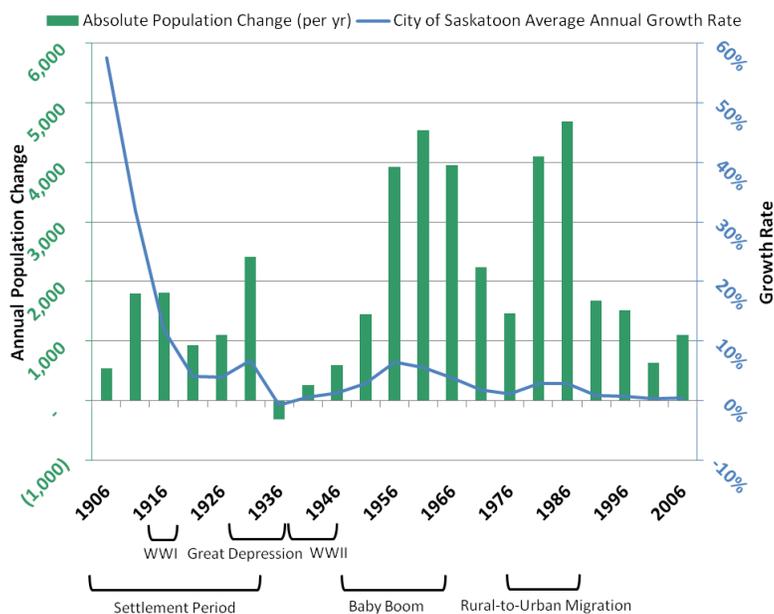




Is Saskatoon in the Midst of a Population Growth Event?

Based on analysis of previous periods of significant growth, and reasonable estimations of current population trends, it is apparent that Saskatoon is in the early stages of a population growth event. If current trends continue, Saskatoon is poised to see growth at levels not experienced in almost 30 years.

Historical Growth Pattern



Saskatoon has experienced three periods of significant, sustained population expansion (population growth events):

The Settlement Period (1901-1931) – Saskatoon’s population increased from 311 to 43,291 with average annual absolute growth of about 1,400 people per year, and an average annual growth rate over the period of 21.8%.

The Baby Boom (1946-1966) – Saskatoon’s population increased from 46,028 to 115,247, more than doubling in a 20-year span of time. Average annual population change during this period was 3,461 with an average annual growth rate over the period of 4.7%.

Rural-to-Urban Migration (1976-1986) – Saskatoon’s population increased from 133,750 to 177,641 – an increase of almost 44,000 in a decade. Average annual population change during this period was 4,389 with an average annual growth rate of 2.9%. While rural-to-urban migration constituted a major part of this growth, the emergence of the so-called “echo-boom” cohort was also likely a significant contributor.

Trends to Watch

- City of Saskatoon population projected to rise to between 236,000 and 256,000 by 2016 and between 255,000 and 310,000 by 2026.

Source: City of Saskatoon estimates

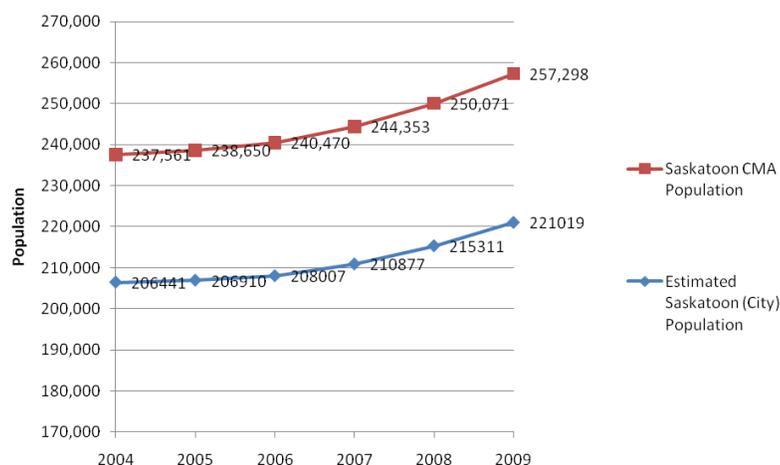
- International migration has become the key driver of population change in the Saskatoon CMA accounting for over 56% of the growth between 2008 and 2009, and more than quadrupling since 2004.

