

Santa Fe's "Silver Tsunami"

January 30, 2013

Santa Fe's senior population (age 65+) may double between 2010 and 2020 from over 10,000 to over 20,000 residents. For the next 20 years the City of Santa Fe will average 1,000 residents turning 65 each year. According to the 2010 Census, Santa Fe already has a higher median age (44) than New Mexico and the U.S. (37). By 2020, as many as 1 out of every 4 or 5 city residents may be age 65 or older.

While the simple fact of turning 65 does not imply an immediate life-change or decline for each individual, the cumulative impact of a rapidly growing senior population will certainly be felt by the city. With this knowledge, the question for the community becomes "How will this, or how should this affect local public policy in Santa Fe?" Some issues affecting city government regarding an aging citizenry may seem obvious; such as an increased demand for transportation service, or increased demand for meals at various senior centers and in-home meals. But other issues may not be so obvious and harder to quantify, such as the impact on Gross Receipts Tax revenue?

Services the City of Santa Fe provides through its Senior Services Division, established in 1977, include the following three primary areas:

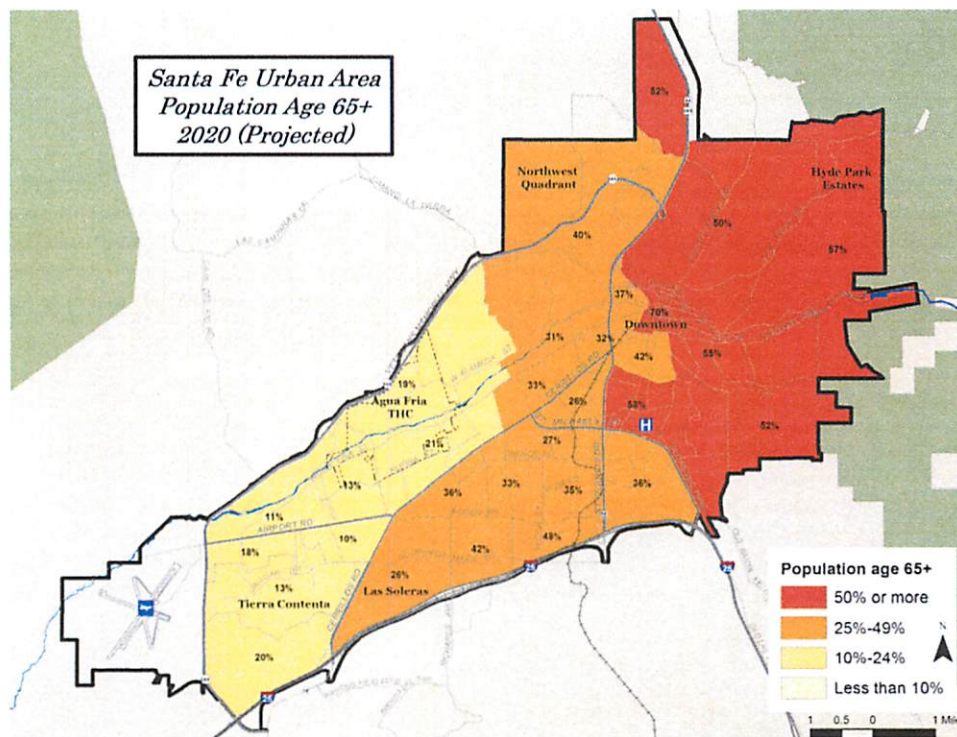
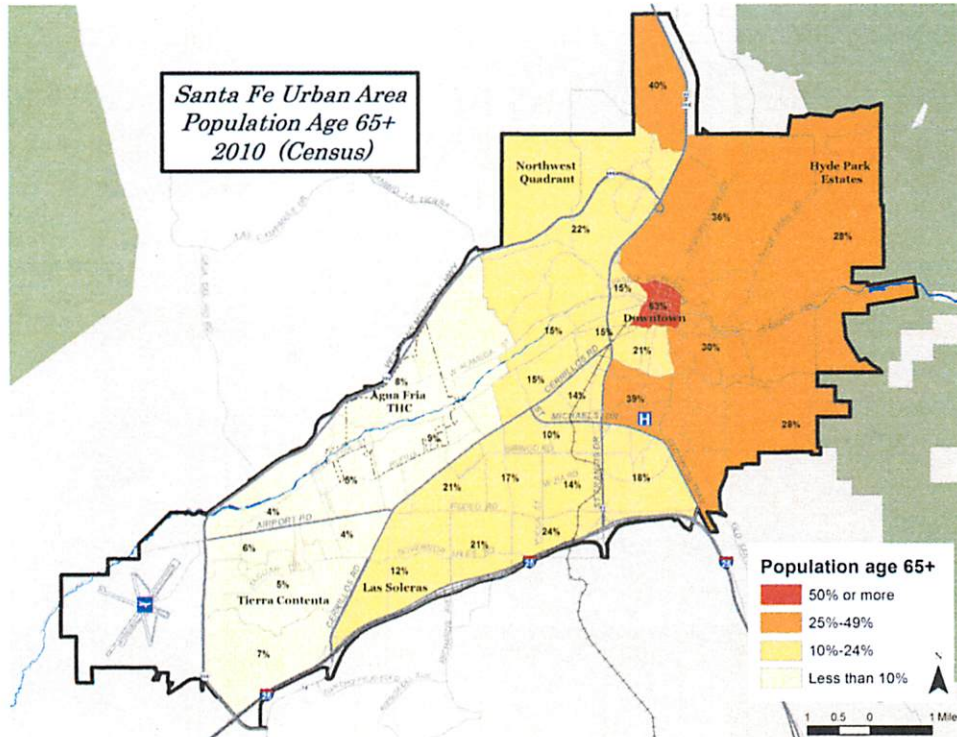
- ***Nutrition*** – "Congregate" meals (65,300 meals served in 2012) at one of five senior centers and "In-Home" meals (138,000 meals in 2012) are provided to those seniors age 60+ requesting the meals (small donations of \$1.00 or \$1.50 per meal are accepted from those seniors who can afford it).
Nutrition Program Budget (FY12-13) – Total \$834,762 (\$379,500, personnel; \$455,262, Operating)
- ***Transportation*** – "Scheduled" and "Call-On-Demand" Van service (42,000 rider trips in 2012) provides door-to-door passenger service for seniors age 60+ requesting the service (small donations of \$.50 per ride are accepted for those seniors who can afford it). (currently 13 vans of 15-passenger capacity; 11 drivers);
Transportation Assistance Program Budget (FY 12-13) – Total \$857,852 (\$743,802, personnel; \$114,050, operating)
- ***In-Home Support*** – A rapidly growing service that provides light cleaning, assisted bathing, meal preparation and respite service for seniors who are caretaking for someone else.
In-Home Support Program Budget (FY 12-13) – Total \$697,256 (\$644,936, personnel; \$52,320, Operating)

