

Understanding Our Community

“Populations are aging – affecting settlement patterns, lifestyle choices, and consumption trends. Diversity is spreading across the map, thanks to the most significant wave of immigration in 100 years. And the nation continues to shift to a knowledge- and service-based economy, placing new demands on education and workforce systems. For cities and their leaders, such changes make understanding the census much more than an academic exercise.

“Information about the residential patterns of poor and working poor families is beginning to shape debates on issues as diverse as federal welfare reform, school equity financing, and suburban job, housing and transportation access. Data on population and economic decentralization are heightening concerns over metropolitan development patterns and their implications for low income workers and neighborhoods. New findings about the changing composition of city populations are affecting local debates over the appropriate mix of housing and city services. In short, to understand the policy context for cities and neighborhoods requires understanding the census.”⁴

The following indicators have been selected by the Brookings Institution as being key to understanding community development issues in communities across the country. The format allows for comparison between communities of different sizes and regions.

The data is taken, for the most part, from the 2000 Census. As such, the numbers are indicative of the local situation at the height of the last business cycle. Even though the nation's economy has slowed significantly since 1999, it is still relevant in a policy analysis context because many of the indicators are not subject to a great deal of change within four years and the 2000 data, which was collected at the culmination of an unprecedented period of expansion, can be viewed as a kind of high-water baseline that provides a snapshot of issues prior to the weakening of the economy that has occurred since 2000.⁵

The presentation of this information is intended to give the reader a better sense of where Fargo stands in relation to other communities in the Midwest. It is a preamble to the Needs Assessment which comprises the next section of this document. The analysis includes information collected by local community development staff and by the Brookings Institution in conjunction with the Living Cities databook project. Comparison communities vary in size and circumstance but still providing interesting context for issues facing communities in the Midwest.

Local	Living Cities Databook
City of Fargo, ND	Cities of Minneapolis St. Paul, MN
Fargo Moorhead MSA, ND/MN	City of Kansas City, MO
City of Sioux Falls, SD	City of Columbus, OH
City of Fort Collins, CO	City of Indianapolis, IN
City of Lincoln, NE	City of Chicago, IL
City of Madison, WI	
City of Duluth, MN	

⁴ *Minneapolis St. Paul in Focus: A Profile from Census 2000*. Living Cities: The National Community Development Initiative. Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy. (Washington, D.C., 2004), 2.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

Population

Population growth does not by itself define a city's health. Nevertheless, the fact that people "vote with their feet" makes population change a good first order indicator of the appeal of a place.

Fargo's Population Growth was double the national rate between 1980 and 2000 and outpaces most of its peers

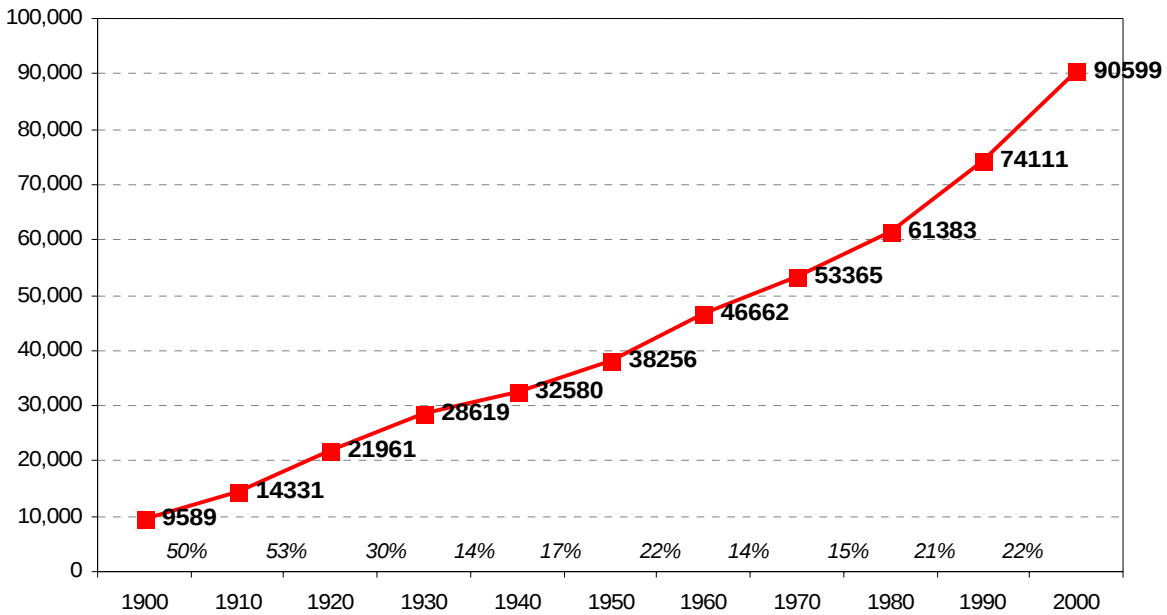
Percent population change, 1980-2000

City	Population			Percent change		
	1980	1990	2000	1980-1990	1990-2000	Total 1980-2000
Fort Collins, CO	65,092	87,758	118,440	35%	35%	82%
Sioux Falls MSA	123,377	139,236	187,093	13%	34%	52%
Sioux Falls	81,343	100,836	124,158	24%	23%	53%
Fargo	61,383	74,111	90,599	21%	22%	48%
Cass County	88,247	102,874	123,138	17%	20%	40%
Lincoln, NE		191,972	225,442		17%	
Fargo Moorhead MSA	137,574	153,296	174,367	11%	14%	27%
Nation	226,542,199	248,718,301	281,421,906	10%	13%	24%
Columbus, OH	565,021	632,910	711,470	12%	12%	26%
Madison, WI	170,616	191,262	207,525	12%	9%	22%
Indianapolis, IN	711,539	731,327	781,870	3%	7%	10%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	641,271	640,618	669,769	0%	5%	4%
Chicago, IL	3,005,072	2,783,726	2,896,016	-7%	4%	-4%
Duluth, MN	92,811	85,493	86,810	-8%	2%	-7%
Kansas City, MO	448,028	435,146	441,545	-3%	2%	-1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, P001 and P1, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

Fargo has experienced double digit population growth every decade of this century

Population change by decade, 1900-2000

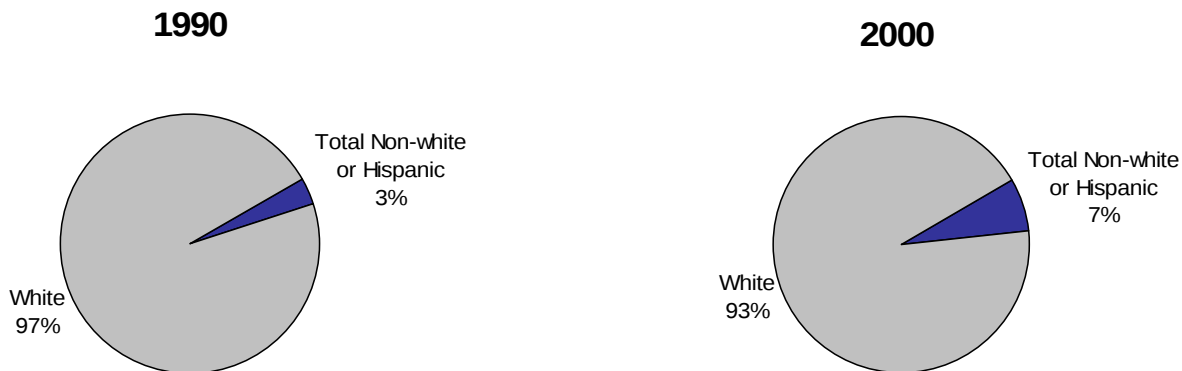


Race, Ethnicity and Immigration

An influx of immigrants ... helped to sustain population growth in a majority of the nation's largest cities in the 1990s. But cities also need to understand how their racial and ethnic compositions are changing so they can decide how to fund and deliver services to meet the needs of increasingly diverse populations. In particular, the growing representation of Latinos, whose families tend to be younger and to have more children, suggests cities need to take a closer look at schools, public health and other programs that primarily serve the young.

