

Population Study

Introduction

This is the sixteenth report in an ongoing study of population changes in Harris County and their impact on demand for County services. The Census Bureau count in 2010 and their estimate for 2011 combined with data from HCAD provide the basis for the 2012 estimates.

Harris County is Growing Fast

Harris County continues to be the nation's third most populous county with an estimated 4.3 million residents as of June 2012 and one of the fastest growing counties in the U.S. with a population increase of 26% since 2000 and 52% since 1990. Harris County contains all or part of 34 cities including Houston, the nation's fourth largest city. The following chart shows the population for Houston, the other cities in Harris County and the unincorporated area of the County.

	2000 Census	2010 Census	2011 Estimate	2012 Estimate	Growth Since 2000	%
Within Harris County						
City of Houston	1,919,789	2,057,280	2,077,000	2,098,000	178,211	9.3%
Other cities	439,615	473,716	476,000	479,000	39,385	9.0%
Unincorporated Area	1,041,174	1,561,463	1,628,000	1,698,000	656,826	63.1%
Total County	3,400,578	4,092,459	4,181,000	4,275,000	874,422	25.7%
Percent Unincorporated	31%	38%	39%	40%	75%	

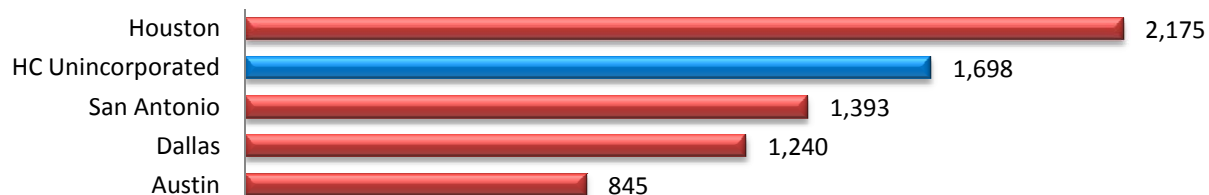
The unincorporated area now represents 40% of the total county population, up from 31% in 2000. Between 2000 and 2010, 75% of the growth in the county was in the unincorporated area.

Unique Unincorporated Area

Harris County is essentially home to the 2 largest cities in Texas if you consider the unincorporated area as a stand-alone city. Harris County Unincorporated passed the cities of Phoenix and Philadelphia in the 2010 census meaning that Harris County is essentially home to both the fourth (Houston) and fifth (Harris County Unincorporated) most populous "cities" in the U.S.

Harris County is the only county in Texas and likely the only county in the U.S. with such a significant unincorporated area. The following chart shows the data for the top five "cities" in Texas.




	2000 Census	2010 Census	2012 Estimates
City of Houston (entire city)	1,953,631	2,099,451	2,175,000
Harris County Unincorporated	1,041,174	1,561,463	1,698,000
San Antonio	1,144,646	1,327,407	1,393,000
Dallas	1,188,580	1,197,816	1,240,000
Austin	656,562	790,390	845,000