Senior Service Summary

With an additional Administrative cost of \$492,722 as well as expenses for the Volunteer Programs and others, the Senior Services Division has a total FY 12-13 budget of \$3.6 million with 70% (\$2.5 million) of that in personnel costs and 30% (\$1.1 million) in operating costs. **Certainly a doubling of the senior population by 2020 will require greatly expanded demands in all three main program areas, but particularly in the rapidly expanding program area of "In-Home Support" where the greatest need for additional personnel is being experienced, according to staff and national trends. The "In-Home Support" program currently serves 115 residents with 12 staff, but has a "waiting list" of over 70 residents.**

Mapping Santa Fe's seniors shows the city's "age wave" moving from east to west.

Part of assessing Santa Fe's senior population is determining in what parts of the city they're located and in what concentrations. The map directly below shows concentrations of seniors by census tract, according to the 2010 Census. The map at the bottom of the page is a projection of how things may look in 2020 when adding each census tract's 55-64 age group from the 2010 census.



Emerging Trends that have been identified in current research include:

- **Alzheimer's Disease** – An increasing number of Santa Feans with Alzheimer's disease may certainly pose increased issues of general safety and rescue.
- **Independent Living ("Aging in Place")** – Baby Boomers have expressed an overwhelming preference to lead independent lives in their own homes and residences in their final years.
- **Healthy Lifestyles** – Educational outreach through seminars, classes and newsletters to provide seniors with the latest information / techniques regarding diet and exercise to help prolong an individual's health, active lifestyle and longevity.
- **Home-Based Healthcare** – As Baby Boomers "Age in Place" home-based healthcare will become more common and make more demands on the healthcare and medical industries.
- **Volunteerism** – Putting experienced senior baby-boomers and all of their vitality to work in various locations, especially our public schools to help with the nation's youth and/or assist their peers who require in-home assistance.
- **Unmarried Partners** – Increasing numbers of senior citizens who find partners later in life are choosing to live together as unmarried couples for the remainder of their lives.
- **Fewer Children as Caregivers** – Baby Boomers did not produce families as large as the ones they grew up in and therefore may have fewer children upon which to rely for assistance in later years.
- **Age-Friendly Urban Development** – Growing recognition at the local government level that new housing developments and even existing development should be geared toward "Age-Friendly" or "Lifelong" communities that include housing choice, transportation options and pedestrian/personal safety.