Whites make up the majority of Fargo's population but racial/ethnic minorities doubled in population share over the decade

Population share by race/ethnicity, 1990-2000



Racial/Ethnic minorities make up less than 7% of Fargo's population. However, this number does not include as minorities European refugees, which comprise more than 20 percent of the city's foreign-born population

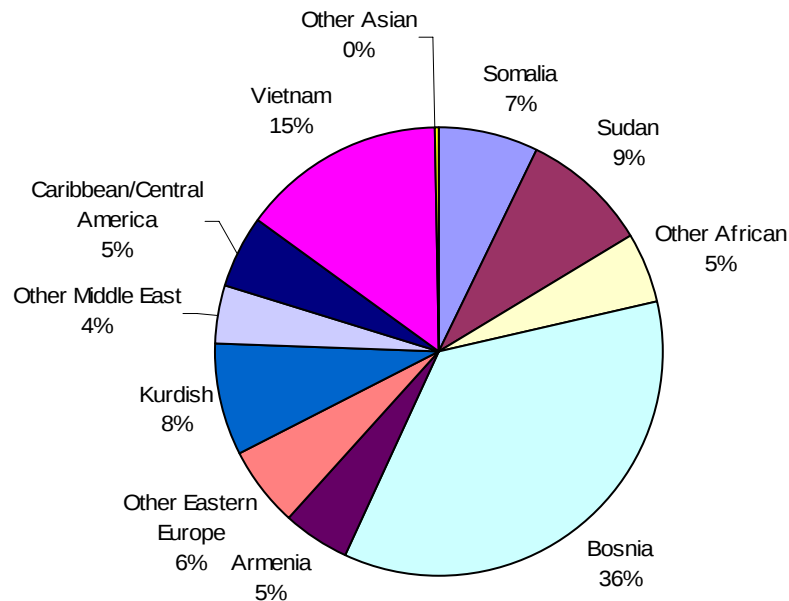
Share of population by race/ethnicity⁶, 2000

City	Total non-white or Hispanic (minority)	White	Black/ African American	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian	Hispanic or Latino	Other/ 2 or more Races
Fargo	6.7	93.3	1.1	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.4
Duluth, MN	8.0	92.0	1.7	1.4	2.2	1.1	1.6
Sioux Falls, SD	9.1	90.9	1.8	1.2	2.1	2.3	1.7
Lincoln, NE	12.2	87.8	3.0	3.0	0.7	3.7	1.7
Fort Collins, CO	14.6	85.4	1.0	2.2	0.6	8.7	2.0
Madison, WI	17.8	82.2	5.5	5.7	0.3	4.2	2.1
Nation	30.9	69.1	12.1	3.7	0.7	12.5	3.1
Indianapolis, IN	32.5	67.5	25.4	1.4	0.3	3.9	1.6
Columbus, OH	33.1	66.9	24.3	3.5	0.3	2.5	2.7
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	36.7	63.3	14.7	8.8	1.4	7.7	4.0
Kansas City, MO	42.4	57.6	31.0	1.9	0.5	6.9	2.1
Chicago, IL	68.7	31.3	36.4	4.3	0.2	26.0	1.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P7, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

Almost 5,000 refugees from 40 countries have re-settled in Fargo since 1990 with one in three coming to the U.S. from Bosnia

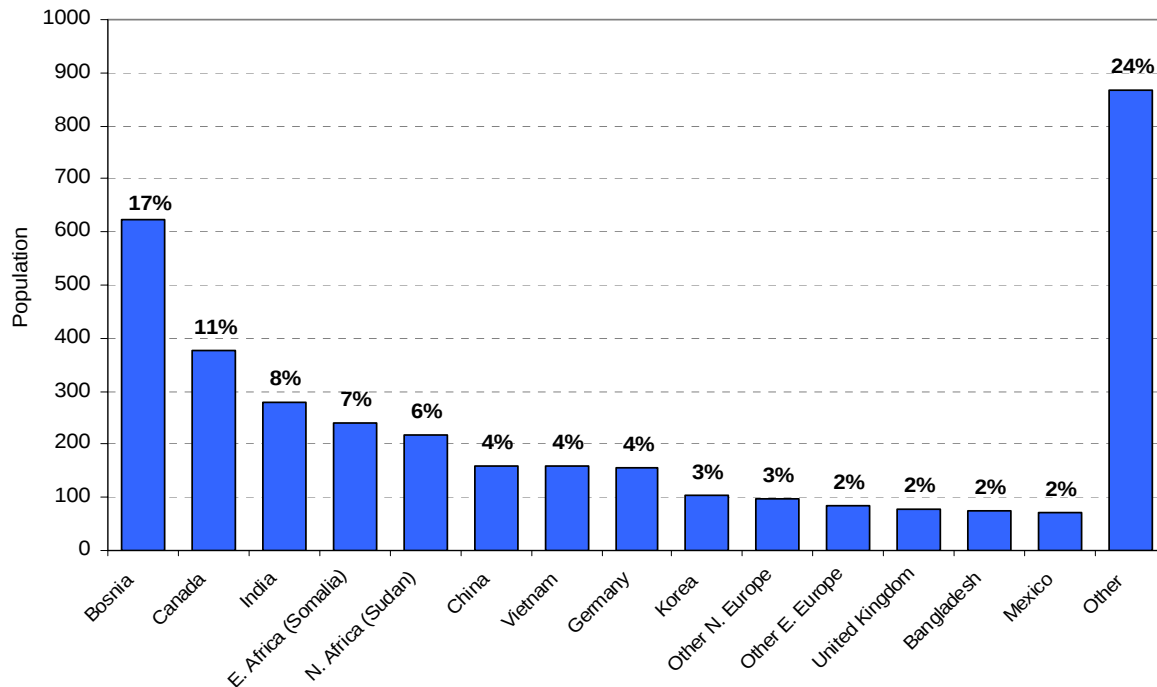
Refugee population by country of origin, 1990-2003, Fargo



⁶ "The federal government considers "race" and "Hispanic origin" distinct concepts and therefore captures information on them in two separate questions on the Census form. In this analysis, "Hispanic or Latino" is used to refer to individuals or households who indicate Spanish, Hispanic or Latino origin, regardless of their race. In general, race-specific population and household counts include only non-Hispanics. Economic variables generally include members of each racial group who also reported Hispanic origin." Living Cities Profile Minneapolis St. Paul, p. 16.

Bosnia is the most common country of origin for Fargo's foreign-born residents

Population and share of foreign-born by country of birth, 2000



Fargo's immigrant population more than doubled during the 1990s, accounting for 12 percent of the city's total population growth

Percent change in foreign-born population, 1990-2000

City	Foreign-born 1990	Foreign-born 2000	Percent change
Sioux Falls MSA	1,803	6,299	249%
Sioux Falls, SD	1,696	5,758	240%
Indianapolis, IN	13,963	36,067	158%
Lincoln, NE	5,169	13,246	156%
Fargo	1,474	3,587	143%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	42,517	96,613	127%
Kansas City, MO	12,387	25,632	107%
Columbus, OH	23,471	47,713	103%
Fargo Moorhead MSA	2,656	5,268	98%
Madison, WI	10,906	18,792	72%
Fort Collins, CO	3,896	6,269	61%
Nation	19,767,316	31,107,889	57%
Chicago, IL	469,187	628,903	34%
Duluth, MN	2,063	2,472	20%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P21

Only four percent of Fargo residents were born outside the United States but recent Census population estimates indicate that more than 25 percent of ongoing population growth is attributable to international in-migration⁷

Foreign born population share, 2000

City	Total Population	Foreign born population	Percent
Duluth, MN	86,810	2,472	2.8%
Fargo Moorhead MSA	174,367	5,268	3.0%
Sioux Falls MSA	187,093	6,299	3.4%
Fargo	90,787	3,587	4.0%
Sioux Falls, SD	124,158	5,758	4.6%
Indianapolis, IN	781,870	36,067	4.6%
Fort Collins, CO	118,440	6,269	5.3%
Kansas City, MO	441,545	25,632	5.8%
Lincoln, NE	225,442	13,246	5.9%
Columbus, OH	711,470	47,713	6.7%
Madison, WI	207,525	18,792	9.1%
Nation	281,421,906	31,107,889	11.1%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	669,769	96,613	14.4%
Chicago, IL	2,896,016	628,903	21.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P21, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution), 2004 Fargo Housing Study Update

⁷ While many immigrants are low income, some are among the wealthiest and best-educated residents of the communities in which they live. At the same time, immigrants may be among the poorer and needier residents of some communities. ("The New Neighbors" (2003),120)

Only one-quarter of Fargo's foreign-born residents are naturalized citizens, which is lower than peer community/national rates of citizenship but consistent with the city's preponderance of new immigrants (75 percent of Fargo's foreign-born population entered the U.S. in the 1990s)

Foreign-born population by citizenship and year of entry, 2000

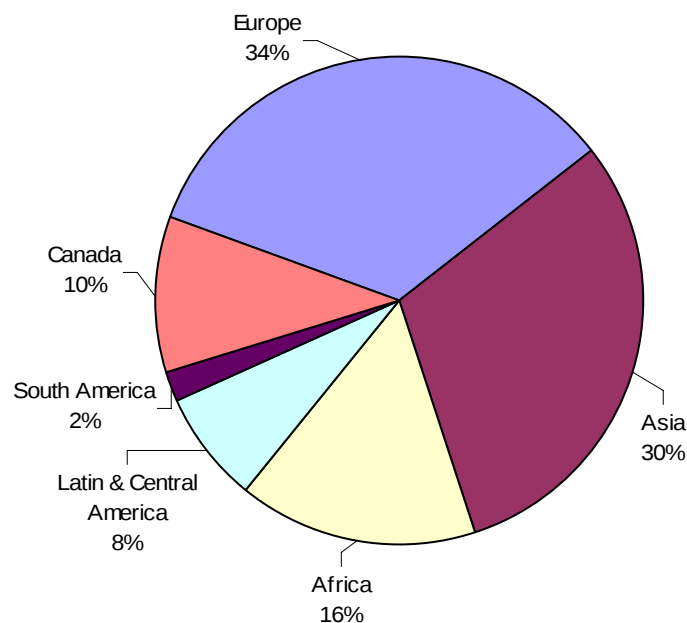
City	Foreign-born Population	Foreign-born that are naturalized	Percent	Foreign-born entering U.S. in 1990s	Percent
Fargo	3,587	891	24.8%	2,676	74.6%
Sioux Falls, SD	5,758	1,619	28.1%	4,122	71.6%
Lincoln, NE	13,246	4,214	31.8%	9,209	69.5%
Columbus, OH	47,713	14,197	29.8%	30,409	63.7%
Madison, WI	18,792	5,119	27.2%	11,845	63.0%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	96,613	25,910	26.8%	59,546	61.6%
Chicago, IL	628,903	223,984	35.6%	291,785	60.5%
Fort Collins, CO	6,269	2,164	34.5%	3,736	59.6%
Kansas City, MO	25,632	8,392	32.7%	15,032	58.6%
Indianapolis, IN	36,067	12,100	33.5%	21,821	46.4%
Nation	31,107,889	12,542,626	40.3%	13,178,276	42.4%
Duluth, MN	2,472	1,588	64.2%	764	30.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau P21, P22

Note: "Naturalization" is the way immigrants become citizens of the United States. If you were not born a citizen, you must naturalize to become one.

