

Chapter 2



Population and Demographics

According to the 2000 Census, Norwalk was a City of 16,238 persons when the Census was taken in 1999. This total was the culmination of a century of growth that saw the City of 7,074 increase by 130 percent. Growth by decade was recorded as follows:

Table 1: Norwalk Population Over Time

1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
7,074	7,858	7,379	7,776	8,211	9,775	12,900	13,386	14,358	14,731	16,238
% growth	11.1%	-6.1%	5.4%	5.6%	19.0%	32.0%	3.8%	7.3%	2.6%	10.2%

Source: U.S. Census

Norwalk witnessed rapid growth during the 1940’s and 1950’s, adding nearly one-third of its population during the post-war boom period of the 1950’s. While growth was inhibited during the 1980’s, a time of recession in the Midwest, the pace of growth has picked back up somewhat, reaching just over ten percent during the 1990’s.

It is important to remember that a municipality’s population increases because of three factors: net immigration into the City, births within the City exceeding deaths, and through annexation of new land and households. It is likely that, in addition to immigration, the City annexed new property during the boom period of the 1940’s and 1950’s.

Table 2: Huron County Population Over Time

1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
32,330	34,206	32,424	33,700	34,800	39,353	47,326	49,587	54,608	56,240	59,487
% growth	5.8%	-5.2%	3.9%	3.3%	13.1%	20.3%	4.8%	10.1%	3.0%	5.8%

Source: U.S. Census

Huron County’s population generally followed the ebb and flow of the City’s growth trends, with a major boost and the birth of the ‘baby boomer’ generation in the 1940’s and 1950’s. While the County experienced two-digit growth over the 1970’s (at 10.1percent), the 1990’s

did not bring the extent of growth witnessed in the City. In fact, Norwalk’s net increase of 1,507 residents was nearly half (46.4percent) of the County’s net increase of 3,247.

Norwalk in 2000

A closer look at the 16,238 people counted as Norwalk residents for the 2000 Census can be helpful in forming a more accurate picture of the City. A first breakdown considers the population by age group. This helps form a picture of the size of various age groups: school age population, the elderly, people in their working years. Also, grouping by age cohort helps project what the population will look like in ten or twenty years.

Table 3 reveals a fairly evenly dispersed population, with males making up 47.8 percent and females 52.2 percent of the total. There is a large cohort of younger adults, with the largest number in the 25-34 and 35-44 brackets. Retirement is not likely for this group for 20 to 30 years, so they represent a significant labor force.

The median age in Norwalk was 34.2, a bit younger than Huron County’s median of 34.9, and fully two years younger than Ohio’s median of 36.2.

Table 3: Norwalk 2000 Population By Age and Gender

	Male	Female	Total Population
Under 5 Years	660	650	1,310
5 to 9 years	690	612	1,302
10 to 14 years	646	599	1,245
15 to 19 years	557	523	1,080
20 to 24 years	509	567	1,076
25 to 34 years	1,175	1,114	2,289
35 to 44 years	1,155	1,252	2,407
45 to 54 years	962	1,031	1,993
55 to 59 years	309	375	684
60 to 64 years	248	296	544
65 to 74 years	467	654	1,121
75 to 84 years	319	554	873
85 years and over	61	253	314
Total	7,758	8,480	16,238

Source: 2000 Census of Population

While nearly nineteen out of 20 Norwalk residents are White, the Black population has held steady for several decades, and the Hispanic ethnic group has grown significantly to become nearly twice the size of the Black/African American racial group. The Hispanic population grew from just 198 in 1990, more than tripling over the decade, to 620 in the 2000 Census. Further, many in Norwalk’s Hispanic/Latino population feel certain that the City’s total Hispanic population is significantly undercounted, and the actual total may be as high as 1,800.

Another interesting characteristic of the population is the origin of its ancestry. The top five ancestries reported by residents for the 2000 Census were German (5,569 people, or

just over one-third of the population), English (1,821), Irish (1,764), United States/American (1,490), Italian (946), Dutch (509), French (409), Polish (361), Scottish (353), and Welsh (256).

