorial zone, which is the unincorporated area around the city as defined in Ordinance No's. 880 and 1014 from 1987 and 1993.

The study of population and its characteristics begins by examining historic trends and growth rates of the community and its planning area (the city and its extra-territorial zone) to provide insight into what has occurred in St. Marys during the past century. A better understanding can be acquired by comparing St. Marys' historic trends with those of the county and the state. Further, other communities in close proximity or in similar strategic locations are used for comparative studies. The cities include Rossville, Wamego, Solomon, Elkhart City, and Medicine Lodge.

Another element includes a discussion of the population characteristics. This includes identification of the median age, age composition, and other general characteristics.

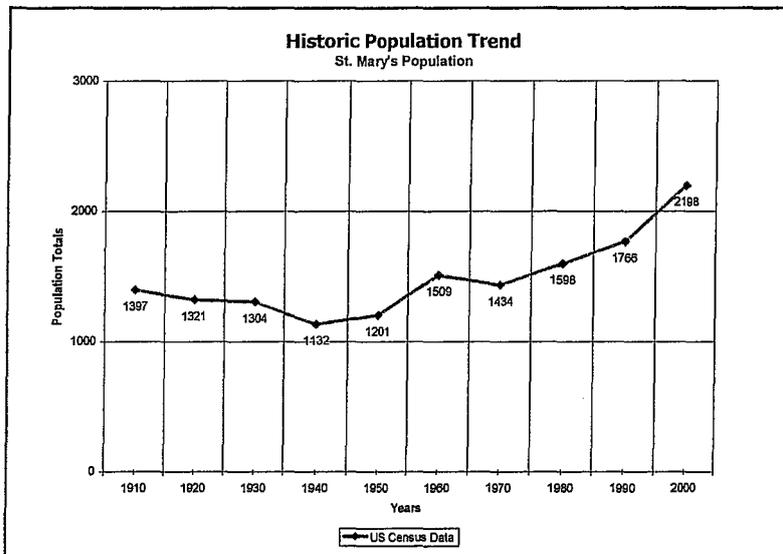
The final element is an examination of the city's population trend as well as population projections. The chapter concludes with recommendations for city improvements to meet the needs of St. Marys' current and future residents.

Historic Population Trends

Population trends during the past 90 years have fluctuated between extreme gains and minor losses. Overall, the population increases by 801 residents between 1910 and 2000, as shown in Chart 2-1. From 1910 to 1940, the population declines by 265 residents, with the greatest loss occurring during the Great Depression of the 1930s. However, St. Marys experienced an increase in population during the next 20 years, as the 1960 census indicates 377 more residents than in 1940. There was a small decline in population from 1960 to 1970, but since 1970 the population increases by 764 residents to its Year 2000 total of 2198.

The Population of St. Marys in the year 2000 accounts for 12% of the total population of Pottawatomie County, KS.