Immigrants from Asia and Europe comprise almost 2/3 of Fargo's foreign-born population

Share of foreign-born by region of birth, 2000



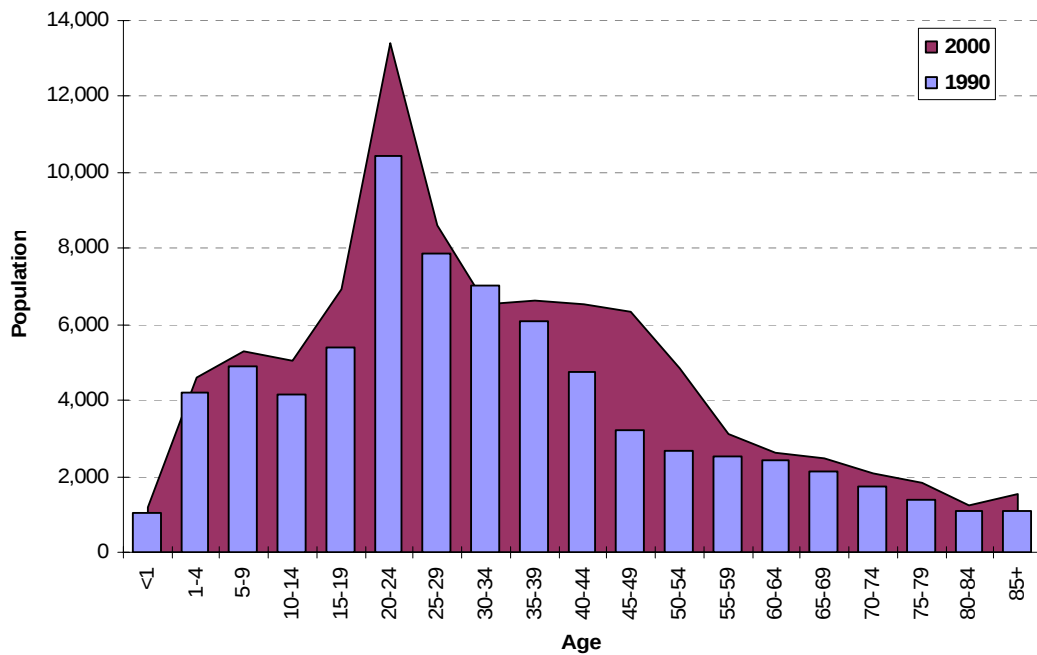
Age

The age profile of a city's population can answer some very basic questions about a city's ability to provide for its residents. For instance, the number of working-age residents from whom the city can raise revenue influences the level of services it can provide for more "dependent" residents like the elderly and children. Likewise, the city's ability to "compete" for younger workers may hint at its prospects for continued vitality in the future.

Adults age 20-24 are Fargo's largest age group in 1990 & 2000

Age 30-34 is the only group to lose population in the 1990s

Population by 5-year age groups, 1990-2000



Forty-five children and seniors in Fargo depend on every 100 working age adults, a ratio lower than the national average

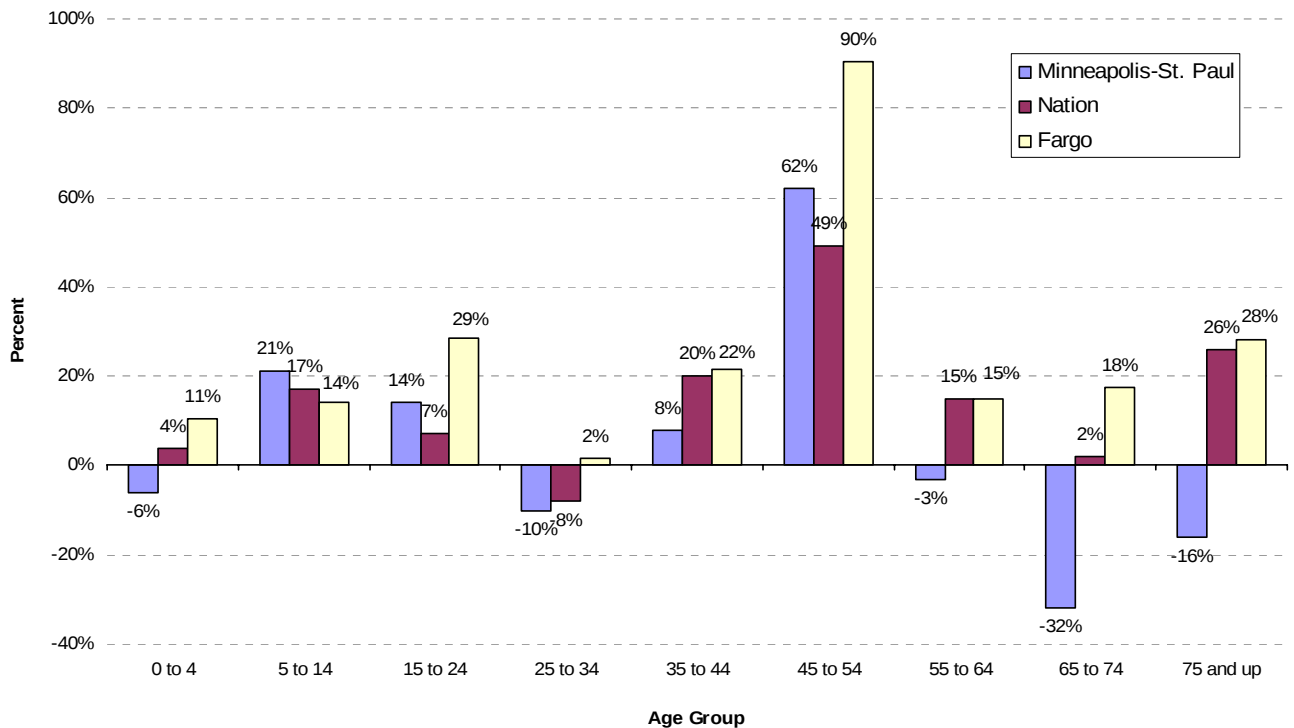
Dependency ratio and share of population by age group, 2000

City	Dependency Ratio	Children (0-17)	Working age (18-64)	Elderly (65+)
Madison, WI	37	17.5%	73.2%	9.3%
Fort Collins, CO	41	21.3%	70.9%	7.8%
Fargo	45	21.2%	68.7%	10.1%
Columbus, OH	49	24.2%	67.0%	8.9%
Lincoln, NE	50	23.0%	66.6%	10.4%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	51	24.2%	66.2%	9.6%
Sioux Falls, SD	57	25.2%	63.8%	11.0%
Duluth, MN	57	21.2%	63.5%	15.2%
Indianapolis, IN	58	25.7%	63.4%	11.0%
Chicago, IL	58	26.2%	63.4%	10.3%
Kansas City, MO	59	25.4%	62.9%	11.7%
Nation	62	25.7%	61.9%	12.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, P8

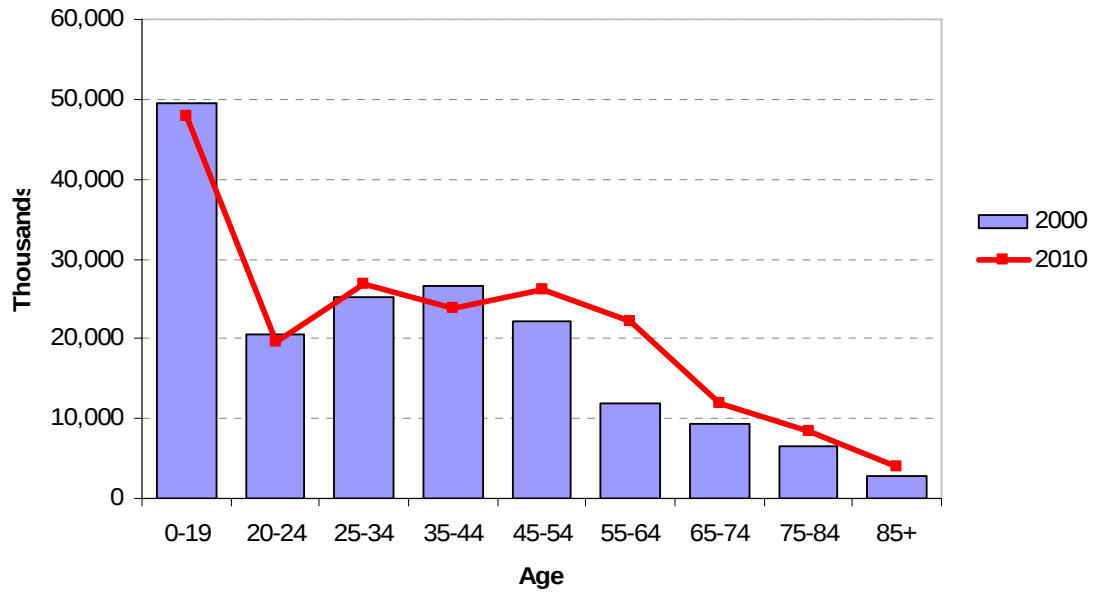
College age, Baby-boomers & Seniors drive Fargo's growth

Percent population change by age group, 1990-2000



**Adults 45 and older make up the largest part of Fargo
Moorhead's future growth**

Projection by Age 2000-2010, Fargo Moorhead MSA



Households and Families

Population change is a good first indicator of city health. But data on the types of households that are contributing to change can provide far more nuanced clues about whether a city is attractive to all kinds of people - or just some kinds. The household composition of a city can provide leaders critical intelligence as to the kinds of housing and services they need to provide. Such data may also prove invaluable in helping cities frame strategies to lure wider mixes of families through proactive housing and amenities strategies.

