

THE PEOPLE

This section examines general trends and characteristics of the people who make up the City of Lincoln and Lancaster County. It includes considerations of how fast the population has grown, changes in the racial and ethnic composition, shifts in age groups, and dynamics in the households being formed in the city and county.

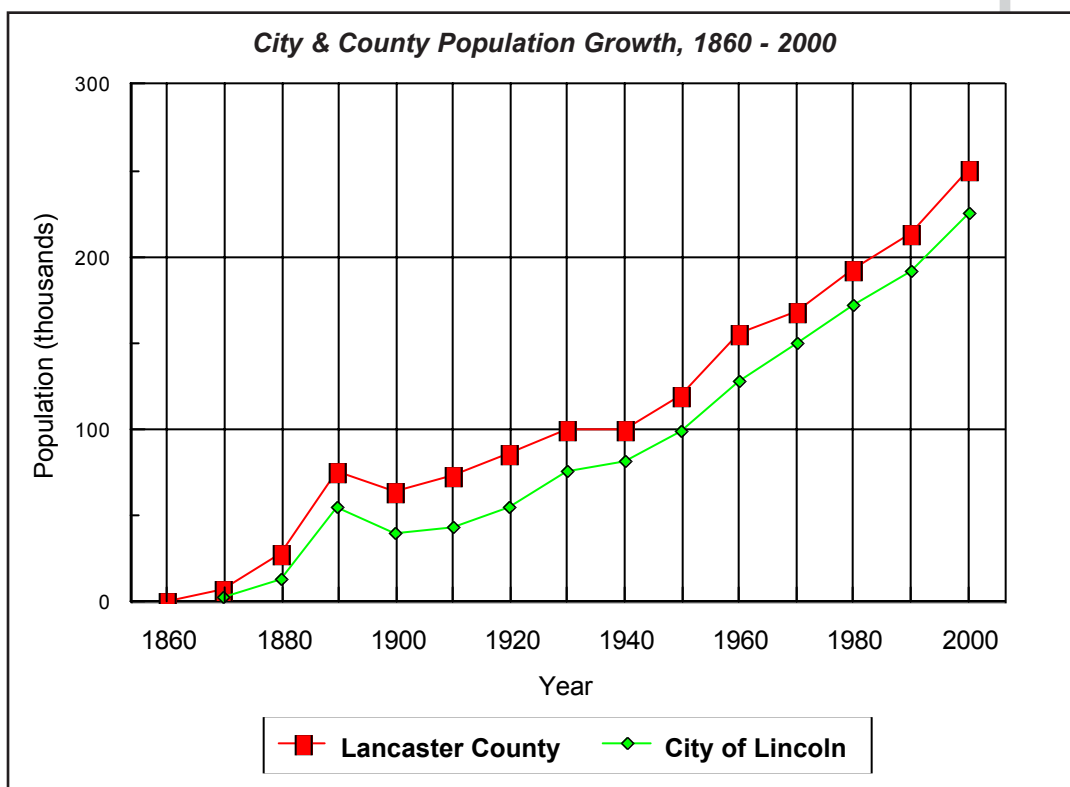
GROWING A COMMUNITY

Throughout its history, Lancaster County has demonstrated a remarkable capacity to grow and flourish.

From a humble settlement with little more than 150 people in 1860, the County's population has prospered through good times and bad. The most recent decade witnessed a continuation of this pattern as the County gained nearly 37,000 new residents — from 213,641 people in 1990 to 250,291 in 2000. This annualized growth rate of 1.6 percent during the 1990's was the fastest pace of expansion since the post World War II boom.

Paralleling the County's recent growth, the City of Lincoln posted similar gains in population. From

a base of 191,971 persons in 1990, the City surpassed the two-hundred-thousand figure in the year 2000 with a total 225,581 residents. The 33,610 new urban residents allowed Lincoln to stay at approximately 90 percent of the County's total population. The City has remained at about this level since the 1970's.



Towns and Villages	Population		Total Change 1990-2000
	1990	2000	
Bennet	544	570	26
Davey	160	153	-7
Denton	161	189	28
Firth	471	564	93
Hallam	309	276	-33
Hickman	1081	1111	30
Malcolm	372	413	41
Panama	207	253	46
Raymond	167	186	19
Roca	84	220	136
Sprague	157	146	-11
Waverly	1869	2448	579
Totals	5582	6529	947

The County’s other twelve incorporated cities and towns also remained a vibrant element of the area’s demographic landscape. During the past decade, population within these cities and towns increased from 5,582 persons in 1990 to 6,502 in 2000 – comprising about 2.6 percent of the County’s total population. The overall pace of growth was measured at 1.54 percent per year. Among the twelve jurisdictions, nine saw a net increase in population, while three experienced modest declines. The City of Waverly registered the greatest absolute gain in population with a net growth of 579 residents.

