WHERE WE STAND

An Update from

EAST-WEST GATEWAY
Council of Governments

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POPULATION GROWTH IN ST. LOUIS: SLOW BUT STEADY

UPDATES FROM *WHERE WE STAND*

To our readers: Since its first publication in 1990, Where We Stand *has come to be recognized as an authoritative source of information about the competitive position of the St. Louis region in the national marketplace. We track about 100 different variables that together tell a story about the health and competitive position of our region.* Where We Stand *is issued about every three years, but we are now issuing monthly updates, which are an opportunity to "refresh" some of the information, or to introduce new measures to give insights into issues that are high on the public agenda. The issue this month refreshes regional population data; next month will be comparative information on foreclosures, a very timely topic. If you find this information useful, or would like to suggest a future topic, just let us know by emailing us at wws@ewgateway.org.*

POPULATION CHANGE: 2000 TO 2005

The tables below shows how St. Louis compares to 34 peer regions with respect to population growth. The 2000 to 2005 time period is presented alongside the 2005 to 2007 period.

In 2005, we observed that St. Louis has had comparatively low growth rates. Between 2000 and 2005, St. Louis ranked 27th out of the 35 regions included in the analysis. In this time period, St. Louis had an annual population growth rate of 0.54 percent. This placed St. Louis far behind Sun Belt growth regions such as Phoenix, Austin and Atlanta. St. Louis also lagged behind several nearby regions such as Indianapolis, Kansas City, Memphis and Louisville.

POPULATION CHANGE: 2000 TO 2007

Changes between the years 2005 and 2007 are interesting to examine because of the considerable turbulence in housing markets during this period. Did St. Louis fare better or worse than other metro areas when the housing bubble burst?

A quick comparison reveals some similarities between the two time periods. The eight fastest growing areas between 2000 and 2005 were also the eight fastest growing regions between 2005 and 2007. However, there were some changes in the list of the 12 slowest-growing regions, as San Diego, Miami and Los Angeles joined the slow-growth group. Louisville, San Francisco and Chicago climbed out of the bottom dozen. St. Louis remained among the 12 slowest growing metros.

St. Louis did climb from the 27th fastest growing region to the 25th fastest, a modest increase in ranking. The advance was due to falling population growth in Miami and Los Angeles. The average annual growth rate in St. Louis fell slightly from 0.54 percent in the first time period to 0.51 percent in the second time period. St. Louis also continued to lag behind its closest peers, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Louisville, Cincinnati and Memphis.

ANNUAL PERCENT POPULATION CHANGE 2000-2005			ANNUAL PERCENT POPULATION CHANGE 2005-2007		
1	**Phoenix**	**3.44**	**1**	**Austin**	**4.29**
2	Austin	3.03	2	Charlotte	4.16
3	Atlanta	2.97	3	Phoenix	3.73
4	Charlotte	2.58	4	Atlanta	3.19
5	Houston	2.34	5	Dallas	2.87
6	Dallas	2.24	6	Houston	2.84
7	Nashville	1.94	7	San Antonio	2.83
8	San Antonio	1.83	8	Nashville	2.42
9	Washington DC	1.61	9	Salt Lake City	2.42
10	Portland	1.57	10	Denver	2.09
11	Salt Lake City	1.52	11	Portland	1.95
12	Denver	1.51	12	Seattle	1.61
13	Indianapolis	1.44	13	Oklahoma City	1.56
14	Miami	1.39	14	Indianapolis	1.51
Average		**1.18**	**Average**		**1.35**
15	Columbus	1.15	15	Kansas City	1.16
16	Oklahoma City	1.05	16	Columbus	1.13
17	Kansas City	1.03	17	Minneapolis	1.11
18	Minneapolis	1.03	18	Memphis	1.03
19	Seattle	0.98	19	Louisville	1.03
20	Cincinnati	0.86	20	Washington DC	0.80
21	San Diego	0.81	21	Cincinnati	0.72
22	Memphis	0.75	22	San Francisco	0.69
23	Los Angeles	0.75	23	Chicago	0.62
24	Louisville	0.74	24	San Diego	0.56
25	Baltimore	0.72	**25**	**St. Louis**	**0.51**
26	Chicago	0.62	26	Baltimore	0.34
27	**St. Louis**	**0.54**	27	Boston	0.31
28	New York	0.43	28	Milwaukee	0.30
29	Milwaukee	0.43	29	Philadelphia	0.30
30	Philadelphia	0.35	30	Miami	0.25
31	Boston	0.24	31	New York	0.16
32	Detroit	0.21	32	Los Angeles	0.01
33	San Francisco	0.04	33	Detroit	-0.40
34	Cleveland	-0.27	34	Pittsburgh	-0.41
35	**Pittsburgh**	**-0.45**	**35**	**Cleveland**	**-0.53**

