



## DEMOGRAPHICS, ECONOMICS, AND HOUSING

The three main community councils (CCs) in West Anchorage - Sand Lake, Spenard, and Turnagain - will serve as units for discussion and planning (shown in Figure A-2). There are a total of 39 CCs within the MOA, that were created to provide citizens an opportunity for maximum community involvement and self-determination. For the purposes of this profile, many sections will use U.S. Census statistics from 2000 because it is the most recent data available at the CC level. The CC data is based on approximations of census tract boundaries. As available, more current data will be contrasted against the U.S. Census 2000 data. Unless otherwise stated, all statistics will be from the U.S. Census.

### Population and Demographics

Since 2000, the MOA population grew from 260,283 to an estimated 284,994 in 2008 (Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, 2009). Anchorage as a whole is projected to see a 28% increase in population by 2025 (Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities [ADOT&PF], 2007).

#### Population

In 2000, 19% (44,162) of the population of the Anchorage Bowl (Bowl) resided in the West Anchorage planning area. Table B-1 provides population and household numbers for West Anchorage as compared to the Bowl from the last census.

Sand Lake CC area has a higher percentage of married couple households (55%) than the Bowl (49%). Fifty percent of households in the Turnagain CC area consist of married couples, which is similar to that of the Bowl. Spenard CC area is much lower, with only 32% of married couple households. The Sand Lake CC area also has the highest percentage of single-parent female households with children under 18 in the West Anchorage area (9%), compared to the Bowl's 8%.

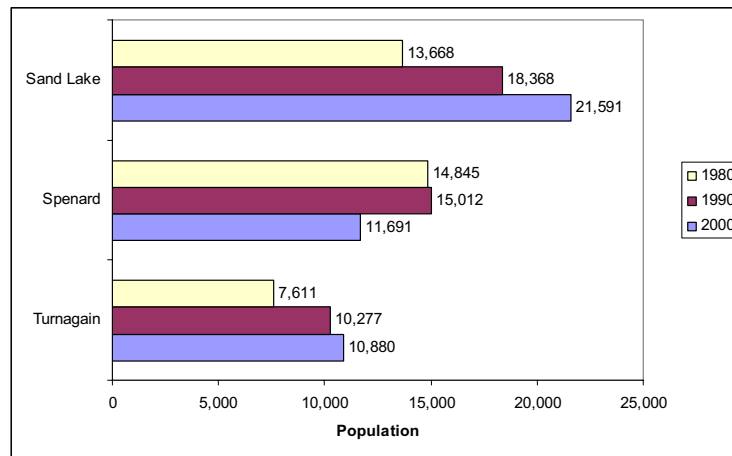
**Table B-1. Population and Household Numbers in West Anchorage in 2000**

	Population			Households	
	Population	Households	Group Quarters	Number	Average Size
<b>WEST ANCHORAGE</b>	<b>44,162</b>	<b>43,933</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>17,105</b>	<b>2.5</b>
Sand Lake	21,591	21,503	88	7,751	2.8
Spenard	11,691	11,621	70	5,180	2.2
Turnagain	10,880	10,809	71	4,174	2.6
<b>ANCHORAGE BOWL</b>	<b>228,275</b>	<b>221,654</b>	<b>6,621</b>	<b>83,991</b>	<b>2.6</b>
MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE	260,283	253,269	7,014	94,822	2.7

Source: *Neighborhood Sourcebook* U.S. Census Data for 2000 compiled by Fison and Associates (MOA, 2009b)

The total populations of the Sand Lake and Turnagain CC areas in West Anchorage have both grown in population over the past 20 years (Figure B-1).

**Figure B-1. Population of West Anchorage Planning Area 1980-2000**



Source: Anchorage Neighborhood Sourcebook. 2000 U.S. Census Data compiled by Fison and Associates

The Spenard CC population experienced a fairly considerable decline between 1990 and 2000. However, the MOA CC boundaries were redrawn during this time period, which could account for much of the population decline.

Almost the entire population of the West Anchorage planning area, approximately 99%, lives in “households.” A household is defined as “all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence,” which could include houses, apartments, mobile homes, a group of rooms, or a single room that is occupied. The remaining 1% lives in group quarters, which include such places as residential treatment centers, skilled nursing facilities, group homes, or workers’ dormitories.

