

Cities, Towns, and Townships in Indiana— The Latest Estimates of Population

Joan Rainey

*Research Director, Indiana
Business Research Center,
Kelley School of Business,
Indiana University*

State, county, and township borders within Indiana are very stable. When we consider population change for these areas, we can attribute it to natural increase (births minus deaths) and migration. Those factors also apply to Indiana's cities and towns, but there is an additional way in which cities can increase their population: annexation. Annexing surrounding areas not only expands a community's geographic area, but can also increase the population of the area as a result. This should be kept in mind when considering the growth trends related in the following highlights of city population growth.

Indiana's Largest Cities

Looking at the largest cities in Indiana (those with an estimated population in 1996 of 20,000 or more), we uncover the following information:

- The fastest-growing "big" city between 1990 and 1996 was Fishers in Hamilton County. From a 1990 population of about 7,000, it has reached an estimated population of more than 20,000, almost tripling its size. This translates to a growth rate of 188%, with more than 13,000 people added to its citizenry in the six years since the census. Indeed, its growth has been so fast that Fishers has now embarked on its fourth special census since 1990. And its 188% growth rate is four times that of Carmel, the second fastest-growing city.

- After Fishers, the next two fastest-growing large Hoosier cities are also in Hamilton County: Carmel (45%) and Noblesville (36%). Other cities experiencing growth exceeding 10% include Lawrence in Marion County (22%), Schererville in Lake County (16%), Greenwood in Johnson County (15%), Merrillville in Lake County (12%), and Portage in Porter County (12%).

- Compare these rates to those of the state (5.3%) and the nation (6.7%) during the same time period, and you have an idea of just how fast their growth is occurring.

- Other Hoosier cities multiplying faster than the state between 1990 and 1996 were Jeffersonville in Clark County (7%), Bloomington in Monroe County (7%), Valparaiso in Porter County (6%), and Mishawaka up in St. Joseph County (6%).

- Cities adding the largest numbers of people between 1990 and 1996 were Indianapolis (15,300), Fishers (13,500), Carmel (11,500), Noblesville (6,300), Lawrence (5,800), Bloomington (4,500), and Greenwood (4,100).

- Cities that have experienced a population decline exceeding 2,000 include Fort Wayne (7000, Allen County), Gary (5671, Lake), Hammond (4200, Lake), South Bend (3400, St. Joseph), Terre Haute (2900, Vigo), Evansville (2800, Vanderburgh), Marion (2600, Grant), East Chicago (2100, Lake), and Muncie (2100, Delaware).

- Large cities with the highest rates of population loss were Marion (8.1%), East Chicago (6.3%), and Terre Haute (5.0%).

The estimates indicate that there has been no change in the ranking of Indiana's ten largest (most populous) cities since 1990. These continue to include:

Indianapolis (757,000)	Hammond (80,000)
Fort Wayne (185,000)	Muncie (69,000)
Evansville (123,000)	Bloomington (66,000)
Gary (111,000)	Anderson (59,000)
South Bend (102,000)	Terre Haute (55,000)

Fishers jumped from being the 80th largest Hoosier community in 1990 to 35th in 1996. Carmel is up from 26th in 1990 to 17th in 1996, and Noblesville's rank increased from 40th to 31st. Marion, however, dropped from 20th to 25th. Cities new to the 20,000-plus group since 1990 include Fishers, Munster, and Noblesville.

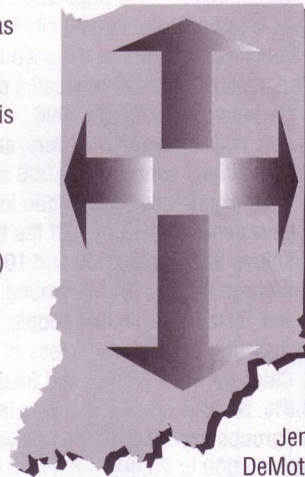
Smaller Cities and Towns

Westfield in Hamilton County is the fastest-growing town in the state. It more than doubled its 1990 census population of 3,300 with a 1996 estimate of 7,400 people and a growth rate of 125%. Other fast-growing Hoosier towns and small cities and their growth rates include North Vernon (69%, Jennings County), St. John (56%, Lake), DeMotte (51%, Jasper), Whiteland (41%, Johnson), Angola (41%, Steuben), Mooresville (36%, Morgan), Porter (33%, Porter), Cloverdale (33%, Putnam), and Brownsburg (31%, Hendricks).