Fargo households are smaller than those in peer communities and declining in size at a faster rate. However, household formation (+30 percent in 1990s) is still strong, supporting a strong local housing market

Average household size, 1990-2000

City	1990	2000	Percent change
Madison, WI	2.49	2.19	-12.2%
Fargo	2.44	2.21	-9.5%
Duluth, MN	2.47	2.26	-8.4%
Columbus, OH	2.38	2.30	-3.4%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	2.26	2.33	3.1%
Kansas City, MO	2.40	2.35	-2.1%
Lincoln, NE	2.54	2.36	-7.1%
Fargo Moorhead MSA	2.65	2.38	-10.1%
Chicago, IL	2.67	2.39	-2.8%
Sioux Falls	2.53	2.40	-5.0%
Fort Collins, CO	2.60	2.45	-5.6%
Sioux Falls MSA	2.59	2.50	-3.4%
Nation	2.63	2.59	-1.5%
Indianapolis, IN	2.46	2.67	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P001, P004 and H18, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

One in four Fargo households contains children under age 18 – this rate is comparable to large urban areas but lower than national rates

Share of households by type, 2000

City	Married couple w/ children	Married couple w/o children	Other family w/ children	Other family w/o children	Individual living alone	Non-family
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	14.9%	17.0%	10.4%	6.9%	38.5%	12.3%
Madison, WI	16.4%	21.2%	6.0%	4.3%	35.4%	16.7%
Fargo	20.2%	22.2%	6.9%	4.0%	34.6%	12.0%
Duluth, MN	18.2%	24.5%	9.2%	4.8%	35.4%	9.0%
Columbus, OH	16.5%	19.5%	11.5%	7.3%	34.1%	11.0%
Kansas City, MO	16.2%	21.8%	11.9%	8.4%	34.1%	7.6%
Chicago, IL	16.9%	18.2%	12.0%	12.5%	32.6%	7.9%
Fort Collins, CO	23.0%	23.0%	6.4%	4.3%	26.2%	17.2%
Indianapolis, IN	18.0%	22.6%	11.9%	7.8%	32.0%	7.8%
Lincoln, NE	22.2%	25.0%	7.8%	4.8%	30.3%	9.8%
Sioux Falls, SD	24.0%	25.7%	8.5%	4.3%	29.8%	7.7%
Nation	24.3%	28.2%	9.1%	6.9%	25.8%	5.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P10, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

One in four Fargo residents arrived in the city in the last five years indicating a lower rate of mobility than is evidenced nationwide

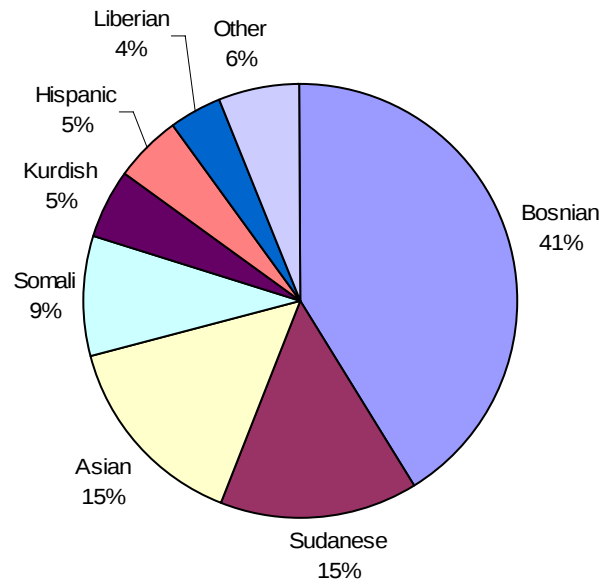
Share of population living in a different city five years ago, 2000

City	Population 5 years old or greater	Living in different city in 1995	Percent
Chicago, IL	2,678,981	426,002	15.9%
Indianapolis, IN	724,716	142,493	19.7%
Duluth, MN	82,144	16,816	20.5%
Lincoln, NE	210,329	45,280	21.5%
Sioux Falls, SD	114,988	25,650	22.3%
Kansas City, MO	409,894	104,347	25.5%
Fargo	84,990	22,230	26.2%
Madison, WI	196,989	54,363	27.6%
Columbus, OH	659,006	200,450	30.4%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	623,413	203,604	32.7%
Nation	262,375,152	88,601,277	33.8%
Fort Collins, CO	111,340	41,826	37.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P25, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

**Fargo Public Schools served 615 ESL students in
April 2004, up from 551 in 2000**

K-12 English as a Second Language students by Country of Origin



Education

Education data are critical because it is well understood that education levels strongly influence individuals', regions', and the nation's economic success. For cities, our nation's long-run transition from a manufacturing-dominated economy to a service-oriented "knowledge" economy means that centers with a critical mass of educated workers gain competitive advantage. Cities whose populations have high levels of educational attainment are well-positioned to attract jobs, grow their tax bases, and provide a high-quality environment for their residents.

As home to three four-year universities, Fargo and the F-M metro area have high percentages of people enrolled in college

Share of population age 15 and over enrolled in a college/university, 2000

City	Population 15 or older	Population 15 or older enrolled at University	Percent
Fort Collins, CO	95,935	24,882	25.9%
Madison, WI	175,269	43,299	24.7%
Fargo	74,644	13,086	17.5%
Duluth, MN	71,686	11,678	16.3%
Lincoln, NE	179,490	28,901	16.1%
Fargo Moorhead MSA	139,746	21,449	15.3%
Columbus, OH	563,755	76,580	13.6%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	532,038	69,101	13.0%
Chicago, IL	2,253,912	209,810	9.3%
Nation	221,148,671	17,483,243	7.9%
Sioux Falls, SD	98,000	7,433	7.6%
Kansas City, MO	346,961	26,433	7.6%
Indianapolis, IN	612,692	42,498	6.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P36, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

One in three Fargo residents has a bachelor's degree, which ranks high among peer communities

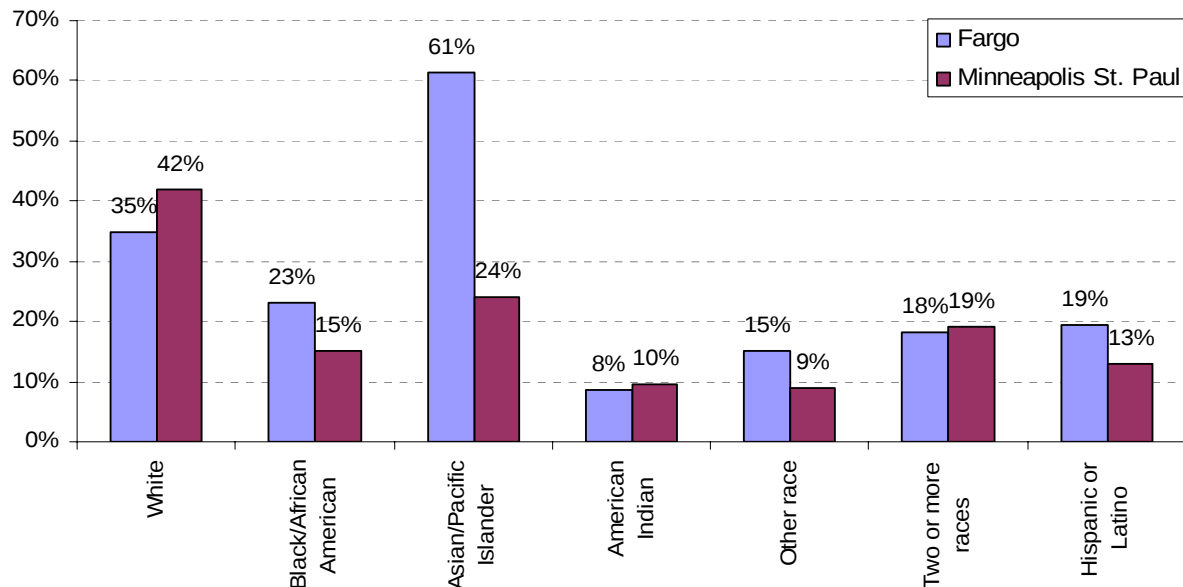
Share of population age 25 and over by educational attainment, 1990-2000

City	Bachelor's Degree		High School Diploma	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Fort Collins, CO	42.7%	48.4%	91.5%	94.0%
Madison, WI	42.0%	48.2%	90.6%	92.4%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	28.7%	35.2%	82.0%	84.5%
Fargo	30.2%	34.4%	88.7%	91.0%
Lincoln, NE	28.5%	33.3%	88.3%	90.2%
Columbus, OH	24.6%	29.0%	78.7%	83.8%
Duluth, MN	22.5%	28.2%	81.4%	87.7%
Sioux Falls, SD	22.9%	27.8%	83.4%	88.5%
Kansas City, MO	22.0%	25.7%	78.8%	82.5%
Chicago, IL	19.5%	25.5%	66.0%	71.8%
Indianapolis, IN	21.7%	25.4%	76.4%	81.3%
Nation	20.3%	24.4%	75.2%	80.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P37, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

American Indians have the lowest rate of college attainment among racial and ethnic minorities in Fargo

Share of population age 25 and over with at least a bachelor's degree by race/ethnicity, 2000



Work

A city's social and economic fortunes turn, in large part, on the ability of its residents to succeed in the labor force. If residents are not able to find work, or have no connection to the labor market at all, a city may need to promote better access to jobs networks and job opportunities for groups or neighborhoods left behind. Understanding more about the employed population is equally crucial. For that reason, understanding the kinds of jobs in which its residents work can help a city tailor education, economic development, and career development strategies that enhance economic security for working families.