Chart 2-1 Historic Population Trend



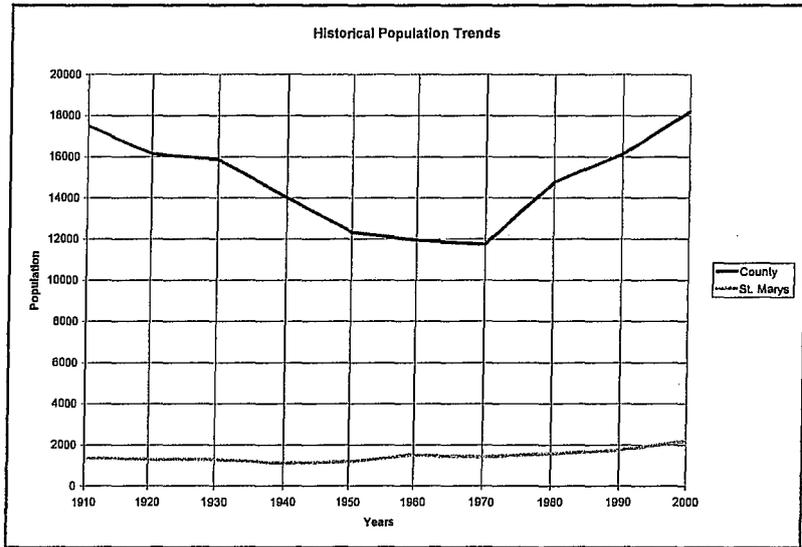
Source: US Census Data

Macro Historical Comparisons

The fluctuations in St. Marys' trends are not typical of trends in the surrounding areas, as shown in Chart 2-2. St. Marys population, between 1910 and 1960 increases overall by 7% while during the same period Pottawatomie County's population decreases by 47%. However, from 1960 to 2000 St. Marys population only increased by 31% while the County Population increased by 34%. Most noted in this analysis is a macro comparison of the County and St. Marys Population from 1910 to 2000. Overall, the County has only grown by 4% while St. Marys has grown 36%.

Previous Comprehensive Plans for St. Marys have attributed the decline in population in the County to trends associated with declining farms and rural areas. However, no explanation has been attributed as to how St. Marys has not only maintained its population but has grown at an astounding rate over the last 90 years.

Chart 2-2 Macro Historical Comparison

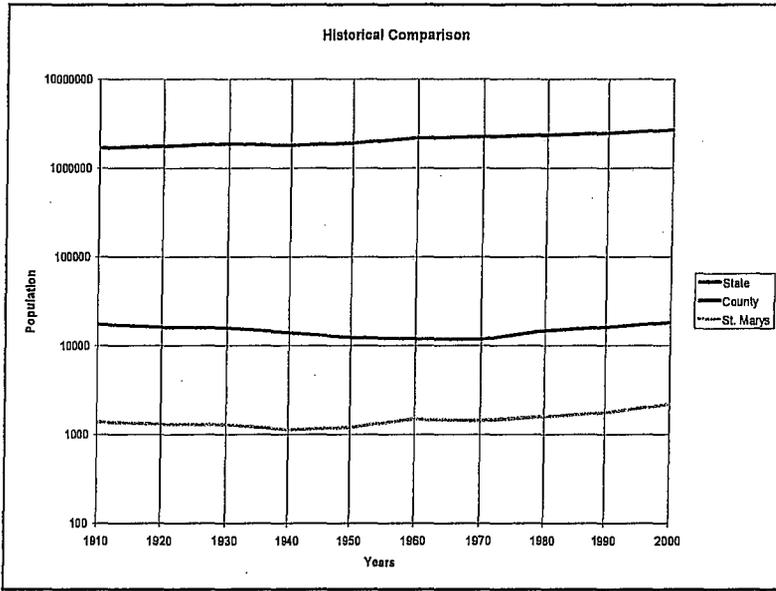


Source: US Census Data

St. Marys was ranked the 112th largest City in Kansas in 2000.

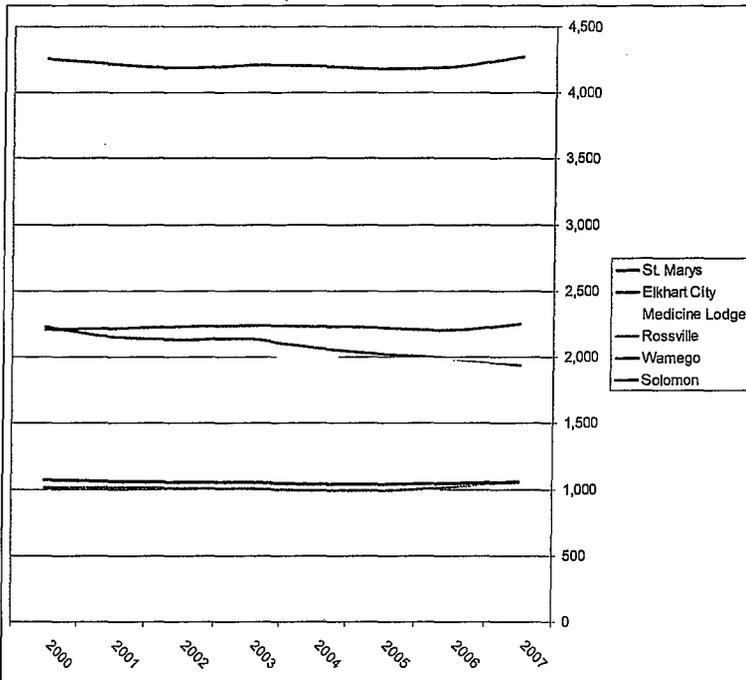
As of the 2000 Census data, Kansas has a total population of 2,688,418 people. In Chart 2—3 below, we compare the population of St. Marys, Pottawatomie County and the State. Using the same time periods from Chart 2-2, from 1910 to 1960, the State population grew 22% and from 1960 to 2000, its growth slowed to 19%. Overall, for the last 90 years, the State has grown 37%. Statistically, St. Marys has grown at the same rate as the State to date.