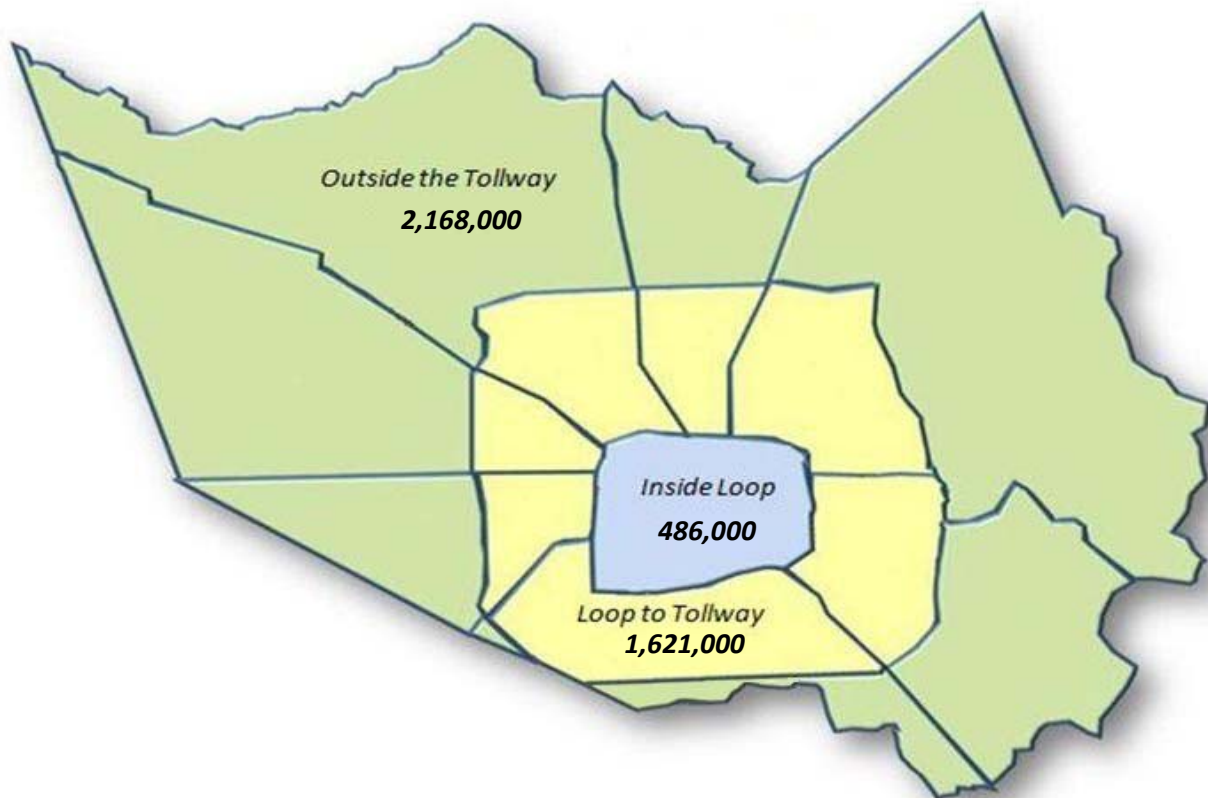


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Population Spreading Out

Over the last decade, the population of Harris County has spread out considerably. The Sam Houston Tollway forms a complete outer loop around the County. The following chart shows how the population outside the Tollway has grown significantly faster than the area inside the Tollway:

Population	2000	2010	2012	Growth Since 2000 Census	
	Census	Census	Estimate	Population	Percent
 Inside Loop 610	456,649	469,051	486,000	29,351	6.4%
 Loop to Tollway	1,493,635	1,597,326	1,621,000	127,365	8.5%
Subtotal Inside Tollway	1,950,284	2,066,377	2,107,000	156,716	8.0%
 Outside Tollway	1,450,294	2,026,082	2,168,000	717,706	49.5%
Entire County	3,400,578	4,092,459	4,275,000	874,422	25.7%
Percent Outside Tollway	43%	50%	51%	82%	



Infrastructure and Growth

Harris County is primarily responsible for the infrastructure maintenance and development outside the Tollway. This area is growing at a rate more than six times that of the growth inside the Tollway and the County relies primarily on property taxes to fund this development. Harris County does not receive general sales taxes like the cities and METRO.