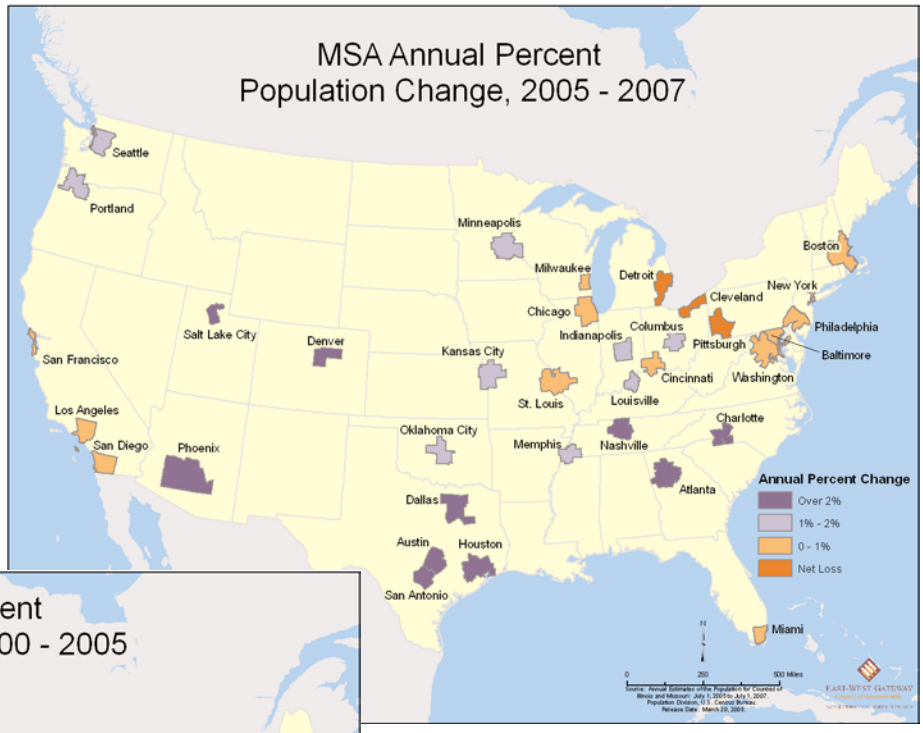
AVERAGE

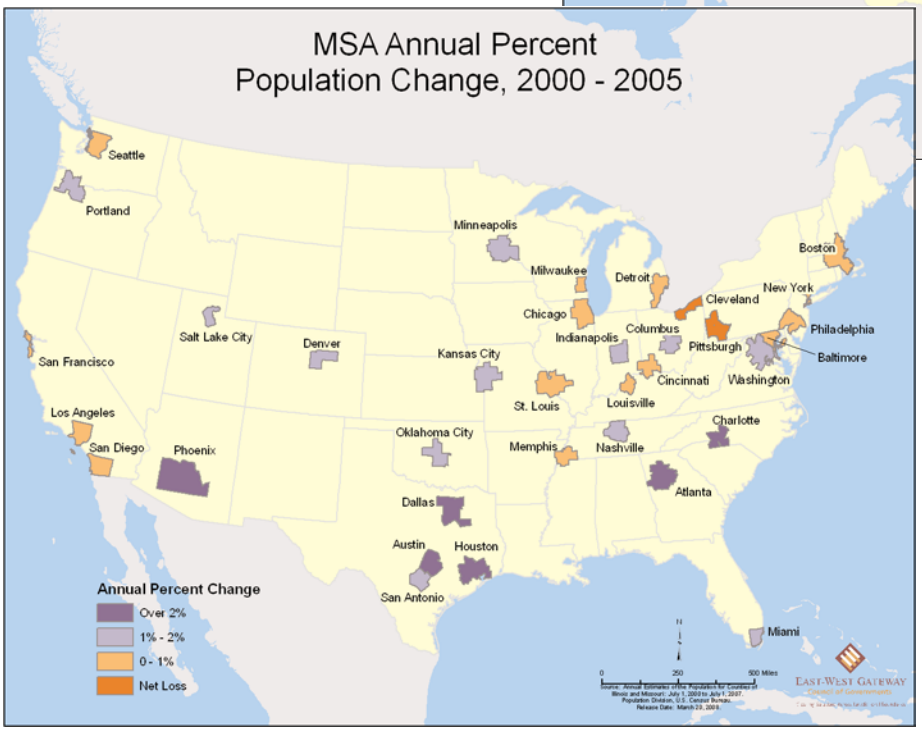
HIGHER

LOWER

Source: Annual Estimates of the Population for Counties of Illinois and Missouri: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2007. Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau. Release Date: March 20, 2008.

Of the 35 peer regions, 22 had higher annual growth rates between 2005 and 2007 than in the first half of the decade, and thirteen regions experienced slower growth. St. Louis was in the group that experienced slower growth after 2005 than earlier in the decade. Thus, it appears that turbulence in the housing market did not affect St. Louis as dramatically as some other regions. Still, St. Louis is a slow-growth region, by national standards. It lags behind most other large metro areas, as well as more comparable neighboring regions.





Nationally, the average annual population growth rate was 0.96 percent between 2000 and 2005, and 0.95 percent from 2005 to 2007. St. Louis grew at a pace lower than the national average in both time periods. Kansas City and Indianapolis were among the regions that grew faster than the national average.

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