Source: Statistics Canada Population Estimates

Key Articles and Links

- [Saskatchewan Population Projections \(2006-2021\)](#)
- [Population Growth – Double or Nothing? Preparing for Saskatchewan’s Next 100 Years](#)
- [Saskatoon Region Economic Report: Q2-2008](#)

Recent Population Trends



Saskatoon CMA, City Estimated Population, 2004-2009

Saskatoon CMA Population Estimates, 2004-2009

Based on Statistics Canada estimates for the Saskatoon Census Metropolitan Area (“CMA”, of which Saskatoon constitutes approximately 86%), the city’s population has increased by almost 15,000 since 2004. A significant upswing in population is evident in the years since the last census (2006-present).

The city accounts for approximately 14,500 of the CMA growth since the last Federal Census (2006), or about 4,800 per year. This translates to an average annual growth rate of approximately 2%. If this average holds true for the five-year intercensal period (2006-2011), the City’s population will reach over 226,000 by 2011.

Jump to Projection Charts

- [City of Saskatoon Historical Population Growth](#)
- [Saskatoon CMA, City Estimated Population, 2004-2009](#)
- [Table - Demographic Components of Population Growth – Saskatoon CMA](#)
- [City of Saskatoon Population Projections, 2009 to 2026](#)
- [City of Saskatoon, Births, Deaths and Natural Increase, 1991-2008](#)

Demographic Components of Population Growth - Saskatoon CMA

| | 2004/2005 | 2005/2006 | 2006/2007 | 2007/2008 | 2008/2009 |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Net International Migration | 874 | 781 | 1,297 | 2,601 | 4,083 |
| % of Total Population Growth | - | - | 33.40% | 45.50% | 56.50% |
| Net Interprovincial Migration | -2,557 | -1,517 | 562 | 967 | 929 |
| % of Total Population Growth | - | - | 14.50% | 16.90% | 12.90% |
| Net Intraprovincial Migration | 1,232 | 1,242 | 896 | 835 | 833 |
| % of Total Population Growth | - | - | 23.10% | 14.60% | 11.50% |
| Total Net Migration | -451 | 506 | 2755 | 4403 | 5845 |
| Natural Increase | 1,031 | 1,057 | 1,128 | 1,315 | 1,382 |
| % of Total Population Growth | - | - | 29.00% | 23.00% | 19.10% |
| Total Population Growth | 580 | 1,563 | 3,883 | 5,718 | 7,227 |

What This Means for Saskatoon's Population

Current economic conditions, immigration trends, and birth rates suggest that these growth rates could be sustained, at least for the short-to-medium term.

Four projection scenarios were developed.

Projection 1 – Population growth promptly returns to recent historical growth levels of ~0.65% or 1,500 people per year.