Chart 2-3 Macro Historical Comparison



Source: US Census Data

Chart 2-4 Micro Historical Comparisons



Source: US Census Data Estimates 2007

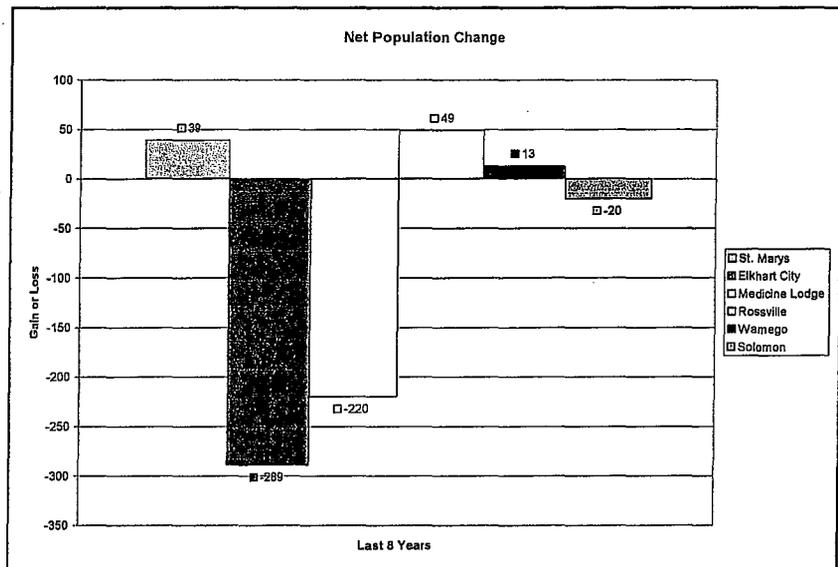
In the 1997 Comprehensive Plan review, population data has been compared to Wamego and Rossville, communities along the Highway 24 corridor. However the demographics, economics, composition, characteristics, and nature of those communities do not allow for direct comparisons to St. Marys. For example, Wamego is over twice the size of St. Marys and Rossville is half the size of St. Marys. For historical reference they are included in the following chart, Chart 2 - 5. A more

accurate picture of the population change in St. Marys can be achieved by comparison to cities that have a similar characteristic; population. The following cities have been added: Medicine Lodge and Elkhart City.

According to the 2000 US Census Data for Kansas by place (Ranked by Population) St. Mary's is ranked 112th in the State with Elkhart City ranked at 111th and Medicine Lodge ranked at 113th. *In the 1997 Comprehensive Plan review, Solomon City is used as a comparison in Chapter 3: Economics in the analysis of the median household income for St. Marys. For continuity, Solomon City is being added to the Population comparison. Solomon City is ranked 193rd.*

Chart 2-4 demonstrates that over the past 8 years, St. Marys has maintained its population and grown by 1.7% whereas cities of similar size from 8 years ago have lost up to 15% of their population. In the Highway 24 corridor, Rossville is estimated to grow by 4.6% and Wamego by less than 1%, while Solomon is expected to lose almost 2% of its population.

Chart 2-5 Net Population Change



Source: US Census GCT-71 Population Estimates
Data Set: 2007 Listed Alphabetically: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2007

Supposition: Comparing St. Marys to cities of related population densities and land area, Elkhart City and Medicine Lodge, St. Marys unmistakably maintains and increases its population.

In geographic comparison along the Highway 24 corridor, Rossville, with 2 1/4 times the lesser land area, edges St. Marys out in overall anticipated growth, whereas Wamego, a city with a population two times the size of St. Marys and 50 % larger land area barely gains less than 1%.