Table 4: Race and Hispanic Origin in Norwalk

	Number	Percent
Total Population, 2000	16,238	100.0
One Race	16,055	98.9
White	15,350	94.5
Black or African American	316	1.9
Asian	35	0.2
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0
Some Other Race	302	1.9
Two or More races	183	1.1
Hispanic or Latino	620	3.8
Mexican	469	2.9
Puerto Rican	46	0.3
Cuban	3	0
Other Hispanic/Latino	102	0.6

Source: U.S. 2000 Census of Population

Table 5: Households in Norwalk

	Number	Percent	Ohio
Total Households	6,377	100.0	100.0
Family Households	4,232	66.4	67.3
With own children under 18	2,213	34.7	31.7
Married-Couple family	3,185	49.9	51.4
With own children under 18	1,521	23.9	22.4
Female householder, no husband present	808	12.7	12.1
With own children under 18	548	8.6	7.3
Nonfamily households	2,143	33.6	32.7
Householder living Alone	1,815	28.5	27.3
Householder 65 Years/over	761	11.9	10.0
Households with individuals under 18 years	2,376	37.3	34.5
Households with individuals 65 years+	1,586	24.9	23.8
Average Household Size	2.49	X	2.49
Average Family Size	3.06	X	3.04

Source: 2000 Census of Population

First, it is important to note that while Norwalk’s population grew by 10.2 percent over the 1990s, the number of households grew by a larger proportion, 13.1 percent. This leads to the correct conclusion that household size has shrunk in Norwalk, from an average of 2.55 in 1990 to 2.49 in 2000. The 2000 average of 2.49 is equal to the State average, but somewhat lower than the Huron County average of 2.65.

Household types by percentage closely follow statewide percentages, rarely varying by more than one to two percent. The greatest divergence is in Norwalk having a larger percentage of households with individuals under 18 years old (37.3 percent vs. Ohio’s 34.5 percent). The incidence of single female householders is slightly greater in Norwalk, and Norwalk’s proportion of households with single householders age 65 and over is nearly two percent greater than the State’s rate (11.9 percent vs. 10.0 percent).

Income Factors

Norwalk’s median household income, at \$37,778, is less than the County and State medians. While median family income is closer to the County’s median, both are several thousand dollars less than the State median. This holds true for the per capita income as well. Finally, the median income for males living in Norwalk is slightly larger than the County median, and just over \$1,000 less than the State median. The median for females is \$620 less than the County median, and over \$4,000 less than the State median. For the most part, Norwalk’s households and wage earners earn less than the County and State’s labor force, on average.

Table 6: Income Comparisons: Norwalk, Huron County, and Ohio

Income in 1999	Number Norwalk	Percent Norwalk	Huron Co.	Ohio
Households	6,349	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than \$10,000	464	7.3	6.8	9.1
\$10,000 to \$14,999	445	7.0	5.9	6.4
\$15,000 to \$24,999	987	15.5	14.7	13.4
\$25,000 to \$34,999	1,059	16.7	15.0	13.6
\$35,000 to \$49,999	1,184	18.6	19.4	17.3
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1,366	21.5	23.9	20.4
\$75,000 to \$99,999	448	7.1	8.6	10.0
\$100,000 to \$149,999	300	4.7	4.4	6.5
\$150,000 to \$199,999	33	0.5	0.4	1.6
\$200,000 or more	63	1.0	0.9	1.7
Median Household Income	\$37,778	X	\$40,558	\$40,956
Median Family Income	\$45,789	X	\$46,911	\$50,037
Per Capita Income	\$18,589	X	\$18,133	\$21,003
Median earnings, male full-time year-round worker	\$36,582	X	\$35,760	\$37,692
Median earnings, female full-time year-round worker	\$22,165	X	\$22,785	\$26,400

Source: U.S 2000 Census of Population

Poverty: With 289 families in poverty in 1999, Norwalk had a 6.8 percent family poverty rate, slightly larger than the County rate (6.5 percent) but less than the State rate (7.8 percent). Among the City’s individuals, 1,391 (8.8 percent) were in poverty in Norwalk, more than the County rate (8.5 percent), and somewhat less than the State rate (10.6 percent).