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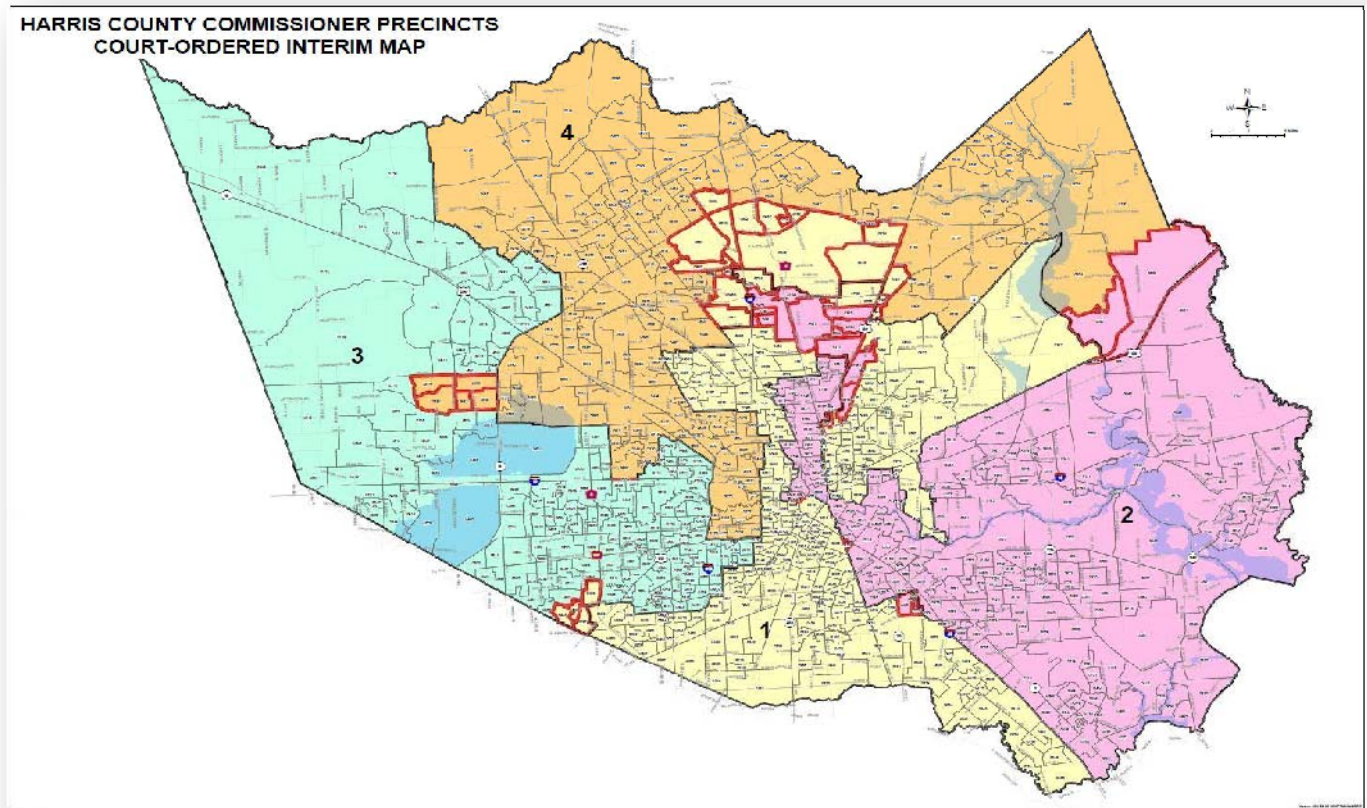
Harris County Precincts and Redistricting

Each of the four Commissioner precincts in Harris County has a significant population in the unincorporated area. The court adopted a map last summer which was changed in a court case that resulted in the "Court Ordered Interim Map" shown below.

This map will be used for the November 2012 elections. Should a new map be approved during the fiscal year, court may elect to adopt that new map.

The following shows a breakdown of the 2010 population based on the Court-ordered map shown:

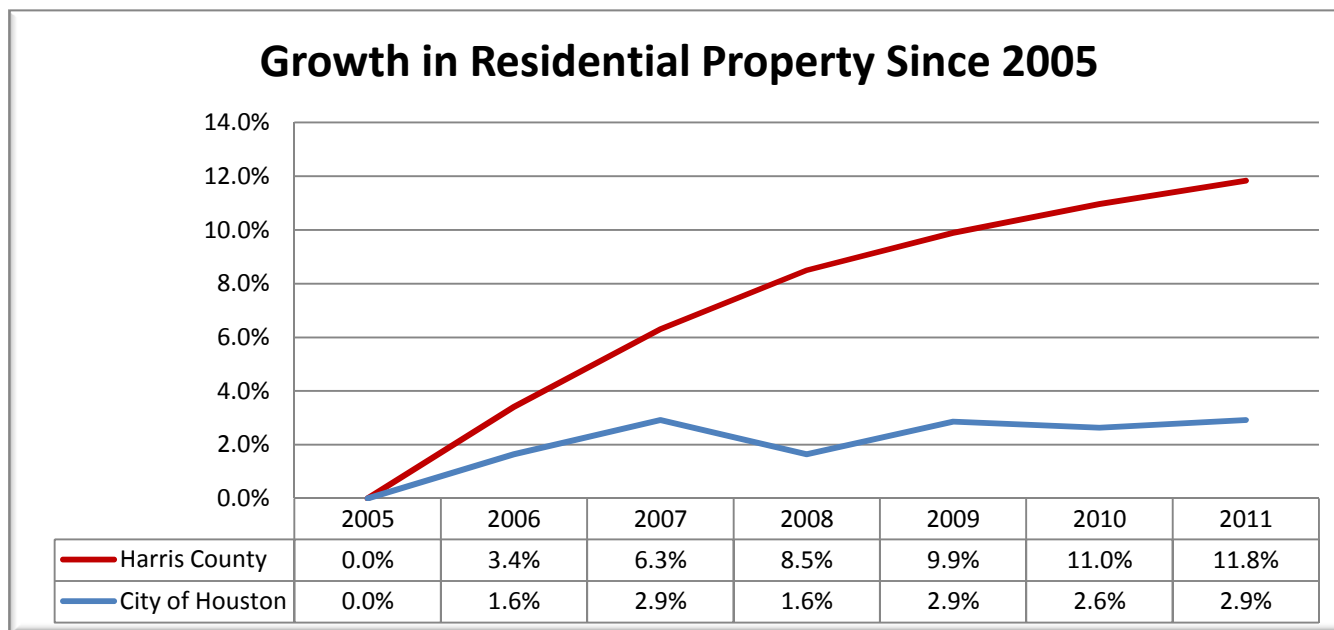
Commissioner Precinct	Within City Limits	Unincorp. Area	Total	Percent in Cities	Share of Unincorp.
Precinct 1	786,764	210,025	996,789	78.9%	13.5%
Precinct 2	795,665	187,615	983,280	80.9%	12.0%
Precinct 3	632,960	424,082	1,057,042	59.9%	27.2%
Precinct 4	315,607	739,741	1,055,348	29.9%	47.4%
	2,530,996	1,561,463	4,092,459	61.8%	100.0%