St. Marys sits half way between Manhattan and Topeka in the Highway 24 corridor. It stands to reason that any gains from outgrowth of those two larger cities will impinge on the closest cities to their respective borders first. Ultimately, St. Marys would be the last to see any gains in population from a geographic factor due to the Highway 24 corridor. If Rossville and to a lesser extent Wamego are now presenting signs of population density gains, St. Marys may have a slight increase in the coming years as well due to this geographic component.

In contrast, when St. Marys is compared to cities of analogous population and land area, (US Census: GCT-PH1-R) St. Marys shows significant strength in its capacity to sustain and develop over the years while the comparatives are hemorrhaging.

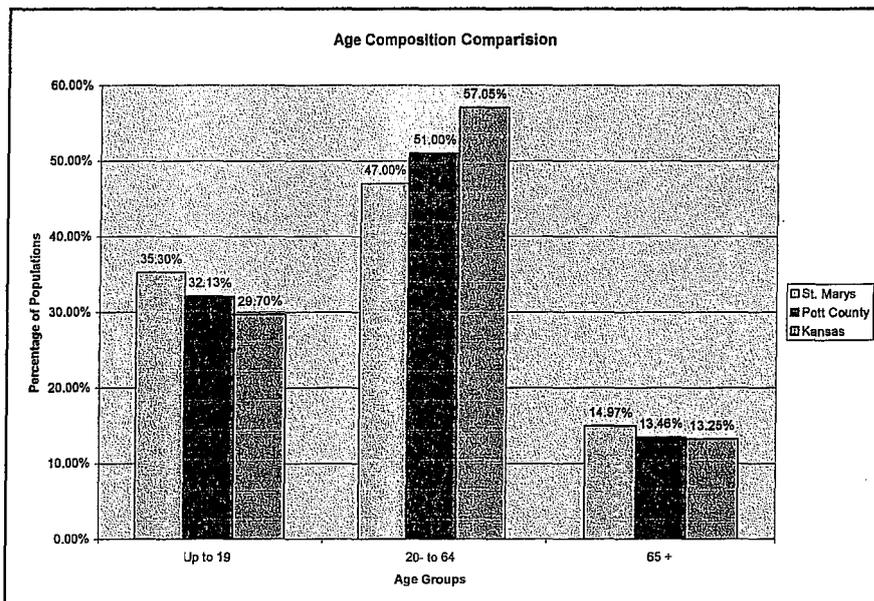
Conclusion: St. Marys has a consistent steady performance record with regard to maintaining and increasing its overall population without including its geographic location. St. Marys may see an additional increase in population density in the near future based solely upon geographic location.

Age Composition

The composition of ages of a given population is critical to the overall analysis of growth, decline, or stagnation along with the general sense of survivability of a town. A method of studying the age of the population used in the 1997 Comprehensive Plan review was an analysis of the percentages of the active population (ages 20-64), youth population (19 and younger), and elderly population (65 and older). The assumption is that the active population usually plays a larger role, socially and economically, in support of both the youth and elderly populations. It is important to understand the extent to which the population is being supported by the active group.

Chart 2-6 shows the percentages of persons in the youth, active and elderly age groups for Pottawatomie County, St. Marys, and the State. In 2000, 32 percent of the citizens of Pottawatomie County were under the age of 19 compared to 29.7 percent for the State. Meanwhile, St. Marys expands with over 35 percent 19 and under.

Chart 2-6 Age Composition Comparison



Source: US Census Data

St. Marys' figure of over 35 percent is much higher than both the county and the state. Thus, St. Marys has a large youth population, a fact that must be an important consideration when considering land use, planning, services, and infrastructure.

In regard to the elderly population, approximately 13 percent of Pottawatomie County's population was over age 65 in 2000. This figure is down 2% since 1990. The state's population also shows a similar percentage of elderly. Nearly 15 percent of St. Marys' population is 65 or above; therefore, city officials should consider this fact in formulating policies and in taking actions that would adversely impact senior citizens, or would improve the quality of life or senior citizens.

In the 20 to 64 age group, defined above as the active group that assumes a level of support for the youth and elderly groups, we see that

St. Marys lags behind the County and State by significant margins. Only 47% of the population of St. Marys is in this "active" group in dissimilarity to the County at 51% and the State at 57.05%.

