



# Demographics

**T**exas' 41-county High Plains region was home to more than an estimated 800,000 people in 2007, about 3.4 percent of the state's population. In recent years, the High Plains region has grown more slowly than the state as a whole. From 2002 to 2007, the region's population rose by an estimated 2.7 percent, while the state's grew by 9.8 percent.<sup>1</sup> The region's population is primarily concentrated in its two largest cities, Amarillo (population 185,525 in 2006) and Lubbock (population 212,169 in 2006).

## Age

In 2007, more than half of all Texans — 52.1 percent — were aged 25 to 64. Those under the age of 25 accounted for 37.9 percent of the total population, while 10.0 percent of Texans were aged 65 and over.

The High Plains population is similar to the state as a whole. Slightly less than half of the region's residents (48.8 percent) were aged 25 to 64 in 2007. About 38.8 percent were under the age of 25, while 12.4 percent were aged 65 and over (**Exhibit 15**).<sup>2</sup>

While persons aged 65 and over accounted for a slightly higher percentage of the High Plains population, that group grew at a slower rate. From 2002 to 2007, the portion of the region's population aged 65 and over grew by just 0.5 percent; for the state as a whole, this population rose by 11.6 percent.

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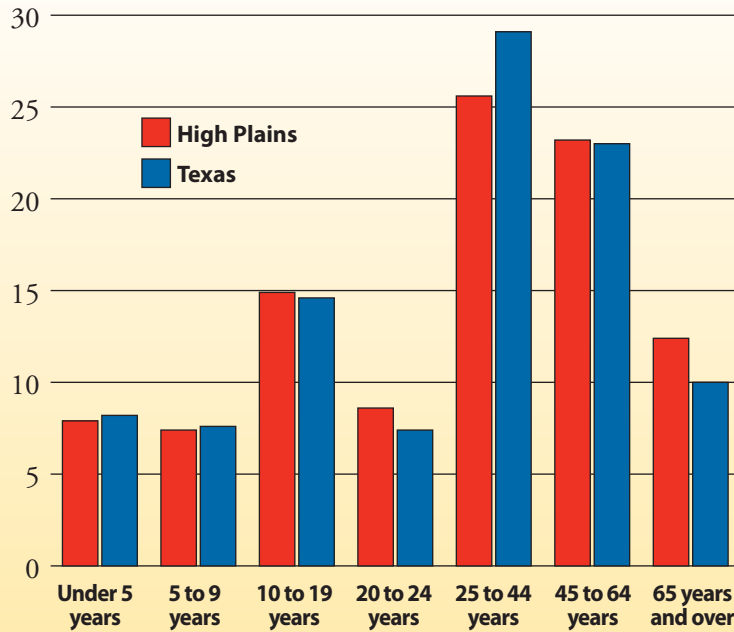
Water Wise Workshop in Lubbock, Texas

PHOTO: City of Lubbock



Exhibit 15

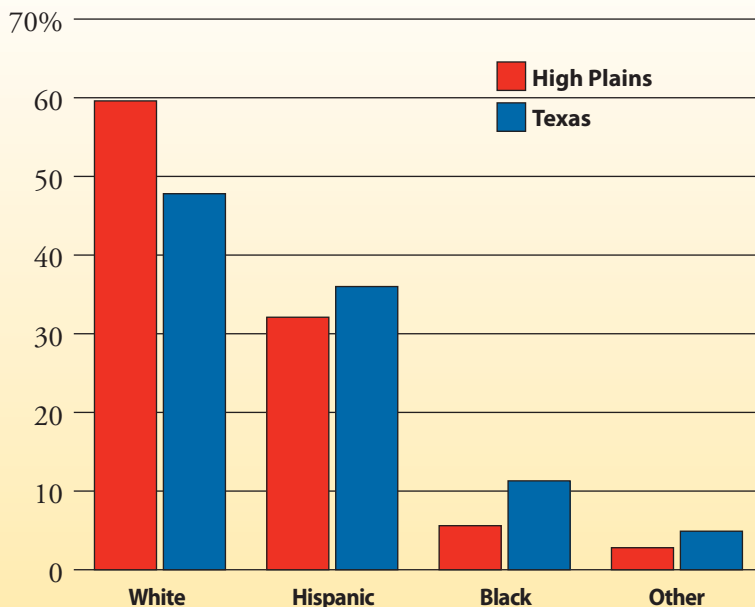
Texas and High Plains Population by Age, 2007



Source: Economic Modeling Specialists Inc.