The balance of the County – persons not residing within any of the incorporated areas – grew at an annualized rate of 1.25 percent — from about 16,100 persons in 1990 to around 18,200 in 2000. Included in these figures are both the farming community and persons living in acreage style developments. Together, these residents account for a little over 7 percent of the County’s total population.

THE CHANGING PICTURE OF DIVERSITY

Lincoln and Lancaster County have historically been home to a relatively small minority population. In 1990, the County’s minority population comprised barely 5 percent of the total population. With recent trends in domestic migration and international immigration, Lincoln and Lancaster County’s minority population grew dramatically during the last decade – now topping 10 percent of the County’s total population.

From nearly 11,000 people in 1990, the number of minority residents in the County surged to almost 25,000 persons in the year 2000 Census. The minority population’s annualized rate of increase of 8.5 percent far outpaced the County’s overall growth rate of 1.6 percent per year, as well as the white population’s rate of 1.1 percent per year. Of Lancaster County’s net population increase of nearly 37,000 persons during the 1990’s, minorities accounted for almost 40 percent – or two out of every five net new residents.

Among identified racial groups, the Asian population tallied the greatest gains – both in terms of absolute and percentage increases. From a base of 3,367 persons in 1990, persons of Asian descent reached 7,162 individuals by the year 2000 – an overall increase of over 110 percent. This resulted in Asians now comprising the largest single minority population in the County.

Blacks/African Americans – the County’s largest minority population in 1990 – increased from 4,659 persons at the start of the decade to reach 7,052 persons by the turn of the century. This 51 percent increase in total population was the second largest of any single racial category.

Persons indicating “Other” as their racial heritage and persons of two or more races also represent a large segment of Lancaster County’s minority population. Individuals noting “Other” as their racial ancestry increased from 1,745 persons in 1990 to 4,225 in 2000 – a rise of over 140 percent. As part of the Year 2000 United States Census, the racial category of “Two or More Races” was added as a response option. While no comparable 1990 figures exist, nearly 4,700 individuals throughout the County indicated a multiple racial background. This equates to almost two percent of the County’s overall population.



The United States Bureau of the Census considers race and Hispanic origin as two separate and distinct concepts. As such, individuals identifying themselves as being of Hispanic origin may be of any racial group.

Lancaster County’s Hispanic/Latino population experienced an increase approaching 115 percent over the decade of the 90’s. With a population nearing 4,000 people in 1990, persons of Hispanic/Latino descent exceeded 8,400 individuals in the year 2000. Among the County’s Hispanic/Latino population, nearly two thirds (or 67 percent) identified themselves as being of Mexican heritage.

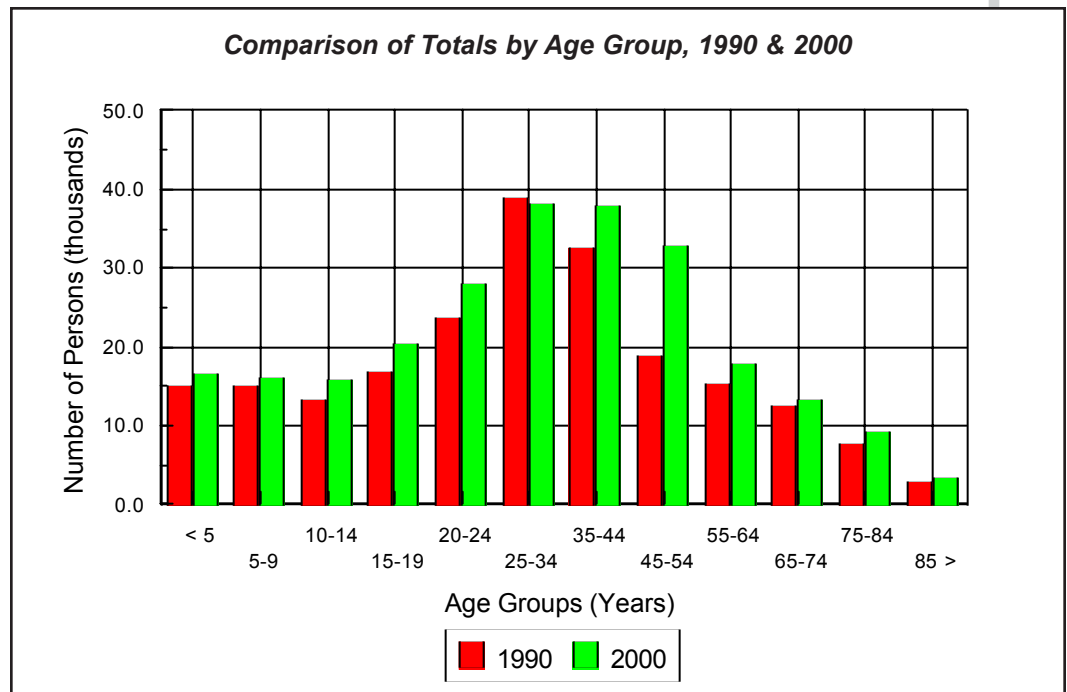
Almost 30 percent noted “Other Hispanic or Latino” as their heritage, with Puerto Rican and Cuban comprising the balance. Members of the “Other Hispanic or Latino” group grew the fastest during the past decade with a percentage increase of 180 percent. Persons of Mexican descent posted the largest absolute gain of 2,706 persons.