Huron County can be classified somewhat as “blue collar” in the sense that the percent of workers in management and professional occupations is about ten percent less than the State percentage (21.2 percent County vs. 31.0 percent State), while the percentage of production and related workers, 30.9 percent for Norwalk and fully one-third of workers for the County, is considerably greater than for the State (19.0 percent). The manufacturing sector, employing three in ten workers in Norwalk and one in three Countywide, only employs one-fifth of the State’s workers. The compensation for this difference is in the additive differences in sector where the City has a smaller percentage of workers than the State, including finance, insurance, and related (a 3.3 percent difference), professional and related (2.8 percent), educational, health, and social services (3.0 percent), and public administration (1.6 percent).

Table 7: Occupation and Industry

Occupation	Norwalk#	Norwalk%	Huron%	Ohio%
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	7,677	100.0%	100.0	100.0
Management, professional, and related occupations	1,762	23.0	21.2	31.0
Service occupations	1,103	14.4	13.5	14.6
Sales and office occupations	1,842	24.0	20.3	26.4
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	48	0.6	1.0	0.3
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	550	7.2	10.7	8.7
Production, transportation, & material moving occupations	2,372	30.9	33.4	19.0
Industry/Sector				
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, mining	21	0.3	2.5	1.1
Construction	527	6.9	7.8	6.0
Manufacturing	2,338	30.5	33.3	20.0
Wholesale trade	259	3.4	2.6	3.6
Retail trade	906	11.8	9.9	11.9
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	381	5.0	6.5	4.9
Information	169	2.2	1.4	2.4
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	230	3.0	2.8	6.3
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management	398	5.2	4.2	8.0
Educational, health and social services	1,279	16.7	15.4	19.7
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, food serv.	658	8.6	6.8	7.5
Other services (except public administration)	319	4.2	4.2	4.5
Public administration	192	2.5	2.6	4.1

Source: 2000 Census of Population

Education

Table 8 provides a comparison of the population’s attainment of varying levels of education. Huron County’s level of educational attainment lags somewhat behind the State’s.

Table 8: Educational Attainment

Level of education reached	Number Norwalk	Percent Norwalk	Huron	Ohio
Population 25 years and over	10,234	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than 9 th grade	441	4.3	4.7	4.5
9 th grade to 12 th grade, no diploma	1,512	14.8	14.3	12.6
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	4,412	43.1	48.8	36.1
Some college, no degree	1,884	18.4	16.7	19.9
Associate degree	487	4.8	4.7	5.9
Bachelor’s degree	1,035	10.1	7.6	13.7
Graduate or professional degree	463	4.5	3.3	7.4
Percent high school graduate or higher	X	80.9	81.0	83.0
Percent bachelor’s degree or higher	X	14.6	10.9	21.1

Source: U.S. 2000 Census of Population

Ohio as a whole has a slightly greater percentage of residents earning Bachelor’s and post-graduate degrees, while the County has a smaller one. While 14.6 percent of the City’s adult population has a college degree, the Ohio percentage is half again higher, at 21.1 percent. Proportions with high school degrees are above 80 percent within the City, County, and State.

Population Mobility

The Census long form asks where respondents lived five years ago, offering a measure of the relative mobility of the population. The following table compares responses between the City, County, and State.

Table 9: Residence in 1995

	Number Norwalk	Percent Norwalk	Huron	Ohio
Population 5 years and over	14,976	100.0	100.0	100.0
Lived in same house in 1995	7,690	51.3	58.4	57.5
Different house in the U.S. in 1995	7,053	47.1	40.8	41.4
Same County	4,956	33.1	26.5	26.3
Different County	2,097	14.0	14.3	15.0
Same State	1,312	8.8	10.7	9.5
Different State	785	5.2	3.6	5.6
Elsewhere in 1995	233	1.6	0.8	1.1

Source: U.S. 2000 Census of Population

Norwalk residents appear to be somewhat more mobile as a group than County and State residents as a whole. Nearly half the over-five population (47.1 percent) lived in a different house in 1995, as opposed to 41.4 percent statewide. Most of that group (33.1 percent of the total) lived in Huron County in 1995, indicating that they simply moved to a preferable house or location. This percentage is somewhat higher than the statewide percentage (26.3 percent). Other segments appear to be more similar between the City, County, and State. Among Norwalk's population, 14 percent lived in a different County in 1995, and 5.2 percent lived in a different State.