The city of Peru in Miami County had an estimated loss of 1,700 people, with a 13.2% rate of decline since the 1990 census.

A Closer Look at Hamilton County

These estimates are consistent with previously released county population estimates for 1996. According to the latter, Hamilton County grew by 35.6% between 1990 and 1996. All of its townships, cities, and towns have increased as well during this period; however, the growth is not evenly distributed across the county. Most of it has occurred in the three largest



cities—Fishers, Carmel, and Noblesville. Together, they account for 80% of Hamilton County's population explosion.

Population Loss in Miami County

Miami County has experienced a decline of 11.4% between 1990 and 1996. All 14 of its townships lost population, with decline rates ranging from 8.1% for Clay Township to 14.3% for Pipe Creek Township. Combined population loss of more than 2,700 people for Peru and Pipe Creek townships accounts for 65% of the county's population decline. The resident personnel at Grissom Air Force Base and their families are included in the Census Bureau's estimates; the number of people assigned to Grissom has been greatly reduced since 1990.

Indiana Townships

Of the 1,008 townships in Indiana, 935 of them experienced population increases between April 1, 1990 and July 1, 1996. The remaining 73 townships experienced a decline.

Grouping Cities by Size

With an estimated 1996 population of 757,000, Indianapolis is not only the largest city in the state, it is four times as populous as the second largest city, Fort Wayne. Indianapolis experienced a population growth of 2.1% between 1990 and 1996.

Fort Wayne, Evansville, Gary, and South Bend— with populations between 100,000 and 200,000— have each experienced population loss. As a group, they have declined by 3.5%. Of the five cities with populations between 50,000 and 100,000, only Bloomington has grown; Hammond, Muncie, Anderson, and Terre Haute all lost people. The group of five cities together experienced a loss of 1.5%.

Cities between 25,000 and 50,000 together grew by 4.8%. Smaller cities and towns in the lower population groups experienced the following rates of increase: 15,000 to 25,000—8.3%; 5,000 to 15,000—6.4%; and under 5,000—4.7%.

As for the nation, there has been no change in the rankings of the six largest U.S. cities since 1990: New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, and San Diego. Phoenix has jumped from 9th in 1990 to 7th in 1996; San Antonio has moved up from 10th to 8th position, followed by Dallas. Detroit has dropped from 7th in 1990 to 10th in 1996, whereas San Jose retains 11th position. Indianapolis has passed Baltimore since the 1990 census to become the nation's 12th largest city.

What Are These Estimates?

Population estimates for Indiana for 1996 are available through our office or at the Indiana State Library

Data Center for all 1,008 Indiana townships and for incorporated places (cities and towns) in Indiana. Remember, they are only estimates and are not the result of an attempt to directly count the population, as in a census year. The city and town estimates are accompanied by revised 1990 Census figures that may reflect newer boundaries for the communities. They are based on the Boundary and Annexation Survey of the Census Bureau, though not all communities participate in this survey each year.

These estimates were produced by the U.S. Bureau of the Census using the Distributive Housing Method. Starting with the number of housing units in each geographic area from the 1990 census, and using building permit and demolition data for 1990 to 1996, an estimate of the number of housing units for July 1, 1996 for each geographic area is calculated. Then, applying the "persons per household" rates

"With an estimated 1996 population of 757,000, Indianapolis is not only the largest city in the state, it is four times as populous as the second largest city, Fort Wayne."

from the 1990 Census, estimates of the household population are calculated. Estimates of 1996 group quarters population are added to the household population estimates to yield total estimates for each area.

Using The Estimates

Even census numbers are not what they seem to be because our communities are not what they were. A case in point is the city of Fort Wayne, which appears to be declining in population when using current boundaries compared to 1990 Census figures. The official 1990 Census for Fort Wayne, published soon after the count, was 173,072 people. But because of boundary changes over the past seven years, the city of Fort Wayne requested a retabulation of its 1990 census figure, as allowed by Indiana state law.

