

Introduction

To facilitate the review of census information for Jefferson Parish, an atlas of Jefferson Parish has been prepared. The established communities and places throughout the Eastbank and Westbank areas of the Parish have been delineated in both graphical and narrative formats on the subsequent pages of this report. All information for these communities has been tabulated to show the population shifts between 1990 and 2000 as well as between 1980 and 2000. However, 1980 data analysis is limited to Total Population, White Population, Black/African American Population, and Total Housing. For comparative reasons, census data are also given for the state and for the region.

History: Initially, the Parish was to be called Tchoupitoulas. However, on February 11, 1825, in honor of his role in the 1803 Louisiana Purchase from France, this Parish was named for the third President of the United States, Thomas Jefferson. Originally, the Parish boundaries were extended to include a larger area than what exists today. It went from Felicite Street in New Orleans to the St. Charles Parish line. As Orleans Parish continued to grow and expand, it moved into former Jefferson Parish areas. The current borders were set in 1874. At that time, the Parish Seat was moved to Gretna where it remains today.

Location: Jefferson Parish is a long and narrow area that is located in Southeast Louisiana. The land area has a range that stretches from the South Shore of Lake Pontchartrain to the coastline of the Gulf of Mexico. It shares a border with Orleans and Plaquemines Parishes to the east; Lafourche and St. Charles Parishes to the west; the Gulf
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of Mexico and a small portion of Lafourche Parish to the south; and Lake Pontchartrain to the north. For purposes of the Census, the northern portion of Jefferson Parish forms a border with St. Tammany Parish in the middle of Lake Pontchartrain. Though it has significant business activity and several large developed areas, such as Kenner and Metairie, it is primarily a suburban parish. The Mississippi River flows generally west to east through the upper third of the parish, and forms a boundary between the Eastbank and Westbank regions.

Geography: A significant portion of the Parish land area contains wetlands, primarily south of the Mississippi River. There are also sandy beaches in the Grand Isle area. Most of the parish land mass is near sea level.

Jefferson Parish covers a 415,360-acre area, of which only 47.6 percent is land (Land area: 305.9 square miles; Water area: 336.5 square miles). Approximately 52.4 percent of the Parish consists of large water areas to include rivers, bayous, lakes, and bays of the Gulf of Mexico. The topography of Jefferson Parish creates four distinct geographic areas: East Bank Jefferson, West Bank Jefferson, the Barataria region, and the Gulf region. Ninety-five (95) percent of the residents of Jefferson Parish live in the urbanized northern portion of the parish (Avondale, Bridge City, Elmwood, Estelle, Gretna, Harahan, Harvey, Jefferson, Kenner, Marrero, Metairie, River Ridge, Terrytown, Timberlane, Waggaman, Westwego, Woodmere).

East Bank Jefferson, which is situated between Lake Pontchartrain and the Mississippi River west of Orleans Parish, is an urbanized area and home for 56.5 percent of the residents of Jefferson Parish. A total of 257,239 persons reside in one of six communities in East Bank Jefferson: Elmwood, Harahan, Jefferson, Kenner, Metairie, and River Ridge. Harahan and Kenner are the only incorporated communities within East Bank Jefferson.

West Bank Jefferson lies south of the Mississippi River and includes both urban and rural areas built upon the natural levees of the river. Approximately 38.5 percent of the

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Jefferson Parish population resides in West Bank Jefferson. A total of 175,549 persons reside in one of eleven communities in West bank Jefferson: Avondale, Bridge City, Estelle, Gretna, Harvey, Marrero, Terrytown, Timberlane, Waggaman, Westwego, and Woodmere. Gretna and Westwego are incorporated.

The Barataria region is located in the elongated central portion of the Parish and includes small communities scattered along the major bayous, principally Bayou Barataria and Bayou des Families. This rural area is sparsely populated with only 26,183 persons, comprising 5.7 percent of the total population of Jefferson Parish. The principal communities include Barataria, Jean Lafitte, and Lafitte and contain a population of 5,046 persons or 1.1 percent of the total population of Jefferson Parish. Only Lafitte is incorporated.

The Gulf region is located along the Gulf of Mexico. Grand Isle is the single community located in this region. Grand Isle is a barrier island and is separated from the other regions of Jefferson Parish by miles of marshland. There is no overland route to Grand Isle within Jefferson Parish as access is via Lafourche Parish. The population of Grand Isle is 1,541 persons or 0.3 percent of the total Jefferson Parish population. Grand Isle is incorporated.

Population and Housing Characteristics

The 2000 Census population and housing characteristics for the State of Louisiana, the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), and Jefferson Parish were compared with that reported for the 1990 Census and, where available, the 1980 Census to identify changes over the past two decades. It should be noted that the 2000 Census added Plaquemines Parish and St. James Parish to the six parishes of Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany, which comprised the New Orleans MSA in the 1980 and 1990 Census. For purposes of comparison, the 1980 and 1990 MSA data has been adjusted to compensate for the change.

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The 2000 data released by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, include total population and housing counts, as well as summary statistics on age, race, sex, and Hispanic origin. These population and housing data are based on 100-percent counts taken from the short census forms that were mailed to each household. The Bureau of the Census tabulates data by block, block group, census tract, place, minor civil division, parish or county, state, and the United States of America. In this report, census population and housing data are given for the State of Louisiana, the New Orleans Metropolitan Statistical Area, Jefferson Parish, and for all places (City, Town, Village, and Census Designated Place) within Jefferson Parish.

There are twenty-one places in Jefferson Parish that are recognized by the Bureau of the Census. Six of these places are incorporated as follow: Grand Isle, Gretna, Harahan, Jean Lafitte, Kenner, and Westwego. The remaining 15 places are unincorporated and are termed Census Designated Places (CDP) by the Bureau of the Census. Boundaries for the CDP's were prepared in conjunction with local planning agencies and local officials. The unincorporated CDP's in Jefferson Parish are: Avondale, Barataria, Bridge City, Elmwood, Estelle, Harvey, Jefferson, Lafitte, Marrero, Metairie, River Ridge, Terrytown, Timberlane, Waggaman, and Woodmere.

Although the boundaries for Census Designated Places may change as these places grow, only minor changes occurred between 1980 and 2000. The consistency in the CDP boundaries makes it possible to compare 1980, 1990 and 2000 Census data. The only major changes from the 1990 Census are the addition of two Census Designated Places. These are the Elmwood and Woodmere CDP's. As a result, trend analysis is unavailable for these two areas.

This document devotes a 6-page summary for the State of Louisiana, the New Orleans Metropolitan Statistical Area, Jefferson Parish, the Eastbank, the Westbank, and each of the 21 Census Designated Places within Jefferson Parish. The 6-page summary includes a location map, summary tables of population and housing data for 1980 – 2000, charts that provide a visual presentation of the trends in population demographics over the past two decades, and brief descriptive text.

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