Exhibit 16

Texas and High Plains Population by Ethnicity, 2007



Source: Economic Modeling Specialists Inc.

Ethnicity

In 2007, an estimated 47.8 percent of all Texans were White; 36 percent were Hispanic; 11.3 percent were Black; and another 4.9 percent were members of other ethnicities. In the High Plains region, 59.6 percent of residents were White; 32.0 percent were Hispanic; 5.6 percent were Black; and another 2.8 percent fell into other ethnicities (Exhibit 16).<sup>3</sup>

The region’s Hispanic population is growing, but more slowly than the state’s. From 2002 to 2007, the Texas Hispanic population in Texas rose by 18.9 percent, compared to 11.8 percent in the High Plains. Unlike the state, however, the number of Whites in the High Plains region declined from 2002 to 2007, by 2.2 percent.

The region has a lower concentration of Hispanics than the state as a whole, but higher than the nation. Blacks are underrepresented in the High Plains region compared both to the state and the nation.

This pattern can be illustrated by a common measure in economic and demographic analysis, the “location quotient” (LQ). A LQ is a ratio that compares the concentration of a given group (by ethnicity or age, for instance) in a location with a state or national average. A LQ of more than 1.0 indicates that the demographic category is overrepresented in the region under study, compared to the state or national average; a LQ of less than 1.0 indicates that the demographic category is underrepresented. Exhibit 17 shows that the High Plains has a higher concentration of Hispanics when compared to the nation and a lower concentration when compared to the state.

While Hispanics make up a smaller share of the High Plains region than in the state as



a whole, they represent a young and growing portion of the population.

**Exhibit 18** examines the region's 2007 population in five-year increments; people in these age groups were those aged five to nine, 10 to 14 and so forth. The LQs used compare the region to national averages.

In all the groups under the age of 25, the LQ for the region's Hispanics exceeded 1.0, indicating higher concentrations of younger Hispanics than the national average. At the other end of the age scale, the region had relatively fewer Hispanics in the oldest two age groups.

The 2007 location quotient for non-Hispanics, on the other hand, was greater than 1.0 for all age groups at or above 60 years of age. The region's share of non-Hispanics over the age of 70 was more than 17 percent above the national average.<sup>4</sup>