### **Age and Gender**

Age distribution provides further details about population composition, and gives an indication of whether the population of a community is getting younger or aging. Looking at the age distribution of a population also has implications for the types of facilities and service demands that could be needed in a community in the future. For example, a rising senior population means rising demand for housing, facilities, and services, including public transportation services suited and conveniently located for seniors.

West Anchorage has the same general age distribution as the Bowl (Table B-2). Within West Anchorage, the highest percentage of school age residents (5-17 years old) is in the Sand Lake CC area (22%). The highest percentage of young adults (20-29 years old) is in the Spenard CC area (16%). The highest percentages of baby-boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) and seniors (65 and over) are found in the Turnagain CC area (36% and 8% respectively).

**Table B-2. Gender and Age in West Anchorage**

	Gender					Age					
	Total Pop.	Male	Female	Male (%)	Female (%)	Less than 15	15-64 Years	65 & Over	Less than 15 (%)	15-64 Years (%)	65 & Over (%)
<b>WEST ANC</b>	<b>44,162</b>	<b>22,310</b>	<b>21,852</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>10,749</b>	<b>30,957</b>	<b>2,444</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>6</b>
Sand Lake	21,591	10,770	10,821	50	50	5,742	14,931	915	27	69	4
Spenard	11,691	6,134	5,557	52	48	2,427	8,504	748	21	73	6
Turnagain	10,880	5,406	5,474	50	50	2,580	7,522	781	24	69	7
<b>ANC BOWL</b>	<b>228,275</b>	<b>116,333</b>	<b>112,963</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>70,713</b>	<b>144,396</b>	<b>13,166</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>6</b>
Source: Anchorage Neighborhood Sourcebook. U.S. Census Data for 2000 compiled by Fison and Associates											

**Race and Ethnicity**

The racial and ethnic composition of West Anchorage is fairly similar to the Bowl; however there are a few key differences. As seen in Table B-3, the Black/African American population makes up only around 3% of West Anchorage's population, while this group composes about 6% of the Bowl's population. The population of West Anchorage consists of approximately 9% Asian residents, and the population of the Bowl is made up of approximately 6% Asian residents. There are several different races included under the Asian category within the U.S. Census, including Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Other Asian (represents Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories). The diversity of nations, cultures and languages represented by this racial designation indicates the variety of cultural differences present within West Anchorage's Asian resident population.

Racial and ethnic minority populations made up approximately 24% of the MOA population in 2007. Alaska Natives and American Indians made up the largest racial minority segment, comprising around 6% of the MOA population (U.S. Census, 2007).

**Table B-3. Race and Ethnicity in West Anchorage**

	Total Population	White (% of area pop.)	Black/ African American (% of area pop.)	Alaska Native/ American Indian (% of area pop.)	Asian (% of area pop.)	Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander (% of area pop.)	Other Race (% of area pop.)	Multiple Race (% of area pop.)	Hispanic (% of area pop.)
<b>WEST ANCHORAGE</b>	<b>44,162</b>	<b>31,782 (72%)</b>	<b>1,389 (3%)</b>	<b>3,098 (7%)</b>	<b>3,957 (9%)</b>	<b>449 (1%)</b>	<b>831 (2%)</b>	<b>2,656 (6%)</b>	<b>2,332 (5%)</b>
Sand Lake	21,591	16,288 (75%)	678 (3%)	1,252 (6%)	1,740 (8%)	123 (1%)	303 (1%)	1,207 (6%)	933 (4%)
Spenard	11,691	7,590 (65%)	411 (4%)	1,220 (10%)	1,052 (9%)	212 (2%)	371 (3%)	835 (7%)	890 (8%)
Turnagain	10,880	7,904 (73%)	300 (3%)	626 (6%)	1,165 (11%)	114 (1%)	157 (1%)	614 (6%)	509 (5%)
<b>ANCHORAGE BOWL</b>	<b>228,275</b>	<b>159,884 (70%)</b>	<b>14,676 (6%)</b>	<b>17,771 (8%)</b>	<b>13,897 (6%)</b>	<b>2,371 (1%)</b>	<b>5,362 (2%)</b>	<b>14,314 (6%)</b>	<b>13,762 (6%)</b>

