

BA growth second in state

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Tuesday, January 05, 2010
1/5/2010 3:59:58 AM

To understand just how much Broken Arrow has grown since 2000, imagine the entire population of Sand Springs, about 18,500 people. Now imagine them moving to Broken Arrow.

That's how much Broken Arrow has grown since 2000, about 18,072 people, through mid-2008, according to the latest available U.S. Census Bureau population estimates.

With 24 percent growth in population since 2000, Broken Arrow ranks No. 2 in the state in residential growth behind Oklahoma City, which has added 45,657 people to its ranks since 2000.

Broken Arrow, with a population of 92,931, has surpassed Lawton in residents and is now the No. 4 most populous city in the state, after Oklahoma City, Tulsa and Norman.

But Broken Arrow's growth is not unique in this area. Broken Arrow is among a handful of cities in the Tulsa metropolitan area that have experienced rapid growth this decade.

Since 1993, Broken Arrow has had two or more streets under construction to meet the expanding traffic needs, City Manager Dave Wooden said.

"Even at that, it's hard to keep up when your growth is as rapid as we're having right now," Wooden said. "Like any growing city, we have more infrastructure needs than we have dollars."

Despite the growth, the city has enjoyed the support of voters when it comes to meeting those needs, he said.

"We have been very fortunate the citizens of Broken Arrow have been very supportive of bond issues," Wooden said.

He points to a high quality of life for the continued population growth during the past decade.

"I think our quality of life here in Broken Arrow rivals any in the state," Wooden said. "We've been ranked either the No. 1 or No. 2 safest city in the state for the past six years."

Other cities leading the way in area population growth this decade were Owasso, Bixby and Jenks.

Owasso has grown nearly 50 percent since 2000, adding 8,965 new residents. Its population is now 27,467.

City Manager Rodney Ray attributes a quality school system for much of the growth.

"I think people really feel this is where they want their children to be," Ray said.

Having a physical separation between Tulsa and Owasso may also contribute to Owasso's popularity this decade, Ray said.

"I think people like suburban lifestyle and perhaps having that distance, that greenbelt that separates Tulsa from Owasso gives them a sense of being in their own community," Ray said.

Other suburban cities also posted strong gains in population this decade.

Bixby has grown 55 percent since 2000. Its population grew from 13,336 in 2000 to 20,678 in 2008.

Jenks has grown by 63 percent since 2000, or from 9,557 to 15,590 people.

Meanwhile, the city of Tulsa has been on a roller coaster population ride since 2000.

Tulsa started the decade with a population of 393,049 residents, an all-time high.

An economic downturn then hit the city, with Tulsa experiencing five consecutive years of population declines before bottoming out at 380,624 people in 2005.

Tulsa's population has increased every year since 2005 and was estimated to be 385,635 people by mid-2008, still 7,414 residents below its peak in 2000.

A combination of suburban growth and city of Tulsa population stagnation has resulted in the percentage of people living in Tulsa compared to neighboring cities decreasing from 62 percent in 2000 to 57 percent in 2008.

Tulsa Mayor Dewey Bartlett said he would like to see the population increase trend continue.

"What I would like is more taxpayers, it's as simple as that," Bartlett said. "More taxpayers will buy more things to generate sales tax revenue, which is what we desperately need to provide services to our citizens."

Area city population change this decade

	Increase	Residents
1. Jenks	+63 %	+6,033
2. Bixby	+55%	+7,342
3. Kiefer	+54%	+557
4. Owasso	+49%	+8,965
5. Coweta	+27%	+1,957
6. Skiatook	+26%	+1,424
7. Broken Arrow	+24%	+18,072
8. Collinsville	+24%	+962
9. Glenpool	+22%	+1,791
10. Catoosa	+21%	+1,158


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Associate Images:



Cars fill the parking lot at Bass Pro Shops Outdoor World store. Broken Arrow has added 18,000 residents since 2000. SHERRY BROWN / Tulsa World

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