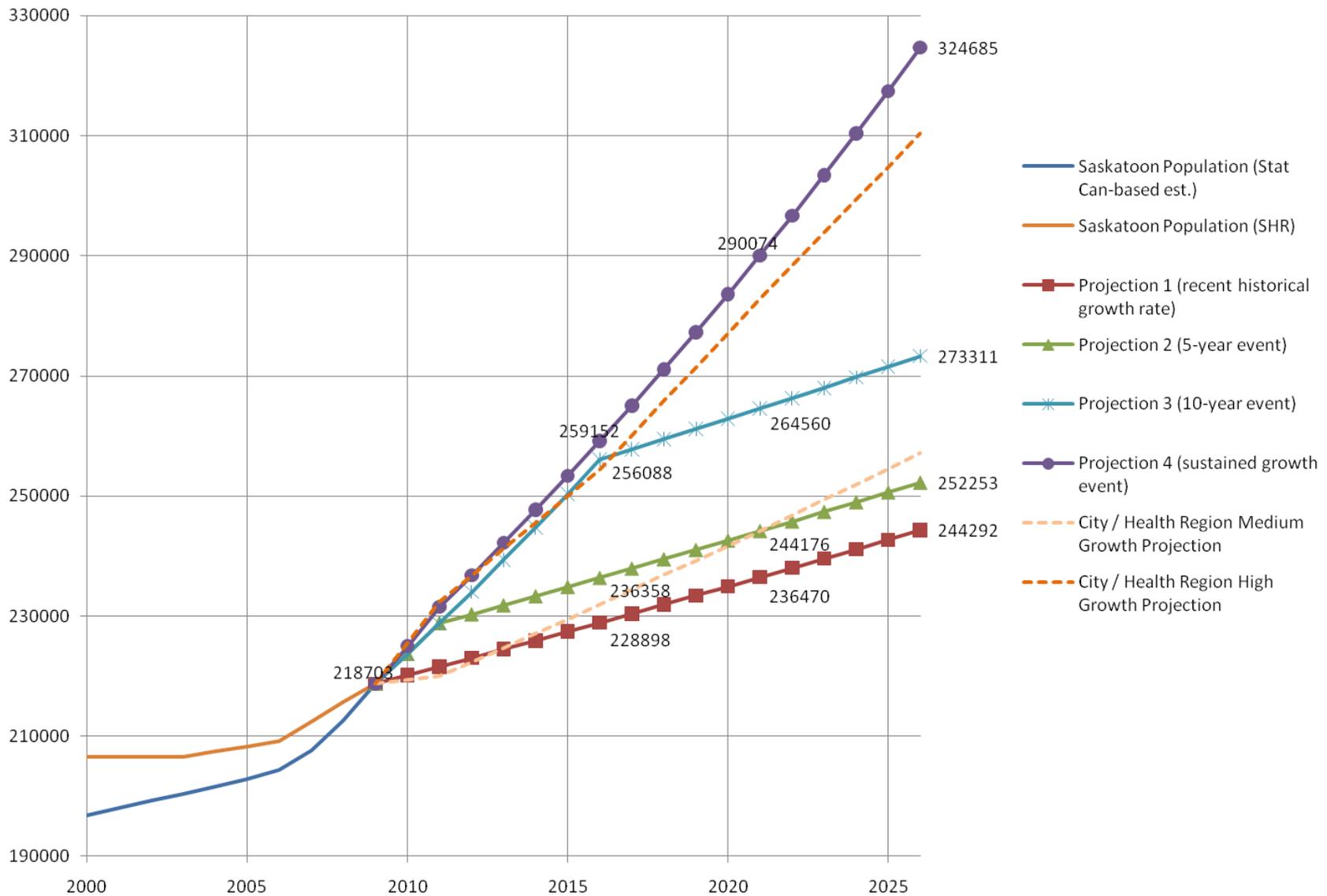
Projection 2 – Short-term (five-year) growth event: Following another two years of growth at 2.28%, growth rate returns to recent historical levels (0.65%).

Projection 3 – Extended (10-year) growth event: Following another seven years of growth at the 2.28%, growth rate returns to recent historical levels (0.65%).

Projection 4 – Population growth continues to increase for two years, following which growth will be sustained at 2.28% until 2026. Describes a long-term population growth event where a historically significant growth rate is maintained over a 15 year period which is comparable to the other three historic growth events.

Recent immigration and interprovincial migration trends, and birth rates suggest that Projection 1 is least likely to occur. Projections 2 and 3 illustrate a likely range for actual population growth to occur to 2026. If recent trends in international and interprovincial migration signal a fundamental and permanent shift in Saskatoon's appeal as a migration destination, Projection 4 is also a plausible outcome.