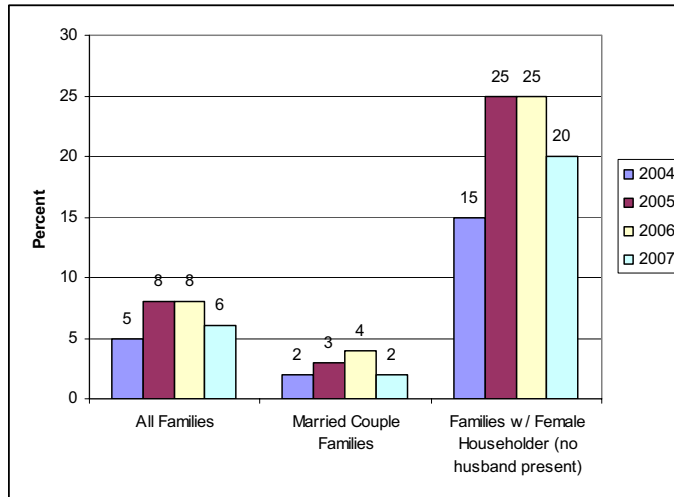
Source: Anchorage Neighborhood Sourcebook. U.S. Census Data for 2000 compiled by Fison and Associates. Note: Hispanics are shown separately because they are considered an "ethnic" rather than a racial group. Most Hispanics classify themselves as white.

In 2008, for the first time, minority students comprised over half (51%) of the student population of the Anchorage School District (ASD). Of that number, the multi-ethnic and Asian/Pacific Islander categories (13% each) are the largest, followed by the Hispanic (10%), and Alaska Native/American Indian (9%) (ASD, 2008). ASD students speak 94 different languages at home. After English, the five most common are Spanish, Hmong, Tagalog, Samoan, and Korean (ASD, 2009a).

### Poverty and Income

The Census Bureau poverty measurement has two components: income levels and family size (including the presence and number of family members under 18 years old). Figure B-2 shows poverty rates for all families city-wide, and those families that have female heads-of-household between 2004 and 2007. Data are not available prior to 2004 in this format, therefore trends cannot be distinguished. However, the existing data indicate married couples experience lower rates of poverty than other families or families with a female head of household.

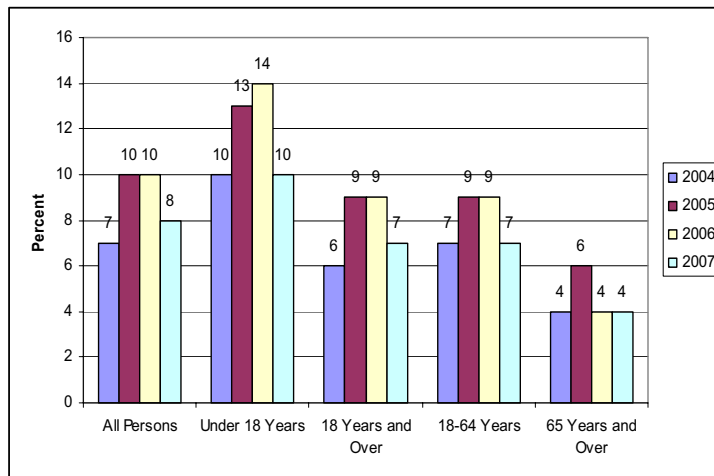
**Figure B-2. Percent of Families\* Below Poverty Level, Anchorage 2004 – 2007**



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 2004 – 2007.  
 \*Does not include population living in institutions and group quarters.

Figure B-3 demonstrates poverty level by age. Persons over 65 years of age experience lower rates of poverty than other age groups. Persons under 18 years of age are more likely to experience poverty than other age groups.

**Figure B-3. Percent of Persons\* By Age Below Poverty Level, Anchorage 2004 – 2007**



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 2004 – 2007.  
 \*Does not include population living in institutions and group quarters.