Exhibit 17

**Location Quotients by Race: Comparing the High Plains to Texas and Nation, 2007**

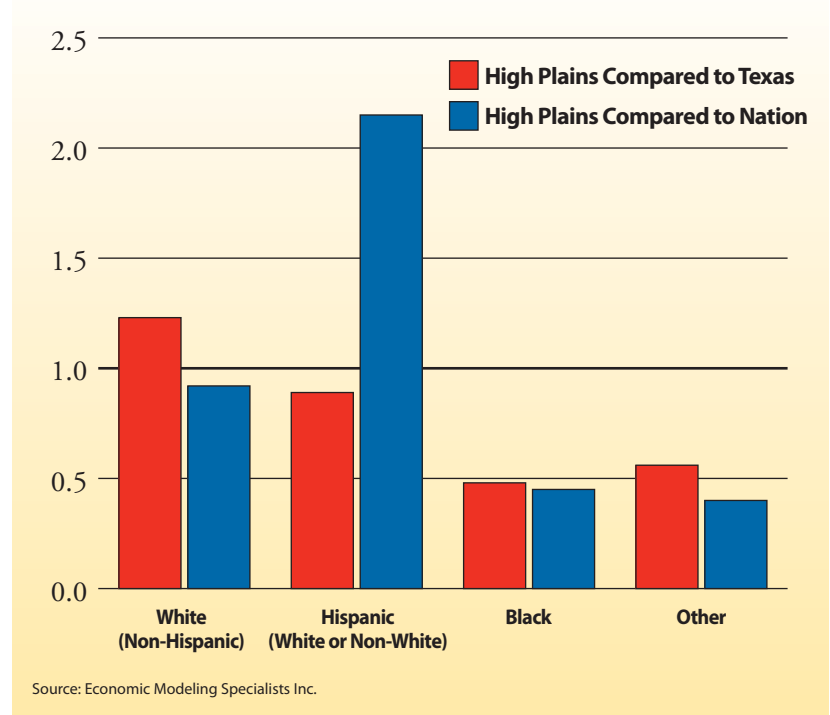


Exhibit 18

**Location Quotients by Age, Hispanic vs. Non-Hispanic, 2007**

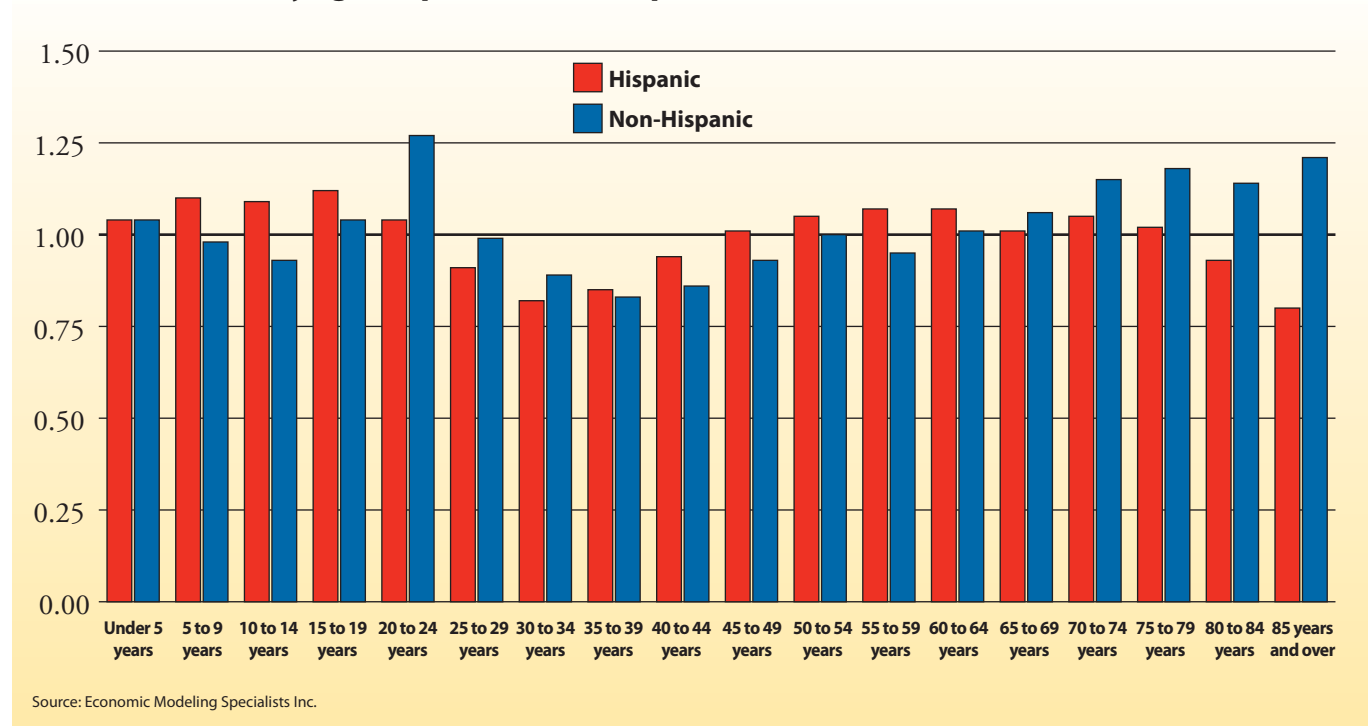
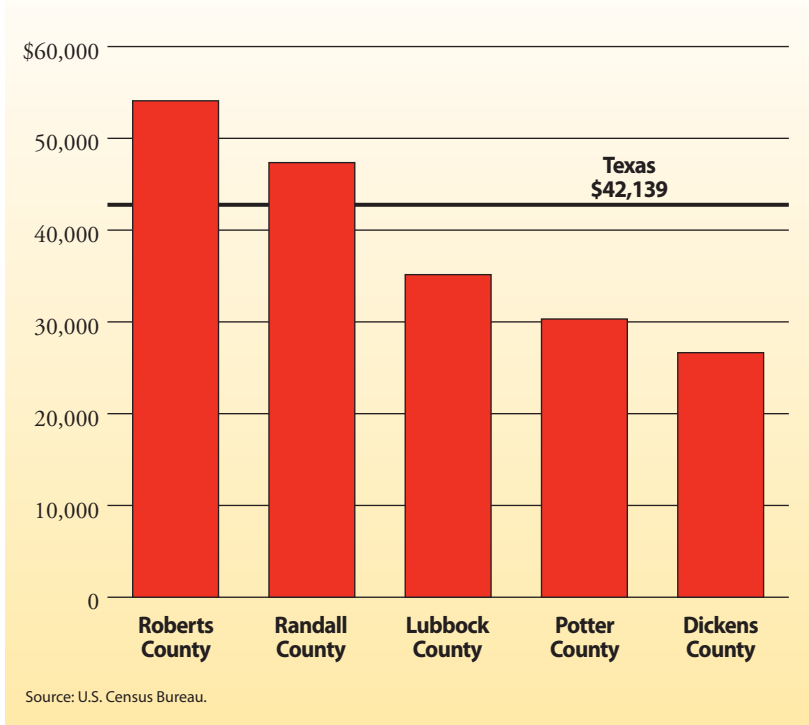