Supposition:

St. Marys has the highest percentage of population of people (19 and under) in the "youth" population in comparison to the County and the State.

The "elderly" group (65 +) in St. Marys is 14.97% of the overall population. This is the largest percentage of population of the three comparisons above.

The "Active" group in St. Marys (20 to 64) supports the highest percentage of population of young people and elderly compared to the County and the State.

The "Active" group in St. Marys is a significantly smaller percentage of the overall population compared to the County and the State.

Conclusion:

Based upon the assumption above, a member of the "Active" group in St. Marys supports a greater percentage of the overall population than that of a member of the same group in the County or State.

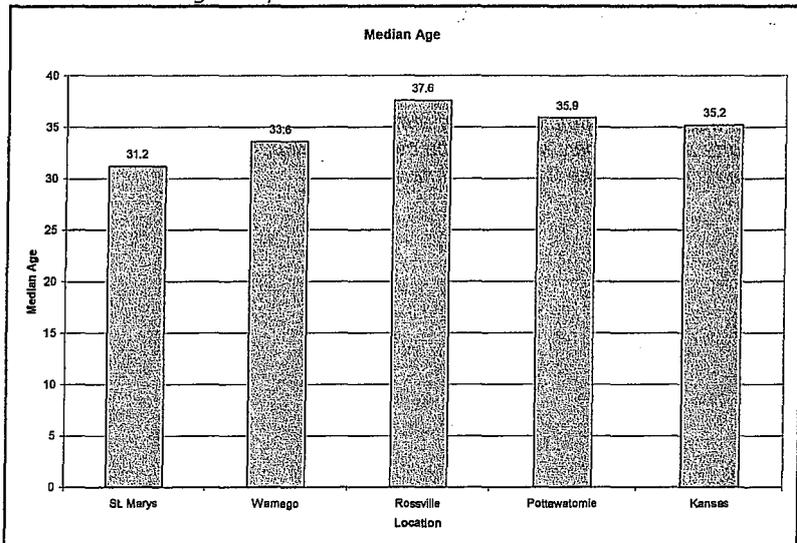
Median Age

The median age is the age at which half the population is older and half is younger. That is, the figure represents a "middle" age, not an average age.

Median age is a key indicator of the vitality of a population. It is a calculated figure that represents the "middle," not average, age of the population; that is, 1/2 of the population is older than the median age and half is younger than the median age. A historic study of median age can reveal trends in the aging characteristics of a population.

The median ages for Pottawatomie County and the State in 1990 were 32.8. The median age for St. Marys in 1990 was 33.1. This shows a slightly older age trend in St. Marys although overall a reasonably young population.

Chart 2-7 Median Age Comparison

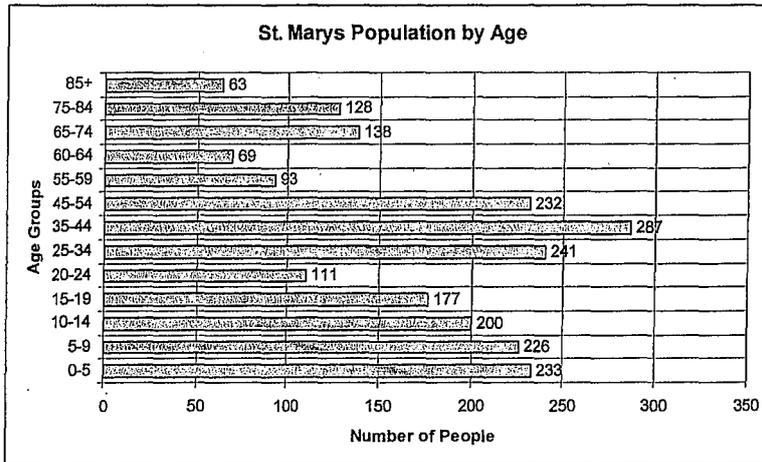


Source: US Census, General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Over the last 10 years the tide has turned in St. Marys. An evaluation of St. Marys and neighboring towns, Pottawatomie County, and the State demonstrate St. Marys to have the youngest median age of the given populations. The median age of St. Marys has declined by 1.9% while the county and State have aged by 3.1% and 2.4%

For further scrutiny, Chart 2-8 breaks down the population of St. Marys by age groups.