As compared to the United States (U.S.), a smaller percentage of MOA residents are considered to be below poverty level. From 2004 – 2007, the percentage of all persons below the poverty level in the nation has held steady at 13%. In 2007, the greatest discrepancy between MOA poverty levels and those of the U.S. is within those persons under 18 years; with 10% of MOA residents compared to 18% nationally in this age category falling below the poverty level.

The poverty rate comparison for MOA and the U.S. by race and ethnicity also shows that the MOA rate is less than the national rate in every category but one (MOA, 2009). Fourteen percent of Asian residents in MOA are considered below the poverty level, while nationally only 12 percent of Asian citizens are in this category.

## **Education**

There are 10 elementary schools within the West Anchorage planning area: Bayshore, Campbell, Chinook, Gladyswood, Kincaid, Lake Hood, Northwood, Sandlake, Turnagain, and Willowcrest. There are two middle schools, Mears and Romig, and two high schools, Dimond and West. Figure D-2 shows the locations of these schools.

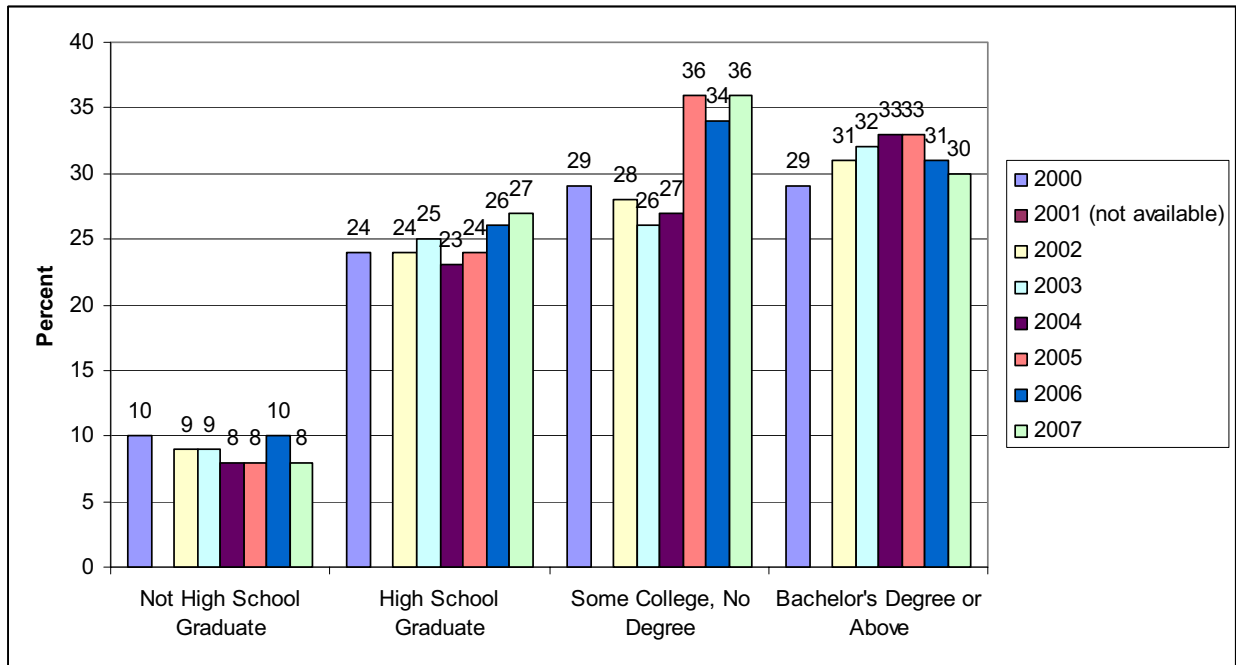
Five of the 10 elementary schools have a total ethnic minority student body population over 50 percent (Campbell, Lake Hood, Northwood, Sandlake, and Willowcrest), with Willowcrest at 75% (ASD, 2008). In 2000, school age children (5-17 years old) made up approximately 19% of the West Anchorage population. North Star Elementary, Central Middle School, Stellar Secondary School, Holy Rosary Academy, and Lumen Christi High School are all located outside of the West Anchorage planning area boundary, but part of their attendance areas are within the boundary.

