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ALLSTON BRIGHTON

## Census data: Brighton population grew 4 percent in past decade

Posted by Matt Rocheleau April 6, 2011 11:00 AM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

**Brighton saw steady population growth over the past decade and held on to its spot as the city's third most-populated neighborhood, according to Census data recently released by the city.**

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Between 2000-2010, Brighton's population grew 4 percent to 45,801, according to figures the Boston Redevelopment Authority compiled from US Census data. The neighborhood trailed Roxbury (76,917) and Dorchester (91,982) in population.

The numbers show 774 more Hispanic/Latino residents and 745 additional Asian residents. Those groups accounted for more than 85 percent of the neighborhood's growth.

The number of white residents declined by 0.1 percent.

The Asian population represented 13.1 percent of Brighton's total population, up from 11.9 percent in 2000; the Hispanic/Latino segment rose from 7.4 to 8.8 percent; and the Black/African American demographic grew from 4.2 to 4.6 percent of the neighborhood's makeup, according to the data.

Boston's population grew by 4.8 percent in the past decade to hit 617,594. The Hub remained a "majority-minority" city as 53 percent of residents are of a non-white race/ethnicity.

Overall in Boston, 47 percent of residents are white, 22.3 percent are Black/African American, 17.5 percent are Hispanic/Latino, and 8.8 percent are Asian.

While Boston gained over 41,000 people age 18

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years and older, the city lost around 13,000 youth residents under 18. The 11-percent drop was among the most notable statistics for research director at Boston think-tank MassINC Benjamin Forman.

"There's no question that family households have been replaced by people without kids," he said, adding that a trend of fleeing families can often be a sign of gentrification.

The ratio of total residents 18 years or older grew in all but five neighborhoods; in Brighton it grew from 89.9 to 91.6 percent. Citywide, that ratio grew from 80 to 83 percent.

Despite having the slowest housing growth among Boston neighborhoods, Brighton held onto its spot as third-most housing with a 1 percent climb to 20,817 total units.

Also, despite seeing the a rise in vacant housing from 1.6 to 4.4 percent over the past 10 years, Brighton only dropped one spot among city neighborhoods in terms of occupied housing, falling from second- to third-highest with 95.6 percent filled during 2010, trailing West Roxbury 95.7 and Allston's 96.6 rates.

Citywide, housing grew by around 25,000 units, or 8 percent, however, vacancies also rose by 60 percent. Around 5 percent of Boston homes were empty in 2000; in 2010, around 7.25 percent of housing was vacant.

Boston's neighborhoods have no officially-defined boundaries, according to the BRA. In order to sort census data by neighborhood, the city department said it used a combination of ZIP codes and zoning boundaries to define each neighborhood's borders.

While the neighborhoods the city has mapped out for census number crunching by-and-large match how most perceive Boston's configuration, the city acknowledged some may dispute how the BRA has defined where neighborhoods begin and end.

"Everyone has their own definition of 'their' neighborhood -- the best part about Boston is there is such pride in the question -- and therefore there are no official boundaries because if there were, we'd have 617,594 different opinions," said spokeswoman Susan Elsbree.

The department plans to release additional maps and is also fielding individual requests to have data provided based on customized neighborhood boundaries.

To simplify city data analyzed for this report, Boston.com grouped, as follows, smaller neighborhoods and districts into other, larger areas creating a total of 18 city subsections: Beacon Hill includes the West End; Downtown includes Chinatown and the Leather District; Roxbury includes Mission Hill and the Longwood Medical Area; South Boston includes the South Boston Waterfront; and the South End includes Bay Village. The Harbor Islands -- with a combined population of 640 and 535 residents during the 2000 and 2010 census, respectively -- were not used in this analysis.

However, raw data is still available here for each smaller neighborhood, district and islands that the BRA defined.

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