Comparisons with Nearby Communities

Table 10, on the following page, presents some comparative statistics for Norwalk and ten nearby communities ranging in population from 6,391 to 24,811. Here is how Norwalk compares with its neighboring cities:

- Norwalk increased in population by 10.2 percent over the decade of the 1990's. The comparison cities varied from -10.1 percent to +11.8 percent. The average change among all eleven cities was 3.62 percent. Thus, Norwalk can be viewed as having grown at nearly three times the average for this set of communities.
- In terms of percentage, Norwalk had the fourth largest Hispanic population, according to Census figures, and was tied with Tiffin for the fifth largest Black population. Hispanic populations ranged from 12.5 percent in Willard, which is located in close proximity to large agricultural operations using migrant labor, to 0.9 percent in Ashland. Black populations ranged from 18.5 percent in Oberlin to 0.1 percent in Shelby and 0.3 percent in Bellevue.
- Norwalk ranked eighth in the percentage of high school graduates, and sixth in the percentage of college graduates. Three of the cities with a greater percentage of college graduates are, in fact, college towns.
- Norwalk is a relatively dynamic community within this sample, with seven cities having a larger percentage of households that were in the same house in 1995 as they were in 1999. Norwalk had just over half (51.3 percent) in the same home over this time period.
- Norwalk's commuters were very close to taking the sample's average time to drive to work: Norwalk's average was 17.0 minutes, while the mean of all eleven cities was 17.4 minutes, with community averages ranging from 13.8 (Oberlin) to 20.6 (Bellevue).
- Using just a few indicators from the Census, Norwalk could be considered a relatively blue-collar community. Norwalk ranked eighth in the percentage of employees in management, professional, and related positions, but fifth in the proportion of jobs that were in production, transportation, and material handling. Norwalk's percentage in the first category (23.0 percent) was less than the State total of 31.0 percent, and in the latter category, its percentage (30.9 percent) exceeded the State figure (19.0 percent). Finally, its percentage of employees in the manufacturing sector, at 30.5 percent, ranked

Norwalk fifth among the eleven communities, and exceeded the State percentage (20.0 percent) by over 50 percent.

- Norwalk witnessed a growth in the number of households of 12.1 percent over the 1990's, ranking it third among the communities in the sample. Norwalk's growth was nearly four percentage points higher than the sample's average of 8.2 percent growth.
- Average household size in Norwalk was second only to Willard's size, pointing toward relatively large household size in Norwalk among similar communities in the region. However, Norwalk's 2.49 average is identical to the average for the State of Ohio.
- How does Norwalk's household income stack up compared to nearby communities? The median household income of \$37,778 places Norwalk in the middle of the pack among the sample, ranking it fifth of eleven. Similarly, Norwalk ranks sixth in per capita income. Looking at the incidence of poverty, Norwalk's percentage of families in poverty ranks it seventh among the sample, and in terms of individuals in poverty, Norwalk ranks ninth, pointing toward a relatively low incidence of poverty. Norwalk's family and individual percentages were lower than the State's incidence of poverty as well.
- Norwalk's increase in housing units over the 1990's, at 11.9 percent, nearly kept up with the 12.1 percent increase in households, and ranked Norwalk fourth among the sample communities, indicating a relatively robust housing market.
- With 61.9 percent of its housing units occupied by their owners, Norwalk ranked seventh. Communities ranged from a high of 73.2 percent owner-occupied in Huron and 70.2 percent in Bellevue, to a low of 50.3 percent in Oberlin and 56.0 percent in Willard. Norwalk's percentage is substantially lower than the State percentage of 69.1 percent.
- By one indicator, Norwalk's housing stock is not much older than that for communities as a whole in north-central Ohio. Norwalk's percentage of units built before 1940, at 30.4 percent, ranked Norwalk seventh. Communities ranged from 47.4 percent in Fremont to 14.2 percent in Huron.
- Owner-occupied units in Norwalk are relatively costly among the sample. Norwalk's median value of owner-occupied units, at \$97,100, ranked it fourth. Median values ranged from \$129,800 in Huron, located on Lake Erie, to \$72,900 in Fremont, Sandusky County's County seat. Further, Norwalk's median rent, at \$478, ranked it sixth, in the middle of the pack. Median rents ranged from \$519 in Huron to \$396 in Shelby.