THE CHANGING SEASONS: GENERATIONAL DYNAMICS

As in many areas of the United States, Lancaster County’s age profile has been influenced by the “Baby Boomer” generation. While persons between the ages of 25 to 34, and 35 to 44 remain the County’s two largest cohorts, persons in the 45 to 54, and 55 to 59 age groups demonstrated the largest percentage gains in population over the last decade. Persons ages 45 to 54 rose by nearly 75 percent, from about 18,850 in 1990 to around 32,800 in 2000.

The emerging maturation of the County’s population base was further affirmed in the median age. This figure reached 32.0 years of age in the year 2000 – up from 30.7 years of age in 1990, and 27.5 years of age in 1980.

Individuals in the 25 to 34 age bracket remained the largest single group with 38,200 persons, followed by the 35 to 44 age category with 37,900 persons. The number of persons at the two ends of the age curve – that is, persons 19 years of age and under, and those 65 years of age and older – both increased but at a slower pace than the County as a whole. Among persons 19 years of age and younger, the population rose by 14.3 percent during the past decade – below the County’s 17.2 percent growth. Within this age cohort, persons between 10 and 19 years of age increased the fastest with an overall rise of 20.4 percent, while those under 10 increased by just 8.2 percent.



Among older residents, persons 65 years of age and older climbed by 12.2 percent during the 1990’s – again below the County’s overall increase of 17.2 percent. However, the growth was disproportional as persons 75 years of age

and older surged by 20.8 percent. These trends hold significant implications for housing, medical care, community facilities, transportation, continuing education, and other services supporting this growing segment of the area's demographic base.

HOUSEHOLDS: A QUILTED PATTERN

The total number households grew at a slightly higher pace than the County's overall population. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of households in Lancaster County rose from 82,759 units to 99,187 units – an increase of 19.0 percent compared to the population's 17.2 percent increase.

There continues to be a decline in the number of “family households” as the number of persons in “nonfamily households” grows. In 1980, family households comprised 66.3 percent of all households. That figure dropped to 64.0 percent in 1990, and to 61.2 percent in 2000. The total number of nonfamily households added during the 1990's (14,295 units) was actually greater than the total number of family households added during the same period (13,123 units).

Both the average household size and average family size showed declines, although there are indications that the long term decline in these two rates is waning.

Average household size has moved from 2.52 persons in 1980, to 2.44 in 1990, and then down to 2.40 in 2000. Similarly, average family size has dropped from 3.10 persons in 1980, to 3.03 in 1990, and now down to 3.00 in 2000.

Persons residing in “group quarters” – that is, residents of dormitories, prisons, and nursing homes – during 2000 (12,197 people) increased slightly from 1990 (11,471) but remained below the 1980 level (12,272). A modest shift has occurred in this demographic group with persons in institutionalized settings (mostly prisons and reformatories) representing a rising portion of the group quarters population – up from 27.6 percent of the total in 1980 to 33.3 percent in 2000.

The percent of “owner occupied dwelling units” throughout the County remained unchanged between 1990 and 2000 - exactly 60.5 percent for both benchmark points. The “owner occupied dwelling unit” figure is down very slightly from 61.4 percent in 1980.