Chart 2-8 population by Age Comparison



Source: US Census, General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Although the data in Chart 2-8 is now 8 years old, it does give a snapshot of the composition of the city at that time. During discussion in the Planning Commission work session, it was concluded that the data is still relative to the general makeup of the current population given school enrollments numbers, voter registration information, and housing data.

Supposition: The 2000 census median age in St. Marys has dropped to 31.2 years of age from 33.1 in 1990.

Given Chart 2-8 above, the population age group supports the determination of an overall younger population in St. Marys. Additionally, over time we can see larger numbers of the population moving into the "Active" group, as previously defined. We also see a large group of children under the age of 14 in Chart 2-8. This is supported by the birth rates being higher in St. Marys, over 47% versus the County at 17% and the State 14.8%. (KDHE Statistics & local birth information)

Conclusion: The population of St. Marys is younger and has an overall higher birth rate than the County and the State. All things being equal, St. Marys can expect to continue to maintain its population and see continued overall growth from within.

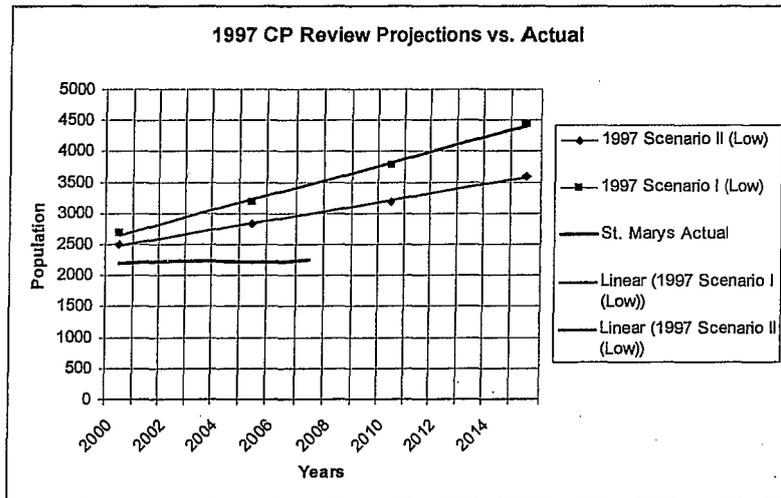
Population Projections

The 1997 Comprehensive Plan update used several mathematical regression methods to project estimated population numbers out to 2015. The graph below, using only the projected low number from both compared to US Census data for the corresponding time frames.

Chart 2-9 CP Review Projections vs. Actual

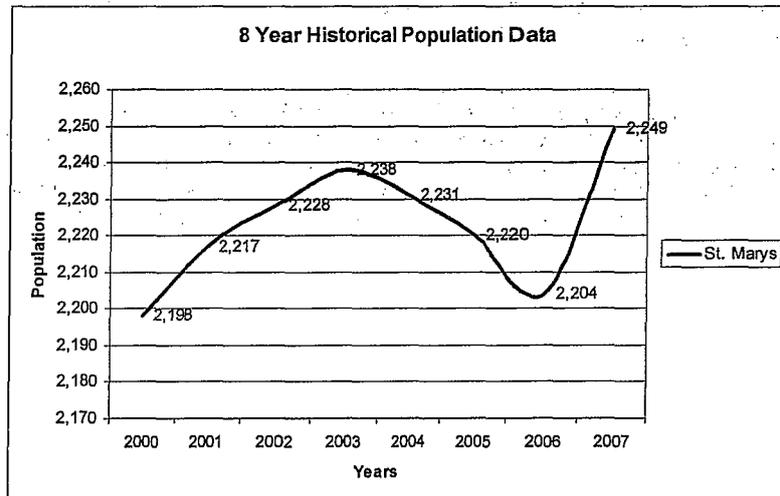
The US Census data shows that the population for St. Mary's townships increased by 58 people from 2000 to 2007.