Table 10: Key Census Indicators for Norwalk and Ten Neighboring Cities

	Ashland	Bellevue	Fremont	Huron	Norwalk	Oberlin	Pt. Clinton	Shelby	Tiffin	Willard	Wooster
Population 2000	21,249	8,193	17,375	7,958	16,238	8,195	6,391	9,821	18,135	6,806	24,811
Population 1990	20,079	8,146	17,648	7,030	14,731	8,191	7,106	9,564	18,604	6,210	22,195
Change 1990-2000	1,170; 5.8%	47; 0.6%	-273; 1.5%	928;13.2%	1,507; 10.2%	4; 0.0%	-715; -10.1%	257; 2.7%	-469; 2.5%	596; 9.6%	2,616; 11.8%
% Hispanic	0.9	2.6	12.3	1.6	3.8	3.0	6.0	1.0	2.1	12.5	1.1
% Black	1.2	0.3	9.9	0.7	1.9	18.5	2.4	0.1	1.9	1.5	3.8
% high school grad	83.5	82.8	77.5	91.5	80.9	86.4	80.1	81.9	83.9	74.2	84.4
% Bachelors Degree	19.6	9.2	10.2	28.4	14.6	41.2	12.2	9.4	17.5	7.6	27.4
Same home in 1995	51.1	58.4	54.7	64.0	51.3	41.5	61.8	55.2	53.2	49.9	47.4
Mean travel to work	16.6	20.6	16.6	20.4	17.0	13.8	17.4	19.7	18.1	15.4	15.9
% mgt prof related	27.5	24.6	20.5	37.4	23.0	43.8	25.7	19.2	24.1	16.7	32.8
% prod transp mat'l	24.9	31.3	36.8	18.6	30.9	8.7	20.5	31.0	28.4	40.9	21.2
% manufacturing	26.9	35.3	35.6	23.6	30.5	8.1	16.8	32.9	30.1	41.8	22.9
# Households 2000	8,285	3,315	6,872	3,273	6,349	2,687	2,801	4,060	7,392	2,544	10,035
# Households 1990	7,632	3,178	6,650	2,820	5,663	2,444	2,859	3,847	7,009	2,307	8,599
Change 1990-2000	653; 8.6%	137; 4.3%	222; 3.3%	453;16.1%	686; 12.1%	243; 9.9%	-58; -2.0%	213; 5.5%	383; 5.5%	237; 10.3%	1,436; 16.7%
Avg. household size	2.32	2.46	2.46	2.37	2.49	2.31	2.27	2.38	2.31	2.63	2.37
Med. household inc.	34,250	40,100	34,051	52,289	37,778	41,094	35,564	35,938	33,261	38,922	37,400
Per capita income	16,760	18,932	16,014	24,942	18,519	20,704	19,177	17,096	16,580	13,942	21,505
% family poverty	7.9	4.1	9.8	2.7	6.8	6.7	7.7	7.4	5.7	12.7	7.8
% individual poverty	10.5	5.8	12.9	3.6	8.8	19.4	9.7	10.2	11.1	16.2	10.4
# Housing units 2000	8,864	3,557	7,385	3,818	6,663	2,865	3,500	4,352	7,868	2,724	10,743
# Housing units 1990	8,020	3,326	7,001	3,204	5,954	2,580	3,474	4,012	7,461	2,419	9,015
Change 1990-2000	844; 10.5%	231; 6.9%	384; 5.5%	614;19.2%	709; 11.9%	285; 11.0%	26; 0.7%	340; 8.5%	407; 5.5%	305; 12.6%	1,728; 19.2%
% owner-occupied	63.8	70.2	58.7	73.2	61.9	50.3	67.1	65.2	64.5	56.0	59.7
% renter-occupied	36.2	29.8	41.3	26.8	38.1	49.7	32.9	34.8	35.5	44.0	40.3
% units built <1940	28.7	38.8	47.4	14.2	30.4	35.2	30.9	30.0	44.0	34.2	22.0
Med val. owner occ.	88,900	87,100	72,900	129,800	97,100	118,500	91,100	81,300	76,700	75,900	107,900
Median rent	461	485	440	519	478	505	488	396	434	461	489

Source: 2000 and 1990 Census of Population and Housing

Population Projections

It is important to project a community’s population in order to prepare for the resulting increase in need for services and facilities. As stated previously, population change is the result of a number of factors, including the number of births and deaths, migration into and out of the community, and increases resulting from property annexation. Several existing sources help to develop a reasonable estimate of future population growth in Norwalk.

