

Opinion: California no longer a youthful state

By Dan Walters, Sacramento Bee

From its inception – first as a Spanish colony, later as part of Mexico, briefly as an independent nation and finally as a state – California has been a youthful society.

Waves of young immigrants, drawn by its expansive opportunities to find fame and fortune, and periodic surges in its birth rate generated high population growth and kept California relatively young.



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No more.

Immigration has slowed to a trickle, and with high outflow to other states and a rapidly declining birth rate, California's once-vibrant population growth has slowed to a walk – just one-third the rate of the 1980s.

The corollary is that those once-young immigrants and their progeny of yesteryear are getting older. As they do, California is growing grayer – fast.

A Census Bureau report reveals that when the 2010 census was taken, California had 4.2 million residents age 65 or older, or 11.4 percent of its 37 million residents.

Read the whole story