

This means that we can expect a total population influx of 21,000 people into the northwest communities by 1981 or 72,000 people by 1985. This averages out to an annual growth rate for the area of 5%, far above our state average of 1%, and in some areas like West Valencia County, the growth rate may reach as high as 8%.

This rapid influx of people will place serious burdens on local community facilities. A major part of this study was to catalog the existing community infrastructure and determine, first of all, if it is adequately serving the present population and secondly, if it will service the expected population. Without fail, the researchers found a serious shortfall in present services in relation to the demand. Schools are overcrowded, with emergency portable classrooms handling the crunch for this year, but no plans for the future. Law systems are overwhelmed, with a low officer ration yet a high crime rate. Housing is inadequate, with vast capital improvements needed. Sewage systems are substandard or inadequate with a massive need of expansion and rehabilitation. Health and Social Services are swamped, with one of the lowest doctor ratios in the state and yet the highest demand of need.

This shortfall in present services is due to two reasons. First, the area has a high level of need. The communities have already experienced rapid growth impacts in the past and have yet to catch up with the first boom. Secondly, they are mostly rural, isolated, and have inadequate planning or funding resources to cope with the demand. These problems become especially critically when we talk about the future requirements to serve the anticipated population.

The Task Force staff and Council of Governments spent the last six