This report will be updated for any changes in the map when they occur.

Growth in Taxable Property

According to HCAD data, the total number of residential properties including single family, multifamily, and agricultural property in Harris County added to the tax roll for Harris County has increased by 11.8% compared to only 2.9% within the city limits of Houston. In 2005, the number of properties in Houston made up 48% of the total county which has dropped to 45% in 2011.

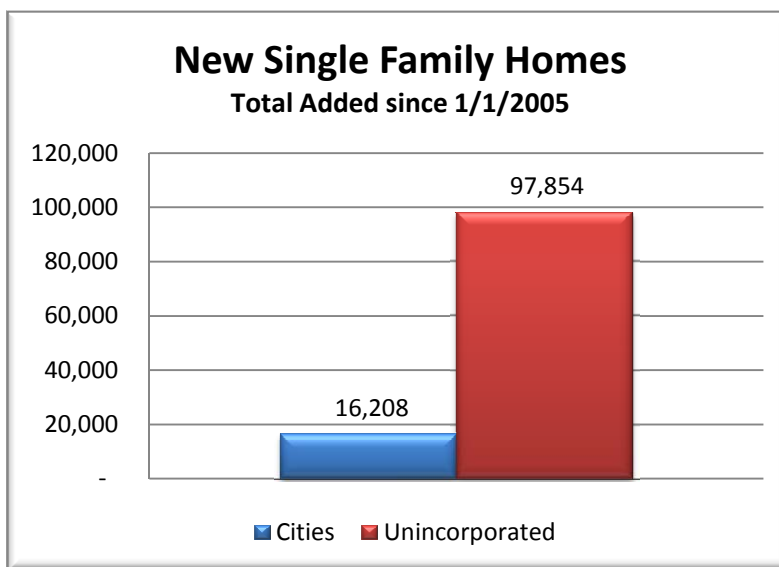


Growth in Number of Single Family Homes

The number of single family homes in Harris County increased by over 114,000 from 2005 to 2011 according to Harris County Appraisal District data.

The number of single family homes in the unincorporated area of the County increased by 97,854 during this period, which represents 86% of the new homes in Harris County added to the tax roll during that period.

This growth impacts the County in many ways including the demand for new roads and infrastructure as well as the need for additional law enforcement services and other public services provided by the County.