Exhibit 19

**Median Household Income, State of Texas and Selected Counties, 2005**



had the highest median household income at \$54,091, while Dickens County had the lowest at \$26,645. Lubbock County, where the city of Lubbock is located, had a 2005 median household income of \$35,150. Randall and Potter counties, where Amarillo is located, had median household incomes of \$47,356 and \$30,316 respectively (Exhibit 19).<sup>6</sup>

**Metropolitan/Nonmetropolitan**

Most of the High Plains region’s population resides in a metropolitan area. Of the 41 counties in the High Plains region, six are in metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs). MSAs are defined by a large population nucleus, along with adjacent communities that have a high degree of social and economic integration with that core. The Amarillo MSA includes Armstrong, Carson, Potter and Randall counties, while the Lubbock MSA includes Crosby and Lubbock counties (Exhibit 20).<sup>7</sup>

These metro counties accounted for 62.5 percent of the region’s population in 2007. The state as a whole had a higher percentage of metropolitan residents; 87.0 percent of

These broad demographic trends can have important implications. It appears that the High Plains region will have a significant advantage in its readily available population of young workers in the near future. The region, however, will have to educate a relatively large number of children while facing the demands of a growing population. And while a relatively high number of older citizens can support the economy with Social Security and other retirement spending, they also put increasing pressures on the region’s health care facilities.

**Income**

The median income for all Texas households in 2005 was \$42,139.<sup>5</sup> Of the 41 counties in the High Plains region, Roberts County

**Famous People From the High Plains**

The High Plains has been the birthplace or home of many famous people throughout the years, including country music singer and songwriter Mac Davis, singer Buddy Holly, singer Natalie Maines of the Dixie Chicks, members of the band Flatlanders, actress Carolyn Jones and astronauts William Cameron McCool and Rick Husband.



Exhibit 20

**High Plains Metro Counties**

Dallam Dalhart ★	★ Stratford	Hansford Spearman ★	★ Perryton	Lipscomb Lipscomb ★	
Hartley Channing ★	Dumas ★ Moore	Hutchinson Stunnett ★	Roberts Miami ★	★ Canadian Hemphill	
Oldham ★ Vega	Potter Amarillo ★	Carson Panhandle ★	★ Pampa Gray	★ Wheeler Wheeler	
Deaf Smith Hereford ★	Randall ★ Canyon	★ Claude Armstrong	Donley ★ Clarendon	Collingsworth ★ Wellington	
Parmer ★ Farwell	Dimmitt ★ Castro	Swisher ★ Tulia	Briscoe ★ Silverton	Memphis ★ Hall	Childress ★ Childress
Muleshoe ★	Lamb ★ Littlefield	Plainview ★	Floyd ★ Floydada	Motley ★ Matador	
★ Morton Cochran	Hockley ★ Levelland	Lubbock ★ Lubbock	Crosbyton ★ Crosby	Dickens ★ Dickens	King ★ Guthrie
Plains ★ Yoakum	Terry ★ Brownfield	Lynn ★ Tahoka	Garza ★ Post		

★ = County Seat  
 □ = Metro Counties

Source: Office of Management and Budget.

