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MATTAPAN

Census data: Mattapan's population dropped at second-highest rate in city

Posted by Matt Rocheleau April 6, 2011 12:00 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Mattapan's population dropped at the second-highest rate among Boston neighborhoods over the last decade, according to census data recently released by the city.

NEIGHBORHOOD NUMBERS

Select a neighborhood below from the dropdown to see a breakdown of Census statistics.

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Between 2000 and 2010, Mattapan's population dropped 5.3 percent to 36,480 and was one of just four city neighborhoods that saw a population decrease. The only neighborhood that saw a higher percentage drop was Roslindale at 5.5 percent, according to figures the Boston Redevelopment Authority compiled from U.S Census Bureau data.

Mattapan has the highest proportion of Black/African American residents in the city, but the number of blacks actually dropped over the last decade.

The neighborhood's overall census decrease was led by a 2,894-resident, or 9.6-percent, decrease in the number of Mattapan's Black or African Americans. At 79.4 percent through 2010, the neighborhood maintained, by nearly 30 percentage points, a higher portion of Black/African American residents than any other neighborhood.

Hispanic/Latino population figures grew by 1,418 residents, or 27.5 percent, while there were 723 fewer residents that identified with two or more races/ethnicities last year compared to a decade ago.

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

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while 47 percent are white. 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 years and older, the city lost around 13,000 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"There's no question that family households have been replaced by people without kids," he said, adding that a trend of fleeing families can often be a sign of gentrification.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 portion of residents 18 years or older grew in all but five neighborhoods; in Allston it grew from 66.7 to 72.6 percent. Citywide, that portion grew from 80 to 83 percent.

The total number of Mattapan housing units rose over the past 10 years by 4.7 percent to 14,191, while housing vacancies increased from 5.3 to 8.9 of the total housing stock.

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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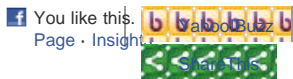
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