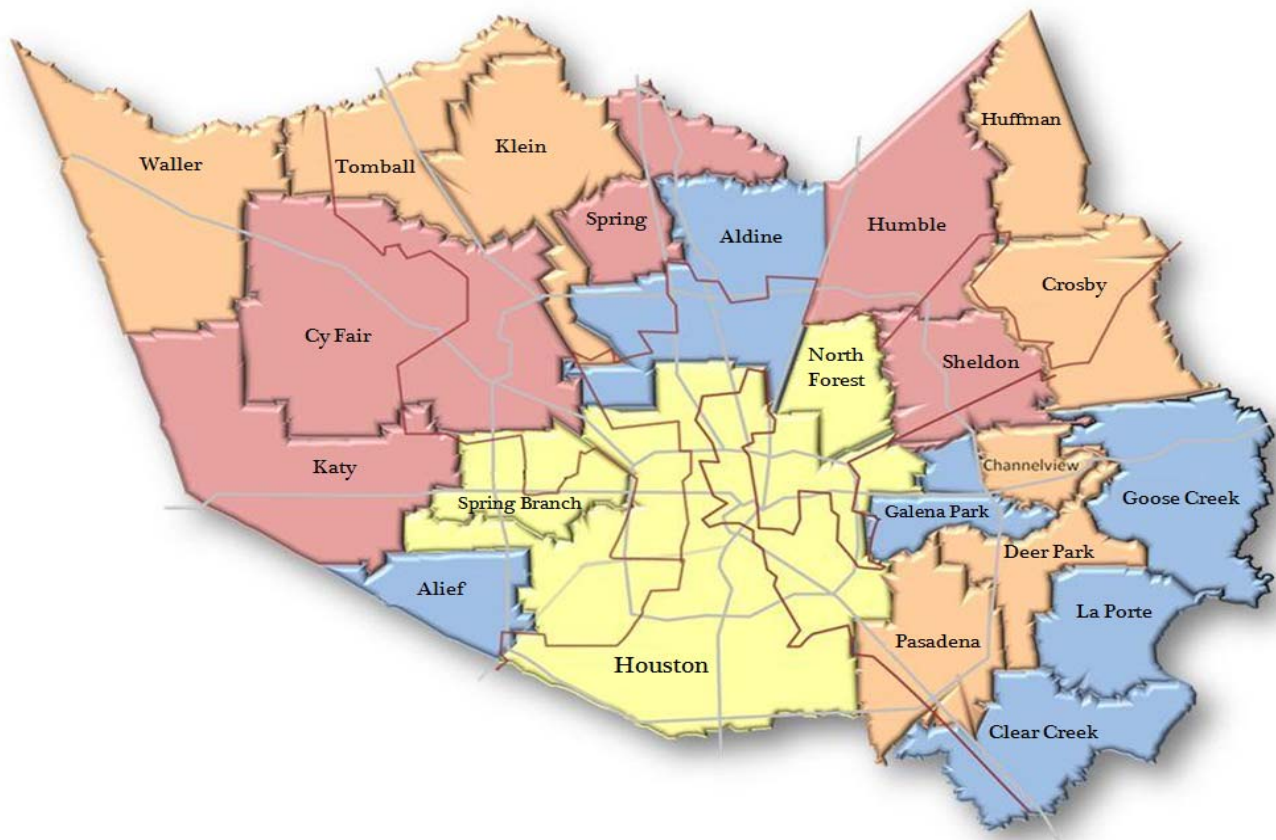


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School Enrollment Trends

The following shows the total student enrollment for each of the public school districts in Harris County comparing the 2010-11 school year with the 2000-01 year.

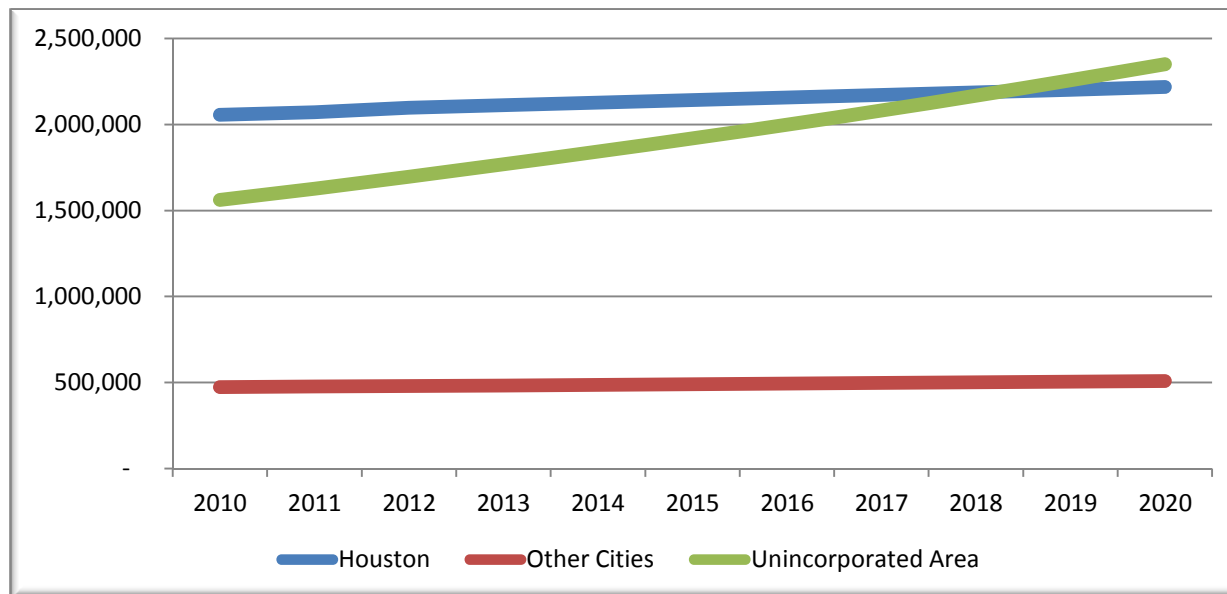
West Side Districts		Central Districts		Northeast Districts		Southeast Districts	
District	Growth %	District	Growth %	District	Growth %	District	Growth %
Cy-Fair	56.7%	Aldine	18.0%	Crosby	26.5%	Deer Park	10.8%
Katy	61.3%	Alief	4.5%	Huffman	20.2%	La Porte	0.2%
Klein	31.8%	Galena Park	11.4%	Humble	40.9%	Clear Creek	23.2%
Spring	47.7%	Houston	-3.6%	Sheldon	67.3%	Pasadena	19.4%
Tomball	38.0%	North Forest	-35.9%			Goose Creek	15.1%
Waller	22.8%	Spring Branch	0.9%			Channelview	22.6%
Total Enrollment							
2000-2001	175,977		371,662		36,052		119,029
2009-2010	263,792		373,839		50,747		140,292
Change	87,815		2,177		14,695		21,263
%	49.9%		6.0%		40.8%		17.9%