*Like the rest of the state, the region's metro population is growing faster than the rest of the region.*

the Texas population resided in metro areas in 2007. Like the state, however, the region's metro population is growing faster than the rest of the region. From 2002 to 2007, the region's metro county populations rose by 3.7 percent, while the nonmetro counties grew by just 1.0 percent.<sup>8</sup>

**Educational Attainment**

High Plains residents aged 25 or over had completed an estimated average of 12.8 years of education in 2007, slightly below the Texas average of 13.1 years. The national average, 13.5 years, was nearly five percent higher than that for the High Plains (**Exhibit 21**).



This educational gap is likely to widen slightly in the near future. The Comptroller's office projects that the average years of education for High Plains residents aged 25 and over will rise slightly by 2012, to 12.9, but the U.S. average will rise to 13.5. In other words, educational attainment in

the High Plains region was 95.2 percent of the national average in 2007, but will fall to 95.0 percent by 2012.

Educational attainment varies by race and ethnicity. **Exhibit 22** presents the region's average years of education by ethnicity in 2007 and the expected levels in 2012. Asians,

Exhibit 21

**Educational Attainment of Residents Aged 25 and Over, 2002-2012, High Plains, Texas and U.S. Averages, Average Years of Education**

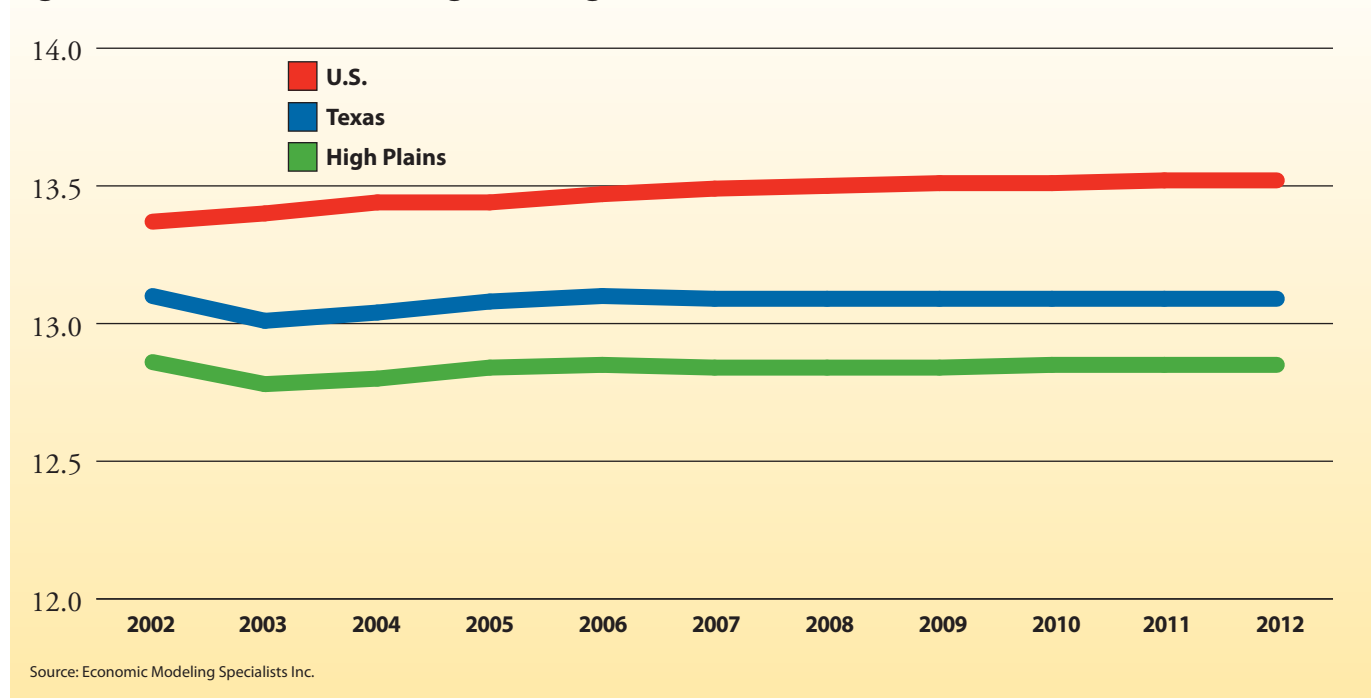


Exhibit 22