The Ohio Department of Development projects County-level population in five-year intervals to 2030. The following is the ODOD projection for Huron County:

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Population	59,490	60,830	62,040	62,610	63,430	63,690	64,020
# Increase		1,340	1,210	570	820	260	330
% from 2000		2.3	4.3	5.2	6.6	7.1	7.6

These numbers may seem low, but the methodology used to develop them is fairly sophisticated, and takes into account existing and projected population by age cohort. Analysis also takes into account the County’s historical record and projection of births (which in turn is based on fertility rates by age cohort), deaths, and in- and out-migration. The following is a summary of those historical components of population change.

	1980-85	1985-90	1990-95	1995-2000	Total
Births	4,493	4,548	4,565	4,480	18,086
Deaths	2,271	2,449	2,440	2,554	9,714
Births-deaths	2,222	2,099	2,125	1,926	8,372

	90-91	91-92	92-93	93-94	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99	99-00	90-00
Inmigration	2,809	2,535	2,655	2,800	3,037	3,017	2,963	2,716	2,822	2,881	28,235
Outmigration	2,567	2,618	2,669	2,588	2,664	2,649	2,872	2,907	2,946	2,805	27,285
Net mig.	242	-83	-14	212	373	368	91	-191	-124	76	950

From the above tables, we can see that over the decade of the 1990’s, births outnumbered deaths by 4,051, and immigration exceeded outmigration by 950, providing for a total net population increase of 5,001.

The Census Bureau has released population estimates by County for July 2004, in which Huron County’s 2004 population is estimated at 60,404. This is very close to a straight-line interpolation of the above 2000 (actually, 1999) and 2005 Census estimates, which would estimate a 2004 population to be 60,606.

A demographic analysis and projection to 2009 has been provided by the Norwalk Economic Development Corporation. That analysis uses the base 2000 Census population total of 16,238 for Norwalk, and offers a 2004 estimate of 16,429 and a 2009 projection of 16,633. The age cohort analysis also indicates a boost in the City’s median age from 34.2 years in 2000 to 34.74 in 2004 and 35.57 in 2009. Comparing this nine-year projection with the County-level projection, with some interpolation, reveals the following:

	2000-2005	2000-2010	2000-2020	2000-2030
County projection	+1,340, +2.3%	+2,550, +4.3%	+3,940, +6.6%	+4,530, +7.6%
City projection*	16,477, +1.5%	16,676, +2.7%	16,935, +4.29	17,040, +4.94%

*The City projection figures were multiplied by 5/4 and 10/9 to make the four-year estimate a five-year one and to make the 9-year projection a ten-year projection. It was found that the rate of increase for the City was approximately 0.65 times the County rate, so this .65 figure was applied to arrive at projections for 2020 and 2030.

The NEDC-provided projections also included the following projections, all of which may have implications regarding the direction of Norwalk’s future growth and markets:

- The Hispanic population was projected to increase from 620 in 2000 to 862 in 2009, an increase of 39 percent over nine years.
- Average household income was projected to increase from \$46,907 in 2000 to \$52,767 in 2009, median household income from \$37,785 to \$42,390, and per capita income from \$18,570 to \$21,234.
- Total population within a five-mile radius of the center of Norwalk was projected to increase from 26,063 in 2002 to 26,807 in 2007, an increase of 744 or 2.9 percent over five years.
- 2000 population within a 5-mile radius of the center of Norwalk was estimated to be 25,653 in 2000; within a fifteen-mile radius, it was 116,937, and within thirty miles, it became 478,164. These areas were projected at 26,121, 117,502, and 478,402, respectively, in 2009.