Using boundaries current as of February 1996, the Census Bureau retabulated its 1990 figures, resulting in a count of 195,680. But late last year, as part of its estimation series, the Bureau also published a retabulated 1990 number of 191,839. Why is there a difference of nearly 4,000 people between these retabulated numbers when one set was produced for the city of Fort Wayne and the other for the estimation series, but both by the same agency?

For the moment, we have no answer to that question. It may involve differences in methodology

or the fact that different units within the Census Bureau conducted the work. The net result is that the base population for 1990, used by the Bureau in estimating the 1996 population, is smaller and resulted in a lower estimate for Fort Wayne in 1996 than otherwise might have been the case.

This could be cause for concern for Fort Wayne, as well as other cities in Indiana. The Census Bureau's estimates and its modified 1990 Census figures

(based on more current city boundaries) are published and readily available, but readers should be encouraged to exercise considerable caution when using them.

Table 1 provides a more detailed breakdown of these population estimates. For further information, please use our web site at www.iupui.edu/it/ibrc or contact us in writing (see address on back cover) or by telephone at 317-274-2979 or 812-855-5507.

Table 1
Population Estimates for Indiana Cities Whose 1996 Population Exceeds 20,000

	Census Population	Rank 1990	Estimated Population	Rank 1996	Population Change 1990-96	Rank of Change	Percent Change 1990-96	Rank of % Change
Anderson	59,518	9	59,131	9	-387	539	-0.7	435
Bloomington	62,015	8	66,479	8	4,464	6	7.2	168
Carmel	25,380	26	36,837	17	11,457	3	45.1	7
Columbus	33,948	17	32,963	19	-985	555	-2.9	483
East Chicago	33,892	18	31,761	22	-2,131	559	-6.3	546
Elkhart	44,661	12	44,224	14	-437	542	-1.0	445
Evansville	126,272	3	123,456	3	-2,816	561	-2.2	469
Fishers	7,189	80	20,665	35	13,476	2	187.5	2
Fort Wayne	191,839	2	184,783	2	-7,056	566	-3.7	497
Gary	116,646	4	110,975	4	-5,671	565	-4.9	527
Goshen	23,794	30	24,930	29	1,136	31	4.8	235
Greenwood	26,507	24	30,600	23	4,093	8	15.4	47
Hammond	84,236	6	80,081	6	-4,155	564	-4.9	526
Highland	23,696	31	23,569	32	-127	527	-0.5	427
Hobart	24,440	27	24,463	30	23	278	0.1	402
Indianapolis	741,866	1	757,171	1	15,305	1	2.1	341
Jeffersonville	24,016	29	25,787	28	1,771	21	7.4	161
Kokomo	44,996	11	45,785	11	789	45	1.8	347
La Porte	21,507	32	20,696	34	-811	552	-3.8	499
Lafayette	44,622	13	44,344	13	-278	535	-0.6	431
Lawrence	26,849	23	32,642	20	5,793	5	21.6	30
Marion	32,607	20	29,964	25	-2,643	560	-8.1	554
Merrillville	27,257	22	30,577	24	3,320	12	12.2	78
Michigan City	33,822	19	32,979	18	-843	553	-2.5	475
Mishawaka	42,635	14	45,045	12	2,410	15	5.7	206
Muncie	71,170	7	69,058	7	-2,112	558	-3.0	485
Munster	19,949	34	20,438	36	489	54	2.5	325
New Albany	36,322	16	38,224	15	1,902	20	5.2	220
Noblesville	17,655	40	23,960	31	6,305	4	35.7	11
Portage	29,062	21	32,419	21	3,357	11	11.6	83
Richmond	38,705	15	37,312	16	-1,393	556	-3.6	494
Schererville	20,155	33	23,322	33	3,167	13	15.7	44
South Bend	105,511	5	102,100	5	-3,411	563	-3.2	488
Terre Haute	57,475	10	54,585	10	-2,890	562	-5.0	530
Valparaiso	24,414	28	25,804	27	1,390	24	5.7	207
West Lafayette	26,144	25	27,177	26	1,033	33	4.0	266

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. As it appears here, the 1990 Census figure reflects boundary changes to the cities since 1990 and is used by the Bureau for comparability purposes.