Fargo exceeds national and peer rates for its share of adults participating in the labor force

Labor force participation rate, 2000

City	Population 16 and Over	In Labor Force	Labor Force Participation Rate
Fargo	73,615	55,251	75.1%
Sioux Falls, SD	96,178	71,988	74.8%
Lincoln, NE	179,490	131,691	73.4%
Madison, WI	175,269	128,050	73.1%
Fort Collins, CO	95,935	69,424	72.4%
Columbus, OH	555,471	394,564	71.0%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	523,787	371,018	70.8%
Indianapolis, IN	602,600	415,761	69.0%
Kansas City, MO	340,707	226,579	66.5%
Duluth, MN	70,664	45,419	64.3%
Nation	217,168,077	138,820,935	63.9%
Chicago, IL	2,215,574	1,358,054	61.3%

Source: Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P43, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

Note: A person is considered to be “in the labor force” if they have a job or if they are unemployed but actively seeking work. It is a measure of engagement with work and the local economy.

In Fargo, less than 5 percent of children under age 17 live in a family with no adult workers which is less than half the national rate

Share of children living in families with no parents in labor force, 2000

City	Children living in Families	Children living in families with no parent in Labor Force	Percent
Fargo	18,629	853	4.6%
Sioux Falls, SD	29,764	1,456	4.9%
Fort Collins, CO	24,499	1,270	5.2%
Lincoln, NE	49,748	2,751	5.5%
Madison, WI	34,850	2,359	6.8%
Duluth, MN	17,399	1,232	7.1%
Nation	67,882,626	7,096,231	10.5%
Indianapolis, IN	186,615	20,247	10.8%
Columbus, OH	160,779	19,261	12.0%
Kansas City, MO	103,352	14,581	14.1%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	150,072	25,699	17.1%
Chicago, IL	675,233	146,055	21.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P46, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

**Fargo is a university community and a regional shopping center.
Almost half of all Fargo jobs are in the areas of “Educational, Health and Social Services” and “Wholesale and Retail trade”**

Share of workers by major industries, 2000

City	Educational, Health and Social Services	Wholesale and Retail Trade	Manufacturing	Professional, Scientific and Management Services	Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Svc	Other industries
Madison, WI	30.0	12.9	8.4	10.4	9.1	29.2
Duluth, MN	29.5	17.3	5.6	6.0	11.6	30.0
Fort Collins, CO	24.3	15.0	13.9	11.5	10.3	25.0
Lincoln, NE	24.0	14.0	11.6	9.1	8.5	32.8
Fargo	23.6	20.3	8.3	6.0	9.5	32.3
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	23.4	12.9	11.6	12.9	10.0	29.1
Nation	19.9	15.3	14.1	9.3	9.2	32.1
Sioux Falls, SD	19.8	17.4	12.0	3.8	7.8	39.2
Columbus, OH	19.3	17.1	8.9	10.8	9.1	34.7
Chicago, IL	19.0	12.0	13.1	13.6	8.5	33.8
Indianapolis, IN	18.5	16.3	13.5	9.5	8.6	33.5
Kansas City, MO	18.3	14.6	10.1	10.8	9.4	36.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P49, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

Fargo workers are employed in year-round part-time work at almost twice the national rate

Share of population 16+ by full-time/part-time employment status, 2000

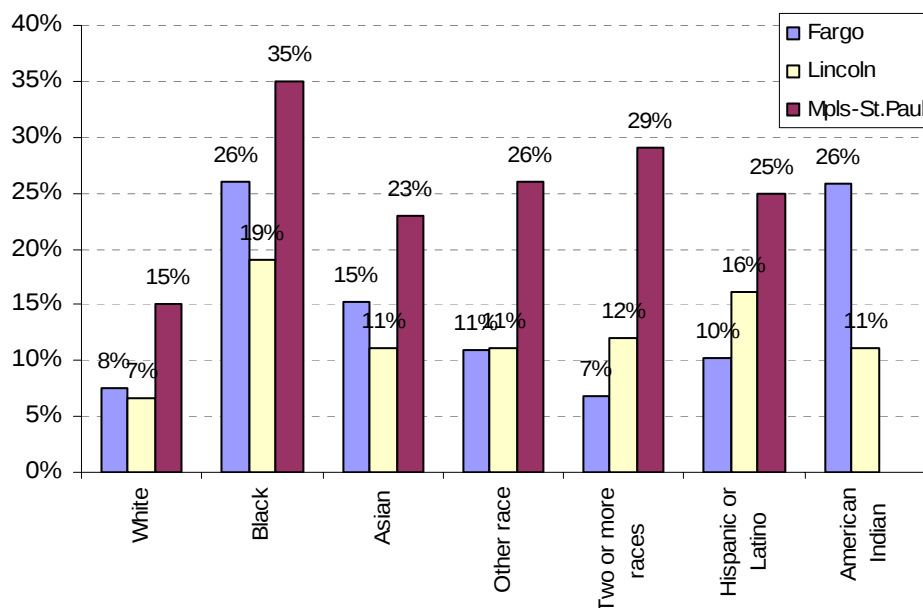
City	Full time All year	Full time Seasonal	Part time All year	Part time Seasonal	Did not work in 1999
Fargo	45.9%	13.7%	11.3%	10.8%	18.2%
Duluth, MN	35.2%	12.4%	11.2%	12.6%	28.6%
Madison, WI	43.0%	13.8%	10.0%	15.2%	17.9%
Fort Collins, CO	40.7%	15.7%	9.8%	16.0%	17.9%
Lincoln, NE	48.8%	11.4%	9.5%	11.4%	18.9%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	44.6%	13.1%	8.2%	10.8%	23.3%
Sioux Falls, SD	52.1%	11.1%	8.0%	9.1%	19.7%
Columbus, OH	48.9%	12.0%	6.8%	9.4%	22.8%
Nation	43.2%	11.8%	6.2%	8.4%	30.5%
Indianapolis, IN	48.5%	12.1%	5.8%	8.3%	25.4%
Kansas City, MO	47.0%	12.3%	5.3%	8.0%	27.3%
Chicago, IL	40.8%	13.0%	5.0%	7.4%	33.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P47, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

Note: Full time all year – 35+ hours/week 48+ weeks/year, Full time seasonal - 35+ hours/week <48 weeks/year, Part time all year - <35 hours/week 48+ weeks/year, Part time seasonal - <35 hours/week <48 weeks/year.

Overall, auto use is high in Fargo but, one in four American Indian and Black households in Fargo do not have access to an automobile

Share of households without a vehicle by race/ethnicity, 2000



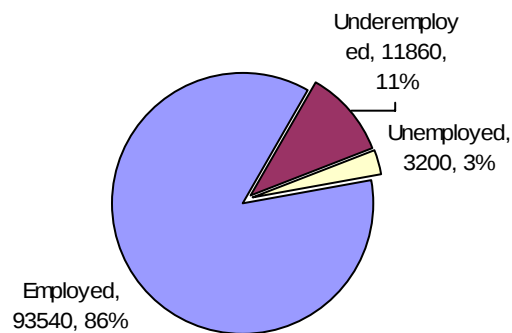
The unemployment rate in Fargo is well below the national average and has been for at least 10 years

Unemployment Rate, 2002

City	2002	1992	1982
Fargo	2.5%		
Sioux Falls, SD	2.6%		
Fort Collins, CO			
Lincoln, NE			
Madison, WI			
Duluth, MN			
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	4.7%		
Kansas City, MO	6.1%		
Columbus, OH	5.1%		
Indianapolis, IN	8.0%		
Chicago, IL	5.3%		
Nation	5.7%		

Source: SOCDs - HUD

Employment Status of workers in Fargo Moorhead Labor force



“Underemployed” workers have indicated interest in changing jobs and have the skills to warrant a higher level of employment.⁸

% of underemployed	...willing to change jobs for designated hourly wage or less
10%	\$9.11
25%	\$11.38
50%	\$15.24
75%	\$22.18