Historically, school membership levels in Anchorage have reflected the city's population growth. The ASD serves nearly 50,000 students and West Anchorage public and charter schools service over 10,000 students (ASD, 2009a). Current school membership represents 17% of the total Anchorage population, down approximately 2% from early-2000 levels (ASD, 2009). For the past five years, the average kindergarten enrollment has increased. These enrollment patterns will have a ripple effect through the higher grade levels.

ASD transports approximately 20,000 students on 252 buses, to and from school, on a daily basis. These buses cover over 1,300 routes daily. Students who live more than a mile and a half from school, or must cross a roadway designated hazardous, are provided school bus transportation (ASD, 2009). The 10 West Anchorage elementary schools are served by 18 different bus routes. The two middle schools, Mears and Romig, have 12 and 10 routes serving them respectively. Dimond High School is served by eight bus school bus routes, and West High School is served by 17.

As seen in Figure B-4, the percentage of high school graduates for the population in Anchorage has increased, with small fluctuations, between 2000 and 2007. However, the percentage of residents with a bachelor's degree or higher has been in decline since reaching its peak level in 2004.

**Figure B-4. Educational Attainment, Anchorage 2000 - 2007**



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 2000 – 2007.

## Economy

The annual average unemployment rate in the MOA has been steadily declining over the past several years (Figure B-5). However, unemployment numbers for 2008 and early 2009 show an increase, likely due to the broader economic downturn that the country is facing. Analysts claim that a local employment increase during a recession could be due to Alaska's relative economic health. The number of unemployed and unemployment rates can climb without job losses if a rising number of unemployed people from other states migrate to Alaska, or if a decreasing number of unemployed Alaskans migrate out of the state. Both scenarios are likely when the State's economy is healthy compared to the nation's (Robinson, 2009).

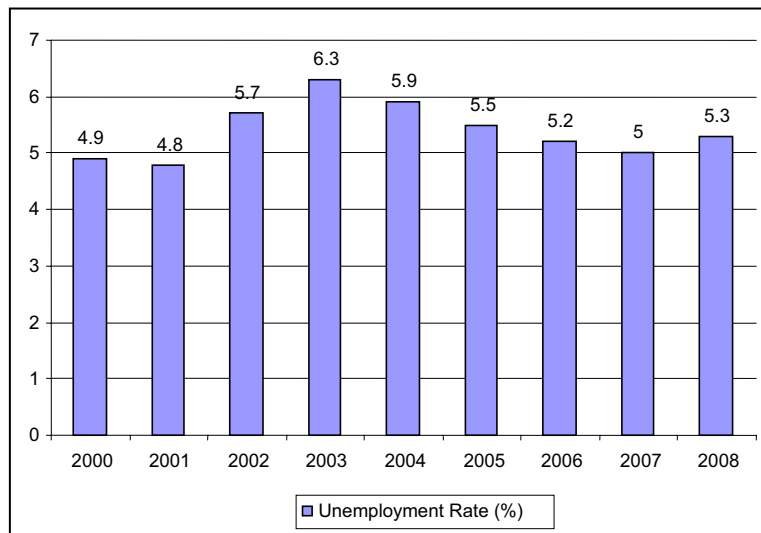
The number of Anchorage jobs in 2008 grew by less than 1%. Projections forecast that there could be 35,000 new jobs within the MOA between 2002 and 2025 (ADOT&PF, 2007), with increases in the trade and health care sectors predicted for 2009 (Anchorage Economic Development Corporation [AEDC], 2009). Public construction projects should remain strong, including projects at Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (TSAIA), which should help the city's construction industry remain stable. However, the air transportation and leisure and hospitality sectors are the first to experience employment loss (AEDC, 2009).

Employment opportunities are dispersed within the Bowl. The main employment centers in the Anchorage Bowl are found in the Downtown and Midtown areas. Within West Anchorage, areas with more concentrated employment activity include the TSAIA area, the Spenard Road corridor, and West Dimond Boulevard. There are also several ongoing construction projects in the area (e.g. South Terminal remodel, runway upgrades, and International Airport Road hotels) that create additional employment

opportunities for residents (AEDC, 2009). Mean travel times to work for West Anchorage residents are not available at the CC level.