Source: Annual Estimates of the Population for Minor Civil Divisions in Kansas



Source: US Census, St. Marys 1997 Comprehensive Plan

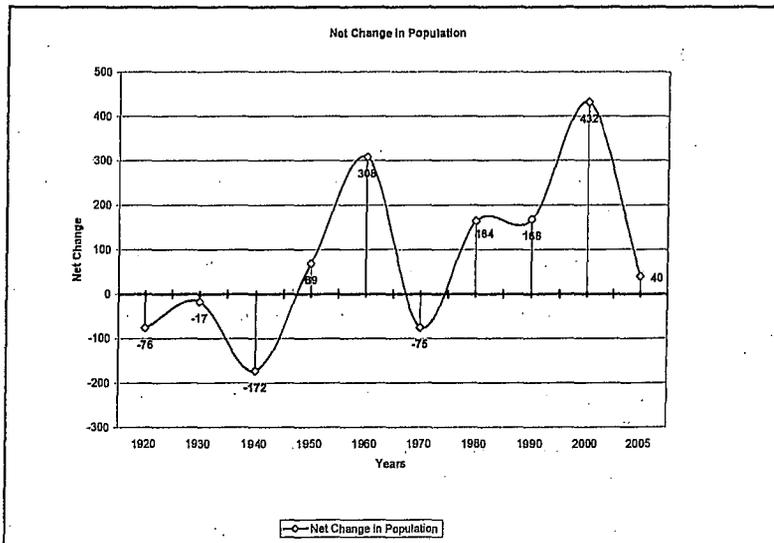
Chart 2-10 St. Marys 8 Years Historical Population



Source: US Census Population Estimates by Place.

Upon closer analysis of the trends in the last 8 years, as shown in Chart 2-10 above, the city's population shows moderate growth rate.

Historical census data from 1910 to 2000 shows an average gain of 80 people every 10 years. Since past performance is not indicative of future results, this number has to be taken in the right context.



Source: Calculated from US Census Population historical data.

Absent in any projection is knowledge of a variety of factors that exert pressure on the future population numbers i.e. macro and micro economics factors, wars, famine, and other acts of nature and alike. Therefore, consideration of actual projections should be taken as a snapshot at one point in time given the information available.

Projections of population should include a variety of factors with degrees of weight for each factor. For example, the Planning Commission considered the affects of existing land use, availability of jobs, current world energy issues, alternative energies, current development, available housing, and types of housing, economics, and city ordinances in its review of the projection of population.

Supposition: The historical averages and birth rates support the hypothesis that St. Marys is growing. While housing, land use, and energy issues indicate the inability of the general population to grow without significant change to several of those arenas. To further explain, it seems evident that population will continued to expand irrespective of the economic or social factors. The social and economic factors will come into play when those people have to make the decision as to where they will live.

If St. Marys does not have available housing, people will migrate to the country surrounding St. Marys or other towns. Additionally, the borders of St. Marys are surrounded by large tracts of land. Given the current price of corn and beef, it is not likely that they would sell in the near future.

Conclusion: St. Marys will continue to experience a moderate growth rate in the immediate future, until all available housing land has been developed. After that point, a change in the internal structure of the housing factor will require more multi-family homes.

Development and annexation of land surrounding St. Marys will have to occur in the future in order for a significant jump in population to occur. Notwithstanding this, St. Marys is reaching its capacity.

Summery Conclusions and Recommendations:

- 1) *Conclusion: St. Marys has a consistent steady performance record with regard to maintaining and increasing its overall population without considering its geographic location. St. Marys may see an additional increase in population density in the near future based solely upon geographic location.*
- 2) *Conclusion: Based upon the conclusion or information above, a member of the "Active" group in St. Marys supports a greater percentage of the overall population than that of a member of the same group in the County or State.*
- 3) *Conclusion: The population of St. Marys is younger and has an overall higher birth rate than the County and the State. All things being equal, St. Marys can expect to continue to maintain its population and see continued overall growth from within.*
- 4) *Conclusion: St. Marys will continue to experience a moderate growth rate in the immediate future, until all available housing land has been developed. After that point, a change in the internal structure of the housing factor will require more multi-family homes.*

Development and annexation of land surrounding St. Marys will have to occur in the future in order for a significant jump in population to occur. Notwithstanding this, St. Marys is reaching its capacity.

Disclaimer: The information and conclusions stated in this draft review were deemed to be accurate at the time of the review.