

# ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION, APPLICATION

## Why Should We, and How Do We Use Data in Planning?

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Whether you've been engaged in planning at your parish for a while or are deciding to embark on a new planning journey, data should play a significant role in the planning process. Data available to you and your team can provide valuable insights and paint a clearer picture of what is going on in your parish and surrounding community. Some resources can provide an overwhelming amount of data; so it's advantageous to identify and collect the relevant data that will assist you in your mission-driven planning.

### **Why Use Data**

Without identifying and collecting key data that can affect your planning, decision-making might be driven by emotion, history or gut feelings. And without data to provide a current snapshot of your community along with future trends, your starting point may not be realistic, making it more difficult to achieve vision.

### **How to Use Data**

Using data can be broken into three steps: analysis, interpretation and application. Analyzing your data critically examines what you've collected, sorting it into key indicators that can affect your planning and vision. Interpreting those key indicators identifies relationships between data variables, comparing them and recognizing differences to form conclusions and begin telling a story.

The chart on the next page shows an interpretation of relevant data points from MissionInsite's FullInsite reports that identifies major data themes and begins to tell the story of two geographical areas in the Archdiocese.

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Demographic Indicator	Study Area A	Study Area B	Deanery	Archdiocese	
Population Growth: 2019-2029	11%	9%	10%	6%	Population
Age 0-4 Growth: 2019-2029	27%	39%	32%	4%	
Age 5-17 Growth: 2019-2029	-9%	-8%	-8%	-4%	
Age 25-34 Change: 2019-2029	63%	47%	55%	13%	
Age 65+ Growth: 2019-2029	57%	60%	59%	41%	
Median Age: 2019	44	45	45	39	Household Structure
Median Age: 2029	43	44	43	40	
Kids Present in Total HH	31%	31%	31%	28%	
Single mother, of Kids HH	11%	9%	10%	26%	
Growth in Kids Presence: 2019-2024	3%	-%	2%	1%	
Married, of Family HH	87%	89%	88%	74%	Economic
Median HH Income	\$88,596	\$95,532	\$90,358	\$60,252	
Households with Income < \$35,000	16%	14%	15%	30%	
Households with Income > \$75,000	58%	60%	59%	39%	
HH Below Poverty	2%	2%	2%	9%	
White Collar	74%	69%	71%	62%	Race/Ethnicity
White	94%	95%	94%	74%	
Hispanic	3%	3%	3%	9%	
Hispanic Population Growth: 2019-2024*	16%	14%	15%	4%	
Black	1%	1%	1%	12%	
Black Population Growth: 2019-2024*	7%	3%	5%	-%	
Asian	2%	1%	1%	3%	
Asian Population Growth: 2019-2024*	12%	8%	11%	8%	
*Population Growth: 2019-2024	6%	4%	5%	3%	

The data and trends reveal these major themes: moderate population growth, significant growth among young families, strong family household structure, higher incomes, and very homogeneous areas. Further exploration of Census data revealed that household incomes fell lower than originally estimated in some areas because of a significant percent of stay-at-home moms compared to dual-income households, adding more insight into the data story.

After interpreting the data, application of this data could help give a parish team direction in their missionary planning process. What ways are our parish profiles similar to, or different from profiles of the community? How can we prepare for growth? Does our parish membership reflect growth in key age groups? How will these trends affect sacramental life at our parish? Does our evangelization include outreach for effectively attracting millennials, young families with children, and singles? Do our faith formation programs need to change? How does the discovery of stay-at-home moms change our volunteer recruitment and participation? What does the income data suggest regarding economic resources available for our ministries?

Data helps us see where we've been, where we are now, and the potential of where we could go in the future. Let me know how I can help you analyze, interpret, and apply the data you've collected for your planning process. I look forward to hearing from you.

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