

Pluses in housing crisis for Midwest (7/10/08)

By Charisse Jones and Paul Overberg, USA TODAY

Parts of the Midwest experienced a modest population resurgence last year as the nation's housing crisis disrupted a long-term migration by Americans to the Sun Belt, a USA TODAY analysis of new Census data shows.

Chicago and St. Paul were among the cities that saw their populations grow during the 12 months ending July 1, 2007, after declining the previous year, according to figures released today.

Cincinnati; Indianapolis; Wichita; Kansas City, Mo.; Springfield, Mo.; Ann Arbor, Mich.; and Rockford, Ill., were among the Midwestern cities where growth, though modest, accelerated from 2005 to 2007.

The housing crisis, which generally has made mortgages harder to obtain and homes harder to sell, is likely a major factor in why many residents are staying put, says William Frey, a Brookings Institution demographer.

The same forces are cooling rapid expansion in booming Sun Belt cities such as Houston, Phoenix, Las Vegas and Orlando, which grew last year but at a slower pace than a year earlier. "You see people hanging tight and not moving out to the suburbs or other parts of the country," says Frey, who saw similar trends in parts of the Northeast and along California's coast.

After losing ground every year since 2000, St. Paul was up 0.4% in 2007. "It's nice to be headed in the right direction," says Bob Hume, spokesman for Mayor Chris Coleman. "You can attribute it to everything from gas prices to great parks, but across the country the urban core is being revitalized. Those investments are starting to yield results."

Housing prices also might be a plus for the Midwest. "The Midwest was much more affordable relative to Sun Belt markets," said Lawrence Yun, chief economist for the National Association of Realtors.

Last year's fastest-growing city was New Orleans. Its population rose 13.8% to 239,124 but is still down by half since Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005.

TABLE: Top 75 U.S. cities ranked by population

Population growth is uneven across the USA. How do you see your city growing or shrinking? Leave a comment below. The 75 most populous cities — based on July 1, 2007, estimates — and the change over seven years:

	2007 pop.	% chng. 2000-07	2007 rank	2000 rank
New York	8,274,527	3.3%	1	1
Los Angeles	3,834,340	3.8%	2	2
Chicago	2,836,658	-2.1%	3	3
Houston	2,208,180	11.8%	4	4
Phoenix	1,552,259	17.4%	5	6
Philadelphia	1,449,634	-4.5%	6	5
San Antonio	1,328,984	14.6%	7	9
San Diego	1,266,731	3.5%	8	7
Dallas	1,240,499	4.4%	9	8

San Jose	939,899	4.9%	10	11
Detroit	916,952	-3.6%	11	10
Jacksonville	805,605	9.5%	12	14
Indianapolis	795,458	1.7%	13	12
San Francisco	764,976	-1.5%	14	13
Columbus, Ohio	747,755	4.9%	15	15
Austin	743,074	12.6%	16	17
Fort Worth	681,818	25.9%	17	28
Memphis	674,028	-2.4%	18	16
Charlotte	671,588	18.5%	19	22
Baltimore	637,455	-2.1%	20	18
El Paso	606,913	7.6%	21	23
Milwaukee	602,191	0.9%	22	19
Boston	599,351	1.7%	23	20
Seattle	594,210	5.5%	24	24
Nashville- Davidson, Tenn.	590,807	8.3%	25	27
Denver	588,349	6.3%	26	25
Washington	588,292	2.8%	27	21
Las Vegas	558,880	16.4%	28	33
Louisville-Jefferson, Ky.	557,789	1.2%	29	26
Portland, Ore.	550,396	4.0%	30	29
Oklahoma City	547,274	8.1%	31	30
Tucson	525,529	7.8%	32	31
Atlanta	519,145	24.2%	33	40
Albuquerque	518,271	15.3%	34	36
Fresno	470,508	9.5%	35	38
Long Beach	466,520	1.1%	36	35
Sacramento	460,242	13.1%	37	41
Mesa, Ariz.	452,933	13.8%	38	43
Kansas City, Mo.	450,375	2.0%	39	37
Cleveland	438,042	-8.3%	40	34
Virginia Beach	434,743	2.2%	41	39
Omaha	424,482	8.5%	42	45
Miami	409,719	13.0%	43	48
Oakland	401,489	0.5%	44	42
Tulsa	384,037	-2.3%	45	44

Minneapolis	377,392	-1.4%	46	46
Colorado Springs	376,427	4.2%	47	49
Raleigh, N.C.	375,806	31.6%	48	61
Honolulu	375,571	1.1%	49	47
Arlington, Texas	371,038	11.4%	50	54
Wichita	361,420	2.7%	51	50
St. Louis	350,759	0.7%	52	51
Santa Ana, Calif.	339,555	0.5%	53	52
Tampa	336,823	11.0%	54	58
Anaheim, Calif.	333,249	1.4%	55	56
Cincinnati	332,458	0.4%	56	55
Bakersfield, Calif.	315,837	29.6%	57	70
Aurora, Colo.	311,794	12.8%	58	63
Pittsburgh	311,218	-7.0%	59	53
Toledo, Ohio	295,029	-6.0%	60	57
Riverside, Calif.	294,437	15.1%	61	67
Stockton, Calif.	287,245	18.1%	62	71
Corpus Christi, Texas	285,507	2.9%	63	62
Newark	280,135	2.8%	64	64
Anchorage	279,671	7.4%	65	66
Lexington-Fayette, Ky.	279,044	7.1%	66	65
St. Paul	277,251	-3.3%	67	60
Buffalo	272,632	-6.8%	68	59
Plano, Texas	260,796	17.3%	69	79
Glendale, Ariz.	253,152	15.2%	70	81
Fort Wayne, Ind.	251,247	-0.2%	71	68
Henderson, Nev.	249,386	42.3%	72	119
Lincoln, Neb.	248,744	9.9%	73	78
Greensboro, N.C.	247,183	8.2%	74	76
St. Petersburg, Fla.	246,407	-0.8%	75	69

Source: Analysis of Census Bureau data by Paul Overberg, USA TODAY

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