**High Plains Region Average Educational Attainment by Ethnicity, Persons Aged 25 and Over**

	Average Years of Education per Capita 2007	Average Years of Education per Capita 2012	% Region Average, 2007	% Region Average, 2012
Asian	15.1	15.2	117.7%	118.4%
White	13.5	13.5	104.9	105.3
Other	13.2	13.3	102.9	103.3
Black	12.6	12.6	98.3	98.4
Hispanic	11.2	11.3	87.6	87.9
<b>Region Average</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>12.9</b>		

Note: Numbers may not total due to rounding.  
Source: Economic Modeling Specialists Inc.



Whites and other ethnicities show above-average years of educational attainment in both years, while Blacks and Hispanics fall below the average.

### Future Growth

Over the next five years, the Comptroller’s office expects the High Plains region’s population to rise by more than 50,000, reaching a total of nearly 854,700 by 2012. Yet growth will vary considerably across the region.

Differing population growth around the region will reflect varying demographic profiles, economic factors, occupational needs and educational levels. These differences will produce different economic and demographic outlooks for areas within the region.

The population of the Amarillo metropolitan statistical area, consisting of Armstrong, Carson, Potter and Randall counties, will

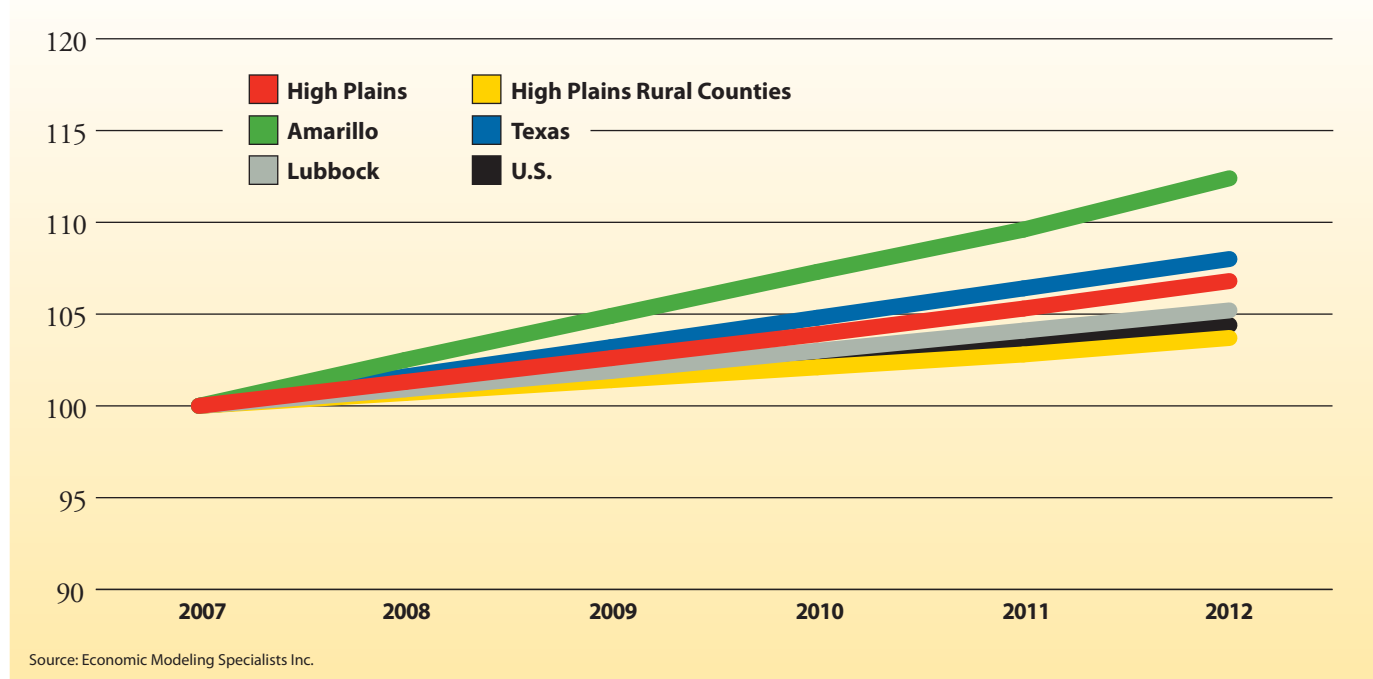
rise by 12.4 percent by 2012 outpacing the state; Lubbock County will see more moderate growth of 5.2 percent. Population growth will be somewhat slower in the region’s remaining counties. There, total population should rise by just 3.7 percent by 2012, from 300,900 to 311,900 (**Exhibit 23**).