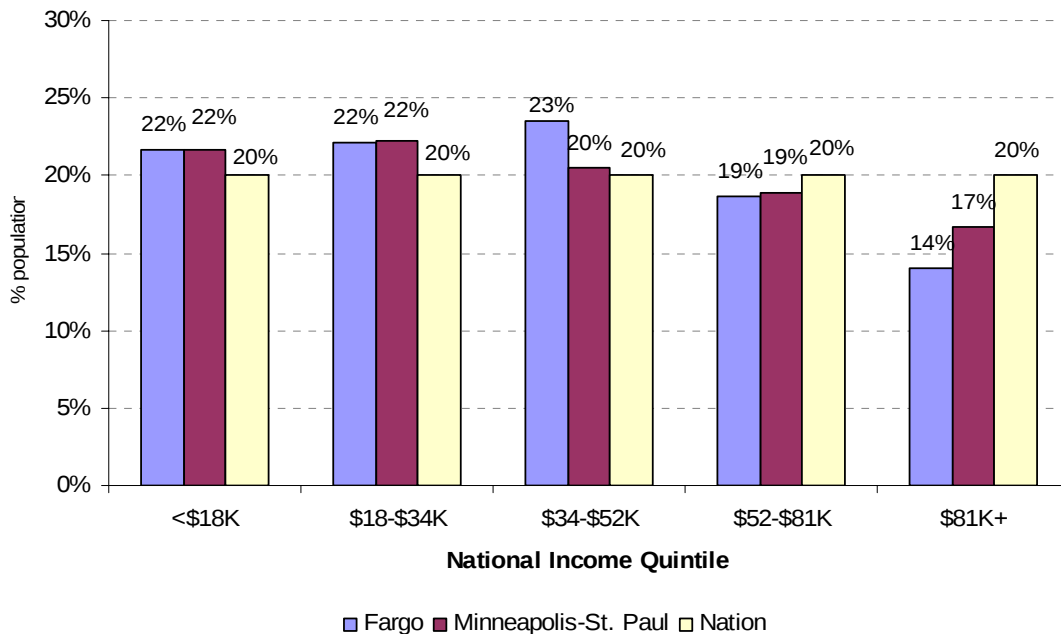
⁸ The Fargo Moorhead MSA Labor Availability Survey, The Pathfinders (June 2004), p. 8.

Income and Poverty⁹

Household incomes matter vitally. Income and poverty levels reflect the ability of residents to provide for themselves and their families, their capacity to support neighborhood businesses, and their prospects for building assets for the future. A city that is able to attract and retain a mix of household incomes may be well-positioned to offer high quality public services that meet the demands of its residents and workers.

Fargo's income distribution shows overall balance with a strong middle class

Proportion of Households by National Income Quintile, 2000



This income analysis was completed in accordance with the Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program publication entitled "The Shape of the Curve: Housing Income Distributions in U.S. Cities 1979-1999", August 2004. Census reported incomes are re-calculated to match national income quintiles and adjusted for regional income differences.

⁹ "Compared to other indicators, income and poverty are especially sensitive to the timing of the decennial census. Both the 1990 and 2000 censuses were conducted near the peak of U.S. business cycles. There is little question that the nation's recent economic downturn has produced shifts in the trends and conditions outlined in this section. Still, this analysis of income and poverty changes ... sheds light on how the city fared in a relatively strong economy, and establishes a baseline for its residents' economic progress in the current decade." (*Minneapolis St. Paul Profile*, p. 55)

Fargo's median household income is low relative to comparison communities but its average household size is smaller as well

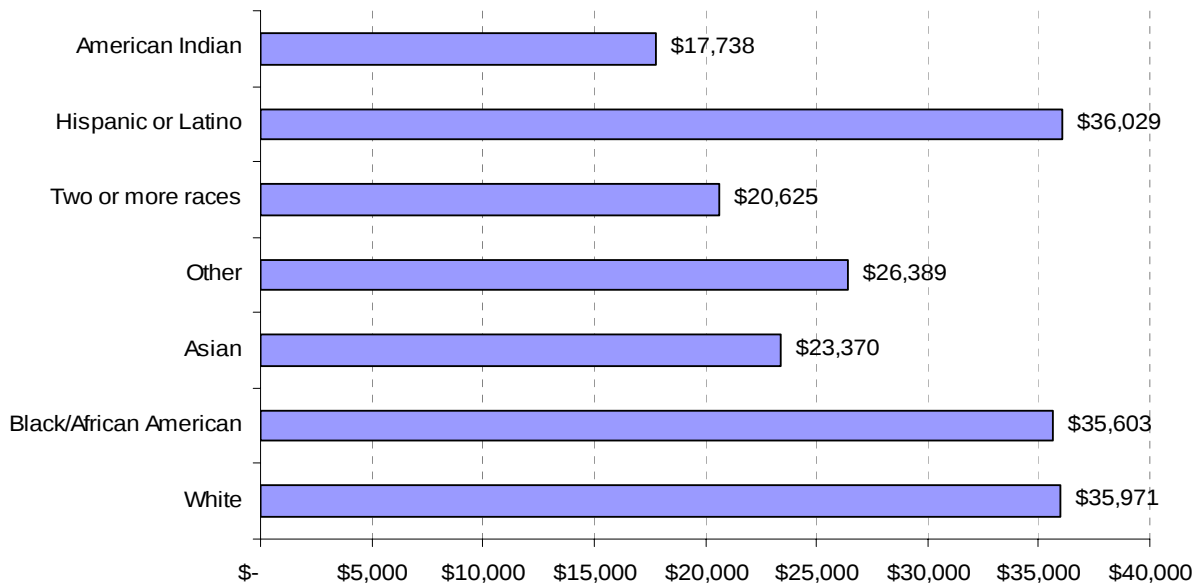
Median Household Income, 1990-2000

City	1990	2000	Change
Duluth, MN	\$31,399	\$33,766	7.5%
Fargo	\$34,027	\$35,510	4.4%
Kansas City, MO	\$35,890	\$37,198	3.6%
Columbus, OH	\$35,807	\$37,897	5.8%
Fargo Moorhead MSA	\$35,673	\$38,069	6.7%
Chicago, IL	\$35,337	\$38,625	9.3%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	\$35,555	\$38,774	9.1%
Indianapolis, IN	\$38,971	\$40,051	2.8%
Lincoln, NE	\$37,695	\$40,605	7.7%
Sioux Falls, SD	\$36,660	\$41,221	12.4%
Madison, WI	\$39,527	\$41,941	6.1%
Nation	\$40,382	\$41,994	4.0%
Sioux Falls MSA	\$37,302	\$43,387	16.3%
Fort Collins, CO	\$36,042	\$44,459	23.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P080A and P53, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

Among racial/ethnic groups in Fargo, American Indians have the lowest household incomes

Median household income by race/ethnicity, 2000



Fargo's non-English speaking households have fairly high rates of English proficiency when compared to other communities

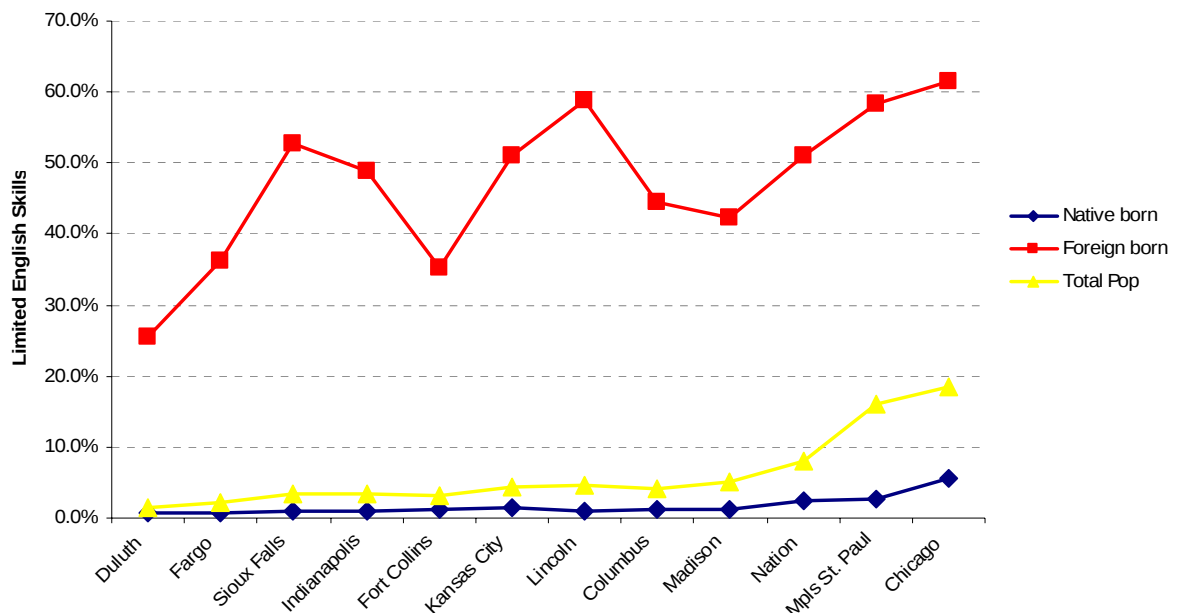
Share of non-English speaking households that are Limited English Proficient¹⁰, All Non-English speaking Households, 2000

Household speaks as primary language...					
City	Spanish	Indo-European	Asian	Other	Total Households
Fargo	10.2%	15.7%	20.0%	27.5%	1.3%
Sioux Falls, SD	23.0%	19.1%	31.4%	30.1%	2.0%
Fort Collins, CO	11.4%	6.3%	28.4%	10.8%	1.7%
Lincoln, NE	16.0%	19.7%	40.4%	30.1%	2.4%
Madison, WI	16.9%	8.1%	37.2%	16.4%	3.0%
Duluth, MN	7.4%	9.1%	25.1%	9.3%	0.8%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	30.8%	14.6%	38.6%	38.3%	5.7%
Kansas City, MO	21.2%	12.0%	32.0%	23.0%	2.3%
Columbus, OH	16.4%	14.6%	35.0%	27.8%	2.6%
Indianapolis, IN	29.2%	31.0%	34.6%	18.6%	10.2%
Chicago, IL	22.3%	13.6%	25.9%	17.3%	1.8%
Nation	23.9%	15.5%	29.2%	15.0%	4.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P20, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

1,800 Fargo residents have limited English skills (2% of pop). Just 36% of foreign born residents have language issues - a high rate of English proficiency compared to other communities

English proficiency by place of birth, 2000



¹⁰ Food insecurity and other hardship measures were more closely associated with limited English proficiency than with either legal status or length of residency in the United States. ("The New Neighbors: A User's Guide to Data on Immigrants in U.S. Communities", Urban Institute (2003), 14.) "Limited English Proficient" individuals are those who do not speak English at home and who speak English less than "very well" (i.e., "well", "not well", or "not at all").