Employment at TSAIA in 2007 was estimated at 10,222 (annual average full-time equivalent jobs), generating an annual payroll of \$562 million (Goldsmith and Killorin, 2007). This represents about 7% of all the wage and salary jobs in Anchorage and 9% of total payroll.

**Figure B-5. Annual Unemployment Rate for Anchorage 2000-2008**

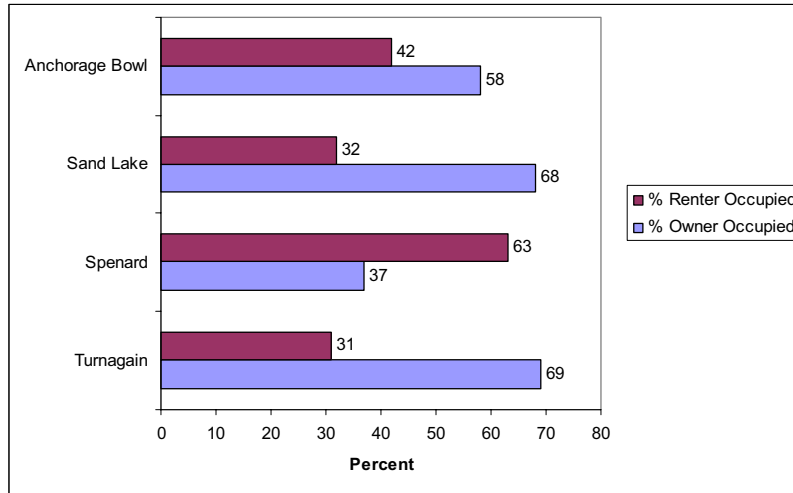


Source: Alaska Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Section 2009

## Housing

The average percentage of residents who own homes in West Anchorage (58%) is the same as the Bowl. The percentage of residents who *rent* in West Anchorage (42%) is nearly the same as the average for the Bowl (40%). Within the West Anchorage planning area, the highest concentration of renters can be found in the Spenard CC area (Figure B-6). The Spenard CC area also has the highest vacancy rate of the three CCs within West Anchorage, at 8%, compared to 3% for both the Sand Lake CC and Turnagain CC areas. Total housing units in the Spenard CC area are 92% occupied; 63% of which are renter occupied. For the Sand Lake and Turnagain CC areas, total housing units are 97% occupied, with between 31 and 32% renter occupation.

**Figure B-6. Percent of Homeowners and Renters in the Anchorage Bowl and the West Anchorage Planning Area**



Source: Anchorage Neighborhood Sourcebook. 2000 U.S. Census Data compiled by Fison and Associates

In 2007, the MOA had a total of 139,994 housing units, 11% of which were vacant (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). Of the 125,039 occupied housing units, 64% were owner-occupied and 36% were renter-occupied. The homeowner vacancy rate was 2% and the rental vacancy rate was 5% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2007). Of the total 139,994 housing units, 60% were single-unit structures, 35% were multi-unit structures, and 5% were mobile homes. Twenty-seven percent of the housing units were built since 1990. The average “housing density per acre” exceeds 10 dwelling units in only a few areas within Anchorage. For comparison, the neighborhoods between Spenard Road and Northern Lights Boulevard have some of the highest housing densities in the Bowl (MOA, 2007).

## Projections

### Anchorage 2020

The MOA used a base case forecast (most probable growth assumption) about Anchorage’s population and economic forecast in order to conduct a land capacity analysis for (*Anchorage 2020*). They estimated how many more residential units would fit in the remaining land in the Bowl under the existing zoning districts. Anticipated population growth was very high during the writing of the *Anchorage 2020*. Table B-4 demonstrates population growth estimates for households and employment calculated in 2004 by the University of Alaska Anchorage’s Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) and Goldsmith.