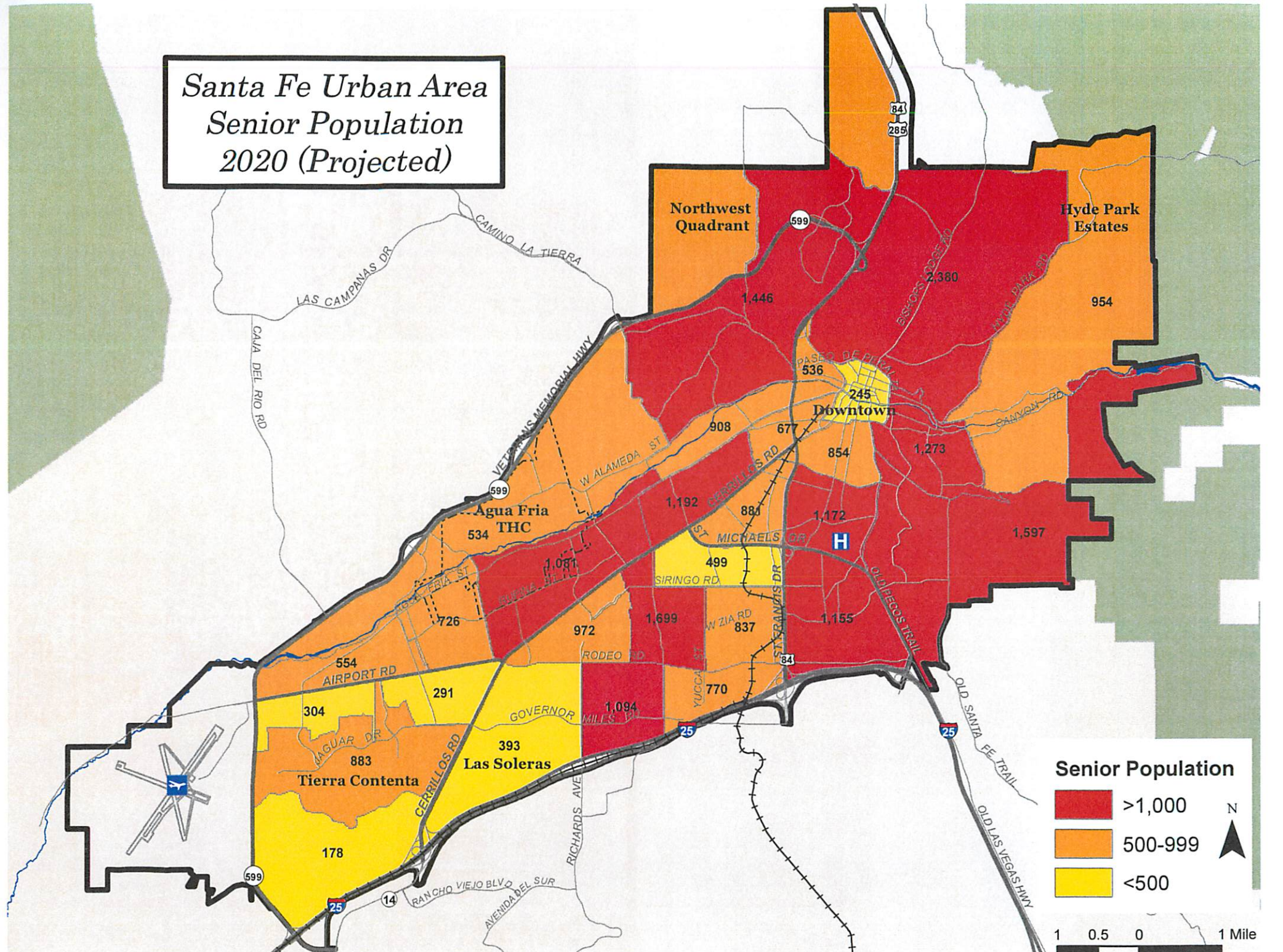
"Design for the young and you exclude the old; design for the old and you include the young."

- **House-to-Duplex** – Local governments should remove as many regulatory barriers as possible (and perhaps provide incentives such as waiving permit fees) to allow seniors to divide larger houses into duplexes, so that they can remain in their homes while having friends or family members live under the same roof with them, but in separate quarters. This allows for more communal and cost-effective "Aging In Place."

- Reed Liming, Director, Long Range Planning Division

Special thanks to: Ron Vialpando, Director, Senior Services Division
Louise Kippert, Administrative Assistant, Seniors Services Division
Leonard Padilla, G.I.S. Analyst

*Santa Fe Urban Area
Senior Population
2020 (Projected)*



Senior Population

- >1,000
- 500-999
- <500

N

1 0.5 0 1 Mile