The poverty rate in Fargo fell in the 1990s, especially among the elderly

Overall poverty rate and poverty rate by age, 1990-2000

City	Poverty Rate		Child Poverty Rate		Elderly Poverty Rate	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Fort Collins, CO	17.0%	14.0%	11.3%	8.9%	11.4%	5.8%
Sioux Falls, SD	8.5%	8.4%	9.6%	10.7%	9.5%	7.4%
Fargo	13.7%	11.8%	11.3%	11.2%	10.0%	7.5%
Lincoln, NE	11.3%	10.1%	11.2%	11.3%	9.0%	6.0%
Madison, WI	16.1%	15.0%	13.2%	11.7%	4.8%	4.5%
Duluth, MN	16.6%	15.5%	18.1%	16.2%	10.0%	9.5%
Nation	13.1%	12.4%	18.3%	16.6%	12.8%	9.9%
Indianapolis, IN	12.5%	11.9%	18.9%	16.7%	11.7%	8.1%
Columbus, OH	17.2%	14.8%	24.4%	19.0%	13.0%	10.9%
Kansas City, MO	15.3%	14.3%	22.8%	20.6%	14.6%	10.5%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	17.8%	16.4%	28.8%	24.4%	10.9%	10.3%
Chicago, IL	21.6%	19.6%	33.9%	28.5%	15.9%	15.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P87, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

Note: Child poverty includes children under age 18. Elderly poverty includes adults 65 and older.

The poverty rate for Blacks/African Americans living in Fargo is higher than it is in the selected comparison communities – first generation immigrants make up the majority of Fargo’s African American population

Poverty rate by race/ethnicity, 2000

City	White	Black/ African American	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian	Hispanic or Latino	Other Race	Two or More Races
Duluth, MN	14.0%	40.6%	23.2%	48.9%	20.0%	19.0%	28.6%
Fargo	10.6%	38.9%	21.9%	35.8%	18.8%	21.6%	29.1%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	8.6%	31.5%	32.5%	32.1%	27.9%	22.5%	24.5%
Chicago, IL	8.2%	29.4%	18.0%	22.0%	19.1%	20.0%	21.0%
Madison, WI	12.3%	29.1%	29.7%	26.4%	25.2%	24.7%	11.0%
Sioux Falls, SD	6.3%	28.2%	6.7%	49.0%	29.7%	21.8%	33.8%
Lincoln, NE	8.7%	27.1%	13.3%	21.1%	23.5%	18.9%	25.6%
Nation	8.1%	24.9%	12.6%	25.7%	22.6%	24.4%	18.2%
Kansas City, MO	7.8%	24.6%	17.1%	18.3%	17.9%	21.3%	21.5%
Columbus, OH	10.8%	23.4%	18.7%	26.3%	25.6%	18.7%	21.1%
Indianapolis, IN	7.9%	20.7%	12.6%	20.9%	16.3%	20.1%	20.5%
Fort Collins, CO	12.9%	12.5%	21.5%	23.1%	17.9%	21.3%	27.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – P159 A-I, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

Fewer than 2 out of 10 children in Fargo live near or below poverty, which is a better rate than in most peer communities and just about half the national rate

Share of families with children under 150% of poverty, 2000

City	Total families with children	Families with children under 150% Poverty	Percent
Fort Collins, CO	13,791	1,805	13.1%
Duluth, MN	9,175	1,367	14.9%
Sioux Falls, SD	16,640	2,557	15.4%
Madison, WI	20,652	3,246	15.7%
Fargo	10,911	1,929	17.7%
Lincoln, NE	28,137	5,035	17.9%
Indianapolis, IN	106,399	25,189	23.7%
Columbus, OH	93,227	24,064	25.8%
Kansas City, MO	58,398	15,852	27.1%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	76,107	22,145	29.1%
Nation	35,234,403	10,334,441	29.3%
Chicago, IL	366,051	129,090	35.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – PCT50, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

Housing

Housing has always played an important role in defining the health of this nation and its cities, with construction figures and home prices measuring the strength of the economy and homeownership rates and rent burdens indicating the wealth of households. Residential homeownership is a good indicator as to whether families can acquire assets and leverage them for other expenditures that build family and community wealth, such as a college education, small business capitalization, or home repair/improvement. Family and community well-being can be threatened, however, if housing costs become too high for residents to bear. Housing cost burdens may point to a need for the preservation and construction of affordable housing ... and may also imply a need to raise residents' incomes so that they are able to afford quality housing. In either situation, cities can play an active role in linking housing supply and demand.

The city of Fargo gained 4,000 new homeowners in the 1990s but the overall homeownership rate still declined by more 2 percent

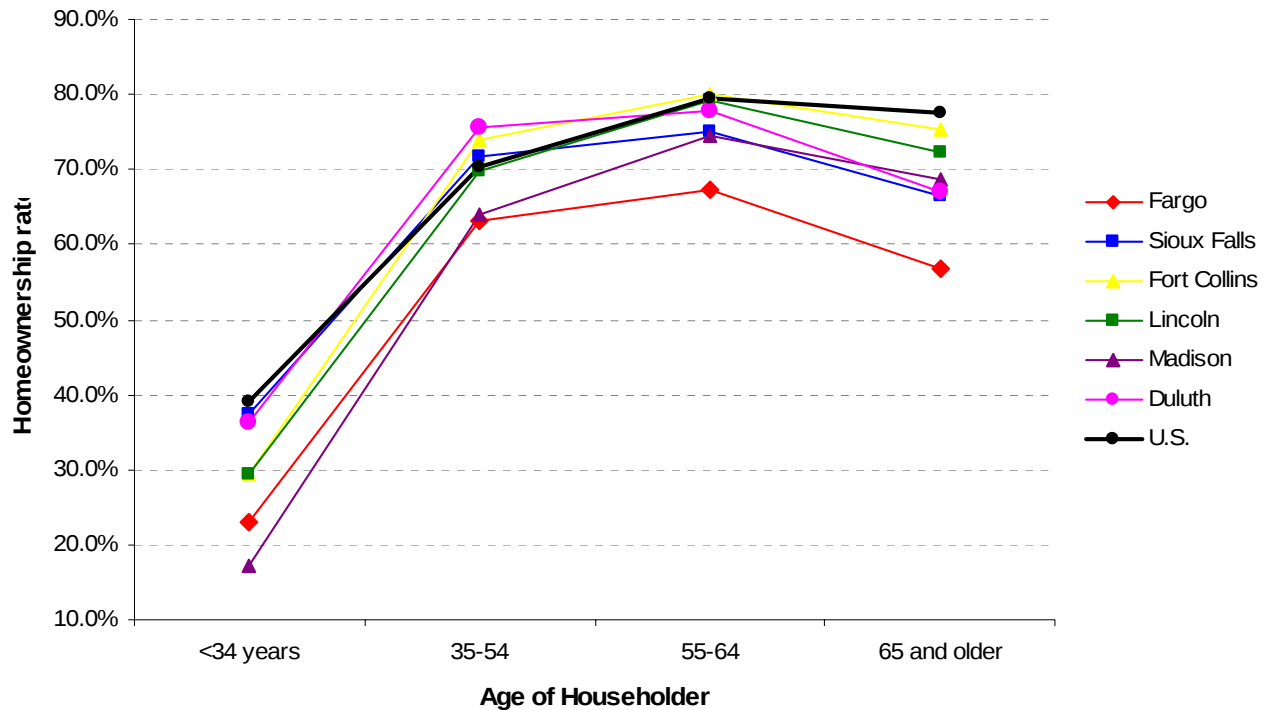
Homeownership Rate, 1990-2000

City	1990	2000	Change
Chicago, IL	41.5%	43.8%	5.5%
Fargo	48.1%	47.1%	-2.1%
Madison, WI	46.9%	47.8%	1.8%
Columbus, OH	46.6%	49.1%	5.4%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	51.4%	52.8%	2.7%
Fort Collins, CO	52.7%	57.1%	8.3%
Kansas City, MO	56.9%	57.7%	1.4%
Lincoln, NE	58.1%	57.9%	-0.3%
Indianapolis, IN	56.7%	58.7%	3.5%
Fargo Moorhead MSA	58.9%	59.0%	0.1%
Sioux Falls, SD	58.8%	61.0%	3.7%
Duluth, MN	68.4%	64.2%	-0.4%
Nation	64.2%	66.2%	3.1%
Sioux Falls MSA	62.3%	66.7%	7.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – H7, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