**Table B-4. 2004 ISER Projected Growth Anchorage Bowl (2004-2025)**

Year	Population	Households	Employment (wage and salary jobs)
2004 (est.)	228,800	88,000	125,400
2025 (base case)	281,500	112,600	146,400
Change from 2004-2025	+52,700	+24,600	+21,000
Percent Change	23%	28%	17%

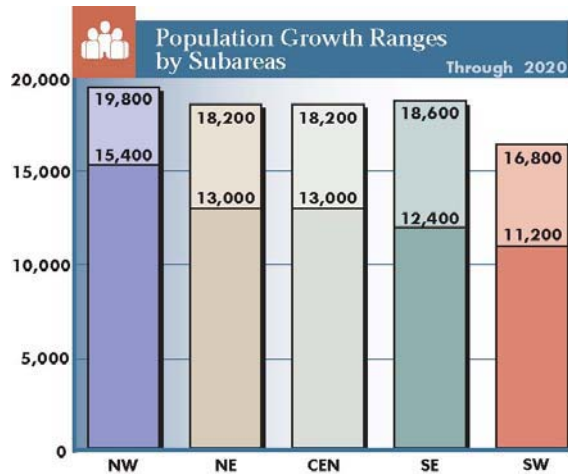
Source: ISER/Goldsmith, 2005 Base Case Forecast; Davis, 2009

Population growth rates within the Bowl were divided into subareas by MOA for planning purposes, as shown in Figure B-7. (Note: West Anchorage contains portions of the northwest, southwest, and central subareas.) Figure B-8 demonstrates population growth ranges by subarea from *Anchorage 2020*. The strategy to accommodate this growth included recommend zoning changes and increased housing density to meet future housing demands, which would occur in the *Land Use Plan Map (LUPM)* process.

**Figure B-7. Planning Subareas from Anchorage 2020**



**Figure B-8. Population Growth by Subareas from Anchorage 2020**



**LUPM 2006**

The *Draft LUPM Update* in 2006 utilized updated economic projections and population forecasts generated by the ISER and Goldsmith forecast for the Bowl from 2005 to 2030. Table B-4 contains these estimates for projected population in the base case scenario for the number of households in the Bowl.

**Table B-5. 2006 ISER Projected Growth Anchorage Bowl (2004-2025)**

Year	Population	Estimated Household Size	Households
2004 (est.)	228,800	2.56 (est.)	89,375
2030 (base case)	262,712	2.46 (approx.)	106,000
Change from 2004-2030	+33,912	-	+16,625
Percent Change	13%	-	16%

Source: ISER/Goldsmith, 2005 Base Case Forecast; Davis, 2009

Anchorage 2020 estimated a population of 298,300 in the Bowl by 2020, but this level of growth was not realized. The updated estimate for the Bowl population by 2030 is only 281,500.

### **Conclusions about Demographics, Economics and Housing**

- The population of Anchorage is aging, but is also still growing. This trend mirrors the age distribution of the population found in West Anchorage.
- The population of Anchorage is approaching 290,000 and is spread out over 64,500 acres. Anchorage as a whole is projected to see a 28% increase in population by 2025. The West Anchorage population of 45,000 is spread out over 26,000 acres. The average density in West Anchorage is lower than the Bowl, however some areas exceed 10 dwelling units per acre.
- Sand Lake and Turnagain CCs have experienced steady population growth since 1980.
- Racial and ethnic minority populations are a rapidly growing segment of the population of Anchorage. However, almost 75% of the West Anchorage population is white. The largest minority group in West Anchorage, Asians, may continue to feel effects of increasing poverty levels. This racial minority group is also one of the largest populations in the ASD.
- There could be 35,000 new jobs within the MOA between 2002 and 2025, with large increases in the Health Services and Retail employment categories (MOA, 2007). The largest amount of employment growth between 2002 and 2025 is allocated to the Midtown section of the Bowl (adjacent to West Anchorage), where more than 9,840 new jobs are projected by 2025. West Anchorage contains several retail neighborhood centers, although does not contain major office space or health service facilities that would capture these growing markets.
- Growth projections call for 37,000 new housing units within the MOA between 2002 and 2025. The northwest portion of the Bowl is projected to see 21% of total household growth in the area by 2025, where there is a greater availability of redevelopable land (MOA, 2007).