### Punkin Days Festival in Floydada

More than a million pumpkins are grown and harvested in Floyd County each year. The county celebrates this bounty with a “Punkin Days” festival in Floydada. On a weekend in October, festival attendees can see all the varieties of pumpkin grown in Floyd County, from Atlantic Giants that weigh more than 100 pounds to mini-pumpkins weighing less than eight ounces. Punkin Days events include seed spitting contests, a costume contest, pumpkin pie baking and, of course, pumpkin carvings.<sup>9</sup>

Exhibit 23

### High Plains Region: Actual and Projected Population Increase, 2007-2012



## Public Safety in the High Plains

One of the most important factors in a region's quality of life is public safety. Crime rates for the High Plains region, as with the rest of the state, fell from 2005 to 2006. The table below shows the rate of various criminal offenses per 100,000 residents for both the High Plains region and the state in 2005 and 2006.<sup>10</sup>

### Crime Rate\* – High Plains Region and Texas, 2005 and 2006

Crime	2005 High Plains Crime Rate	2005 Texas Crime Rate	2006 High Plains Crime Rate	2006 Texas Crime Rate	High Plains Change in Crime Rate	Texas Change in Crime Rate
Murder	3.8	6.1	3.3	5.9	-12.9	-3.3
Rape	38.9	37.2	40.8	35.8	5.0	-3.8
Robbery	89.6	156.5	105.4	158.5	17.6	1.3
Assault	450.3	329.6	455.9	316.8	1.2	-3.9
Violent Crime Rate	582.6	529.5	605.5	531.6	3.9	0.4
Burglary	992.3	960.6	975.2	916.3	-1.7	-4.6
Larceny	3,027.9	2956	2,783.3	2,752.8	-8.1	-6.9
Auto Theft	297.2	408.7	289.2	407	-2.7	-0.4
Property Crime Rate	4,317.4	4,325.3	4,047.7	4,191.6	-6.2	-3.1
<b>Total Crime Rate</b>	<b>4,900</b>	<b>4,854.8</b>	<b>4,653.2</b>	<b>4,593.1</b>	<b>-5.0</b>	<b>-5.4</b>

\*All crime rate numbers are reported per 100,000 population.  
Source: Texas Department of Public Safety.

The Comptroller's office estimates that public safety and criminal justice accounted for about 8,400 jobs in the region and more than \$313 million in earnings in the High Plains region in 2006.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Data provided by Economic Modeling Specialists Inc.
- <sup>2</sup> Data provided by EMSI.
- <sup>3</sup> Data provided by EMSI.
- <sup>4</sup> Data provided by EMSI.
- <sup>5</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "Household Income—Distribution by Income Level and State: 2005," <http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/tables/08s0684.xls>. (Last visited March 20, 2008.)
- <sup>6</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, "Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates—State and County Estimates," <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipa/county.html>. (Last visited March 20, 2008.) A custom query was created.

- <sup>7</sup> Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget, *OMB Bulletin No. 08-01: Update of Statistical Area Definitions and Establishments* (Washington, D.C., November 20, 2007), pp. 23-39, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/bulletins/fy2008/b08-01.pdf>. (Last visited March 5, 2008.)
- <sup>8</sup> Data provided by EMSI.
- <sup>9</sup> Floydada Chamber of Commerce, "Punkin Days," <http://www.floydadachamber.com/punkin.htm>. (Last visited September 19, 2007.)
- <sup>10</sup> Texas Department of Public Safety, "Texas Crime Report for 2005 and 2006," <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/crimereports/citindex.htm>. (Last visited September 18, 2007.)