Fargo's Homeownership Rates are lower than peer communities across all age groups

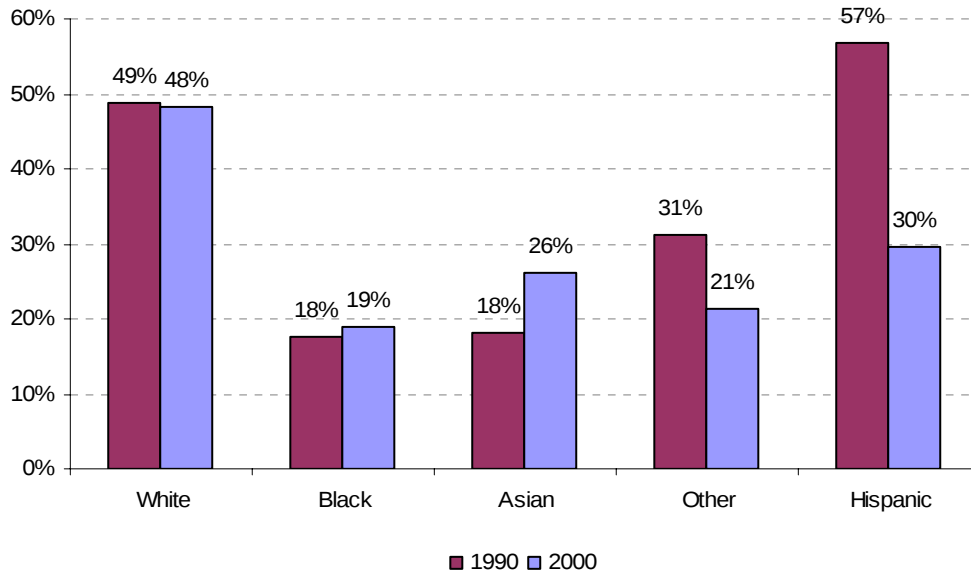
Homeownership rate by age of householder, 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau – PCT50, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

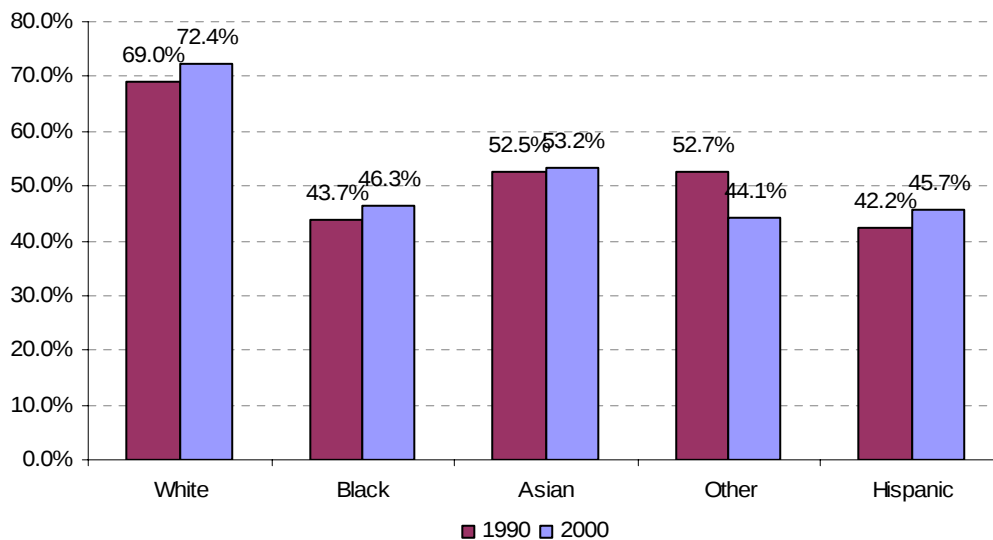
The share of Black and Asian householders in Fargo that own their own home increased slightly in the 1990s

Homeownership rate by race/ethnicity, 1990-2000, Fargo



U.S. homeownership rates increased for most racial/ethnic groups in the 1990s

Homeownership rate by race/ethnicity, 1990-2000, U.S.



Almost half of the housing units in Fargo are in structures with 5 or more units, a rate that exceeds all other comparison communities

Share of housing units in multi family structures, 2000*

City	Total Housing Units	Multifamily Housing Units	Percent
Fargo	41,277	18,924	45.8%
Chicago, IL	1,152,871	456,700	39.6%
Madison, WI	92,353	33,043	35.8%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	284,337	97,265	34.2%
Fargo Moorhead MSA	73,536	24,233	33.0%
Columbus, OH	327,429	95,179	29.1%
Lincoln, NE	95,188	24,548	25.8%
Sioux Falls, SD	51,724	13,229	25.6%
Kansas City, MO	202,273	48,570	24.0%
Fort Collins, CO	47,766	11,387	23.8%
Indianapolis, IN	352,748	83,205	23.6%
Sioux Falls MSA	69,368	14,184	20.4%
Duluth, MN	37,000	7,105	19.2%
Nation	115,904,641	20,059,763	17.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – H30, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

Note: Multifamily structures include those with 5 or more housing units

Fargo's rental housing market is competitive and relatively affordable but prices are increasing at a rate comparable to urban communities

Percent change in median gross rent, 1990-2000

City	1990	2000	Change
Fort Collins, CO	\$526	\$689	30.9%
Duluth, MN	\$389	\$444	14.1%
Sioux Falls, SD	\$474	\$521	9.9%
Lincoln, NE	\$476	\$519	9.8%
Madison, WI	\$589	\$644	9.4%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	\$529	\$565	6.9%
Fargo	\$443	\$468	5.7%
Columbus, OH	\$556	\$586	5.4%
Chicago, IL	\$586	\$616	5.1%
Indianapolis, IN	\$540	\$567	5.0%
Kansas City, MO	\$532	\$548	3.0%
Nation	\$589	\$602	2.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – H043A and H63, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

Note: 1990 rents adjusted to 2000 dollars

While almost one in three Fargo renters is burdened by housing costs, rental housing in Fargo is relatively affordable – the percent of renters with a housing cost burden is lower than most peer communities

Share of renters paying at least 30 percent of their income on rent, 2000

<i>City</i>	Total Renter Households	Paying 30% or more of Income on Rent	Percent	Total renter HH w/ income of \$20,000-\$35,000	Paying 30% or more of Income on Rent	Percent
Sioux Falls, SD	19,384	6,130	31.6%	6,336	1,222	19.3%
Fargo	20,795	6,755	32.5%	6,186	765	12.4%
Kansas City, MO	77,527	26,364	34.0%	21,326	5,592	26.2%
Indianapolis, IN	132,052	46,821	35.5%	36,715	10,458	28.5%
Columbus, OH	153,328	55,588	36.3%	41,634	13,361	32.1%
Lincoln, NE	38,029	13,854	36.4%	11,302	2,717	24.0%
Nation	35,199,502	12,969,286	36.8%	8,621,577	3,101,800	36.0%
Chicago, IL	596,060	225,765	37.9%	132,066	51,130	38.7%
Minneapolis St. Paul, MN	129,503	49,382	38.1%	35,130	11,497	32.7%
Duluth, MN	12,694	5,265	41.5%	2,991	730	24.4%
Madison, WI	46,385	20,202	43.6%	12,182	5,271	43.3%
Fort Collins, CO	19,639	9,187	46.8%	5,054	2,513	49.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – H69 and H73, Living Cities Dataset (Brookings Institution)

- “Renter households generally have lower incomes than owner households. At the time of the 2000 Census, nearly 71 percent of renter households had annual incomes below \$35,000, compared to only 21 percent of owner households.
- “Most of the households with a housing cost burden in 2000 were younger households, age 34 or under. Nearly 3,900 younger households reported paying more than 30 percent of their income for housing. The large number of households undoubtedly reflects the student population in the community. On a percentage basis, older renters, age 75 and above, were the most likely to have a cost burden. Nearly 47% of renter households in these age ranges were paying more than 30% of income for housing in 2000.”¹¹

¹¹ Fargo Housing Study Update, p. 5.

Newly lowered 2005 FMRs for Fargo Moorhead indicate improved affordability in the local rental market

Rental Housing Affordability, Fargo Moorhead MSA, 2004

<i>City</i>	Rent affordable for this income group	Income needed to afford unit at FMR	2005 Fair Market Rent (FMR)	Housing Wage to afford unit at FMR	% AMI to afford unit at FMR (based on 4 person household)	Work hours per week at Min Wage to afford unit at FMR
30% Area Median Income	\$455					
50% Area Median Income	\$759					
80% Area Median Income	\$1,214					
100% Area Median Income	\$1,517					
0 Bedroom		\$13,880	\$347	\$6.67	23%	52
1 Bedroom		\$16,480	\$412	\$7.92	27%	62
2 Bedroom		\$20,960	\$524	\$10.08	35%	78
3 Bedroom		\$30,240	\$756	\$14.54	50%	113
4 Bedroom		\$34,960	\$874	\$16.81	58%	131

Source: Out of Reach 2004