The 4 largest school districts in the western half of the County (Katy, Cy-Fair, Spring and Klein) had 164,000 students enrolled 10 years ago which increased to over 248,000 this past year. These districts had only 78% as many students as HISD in 2001. Now they have 22% more students than HISD. Cy-Fair alone has grown from 68,000 students in 2001 to 106,000 students enrolled in 2011, representing an increase from 32% of the size of HISD in 2001 to 52% in 2011. If these trends continue, Cy-Fair could become the largest school district in the County by the year 2020.

The Next Ten Years

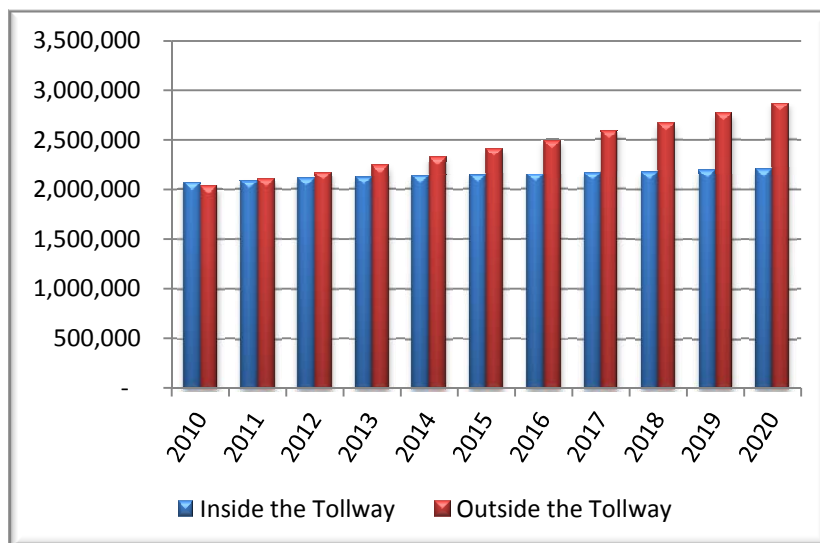
The following shows the projected growth in population during the next 10 years assuming that the growth patterns from 2000 to 2010 continue for Harris County with no significant areas being annexed by the city of Houston.



The unincorporated area would pass the city of Houston in population by 2018 if the current trends continue. Total Harris County population would pass the 5 million mark in 2019. The next chart shows the population inside and outside the tollway assuming the same trends continue.

Over 86% of the growth in population over the next 10 years would be outside the tollway.

Harris County government provides much of its services to residents throughout the County including people living in Houston and surrounding cities and towns. There are some services, such as law enforcement and public safety, public health and animal control, and libraries that are provided primarily to the unincorporated areas of the County.



While nothing is certain, all indications are that Harris County will continue to experience significant growth throughout the County in all 4 County Commissioner precincts and especially in the unincorporated areas. The demand for infrastructure to support this growth, as well as increased demand for services such as law enforcement and health care, will make it necessary to maintain adequate sources of revenue for budgetary purposes.