The recent *City of Saskatoon & The Saskatoon Health Region Population Projections (2006 – 2026)* report reaches similar conclusions to Projections 2-4 while using a completely different methodology. Therefore, it is probable that by 2026, Saskatoon's population will be somewhere between 255,000 and 310,000.



Saskatoon Population Projections, 2009 to 2026

Sources of Growth

In the Saskatoon CMA since 2006:

- natural increase (births-deaths) has increased moderately;
- intra-provincial migration has declined moderately;
- interprovincial migration has reversed directions with many people now returning to Saskatoon contributing to a moderate population gain; and
- **international migration has more than quadrupled.**

Changes in the natural increase and intra-provincial migration figures effectively offset each other. Interprovincial migration has switched from being a drain on the city's population to a moderate growth driver. International migration has become the key component of the city's population growth, outweighing all other sources combined.

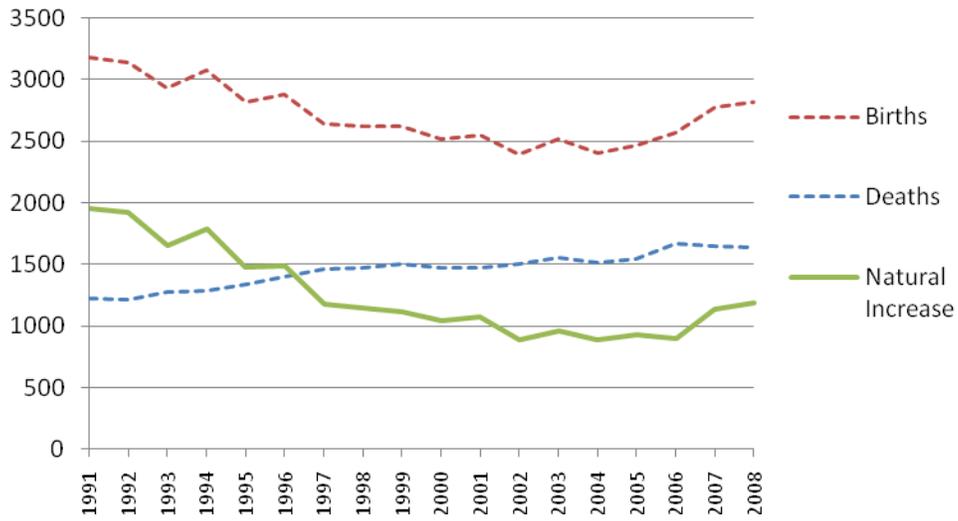
Given the characteristics of international immigration and ongoing policies (i.e. The Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program) to improve Saskatoon's appeal to immigrants, as well as current economic conditions in the City, it is unlikely that immigration will decline to pre-2006 levels in the short term. The city has apparently arrived at a period of sustained high levels of international immigration relative to recent years.

Current economic conditions in Saskatoon also make it unlikely that a significant decline in either inter- or intra-provincial migration trends will occur.

The rate of natural increase is likely to also contribute a relatively small but not-insignificant amount to Saskatoon's overall growth. Natural increase should remain constant or increase slightly as children of Baby Boomers enter their prime child-bearing years. Birth/death data from the Saskatoon Health Region shows moderate upswings in births as well as the level of natural increase. This trend will help bolster growth numbers, even if the level of international migration should fluctuate.

Conclusion

Saskatoon is currently in the initial stages of a population growth event that should see the population rise to between 236,000 and 256,000 by 2016 and between 255,000 and 310,000 by 2026. It is too early to confirm whether the growth rate will be sustained for several census periods (as was the case with previous growth events), or whether it will taper off relatively quickly and return to historical growth rates of the 1990s to the mid-2000s. However, given the characteristics of the growth, and the economic conditions in the city despite the current global economic downturn, it is reasonable to project that Saskatoon's growth will proceed at an accelerated pace for some time to come. With a strengthening of the world economy and a sustained or increasing level of international in-migration, these projections will be even more assured.



City of Saskatoon, Births, Deaths and Natural Increase, 1991-2008