

# Census tells how 2 cities differ

## Watsonville's growth, racial makeup contrast with those of Santa Cruz

Census-2000  
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The 2000 census reveals a tale of two very different cities: Santa Cruz is growing slowly, and Watsonville is exploding.

Even more striking are the cities' racial compositions.

California  
**Census 2000**  
Beyond the numbers

Santa Cruz grew from 49,040 in 1990 to 54,593 in 2000, an 11.3 percent gain, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Watsonville increased from 31,099 in 1990 to 44,265 in 2000, a whopping 42.3 percent hike.

Santa Cruz's Latino population grew from 13.6 percent to 17 percent in 2000. Watsonville, by contrast, jumped from 60 percent to 75 percent in 2000, making it the San Francisco Bay Area's most Latino city.

"It's not a surprise to me," said Watsonville Mayor Chuck Carter.

For years Watsonville has been trying to house its burgeoning Latino population while maintaining the agricultural industry that rings the city, he said.

"That's our challenge," he said. "In this valley we have a finite amount of land. Right now we have people stacked in garages and attics."

While he was impressed with the Census Bureau's efforts to count residents, Carter suspects Latinos were undercounted.

The county's population grew from 229,734 in 1990 to 255,602 in 2000, an 11.3 percent gain. The county's Latino population grew from 46,797 to 68,486, a 26.8 percent gain. Whites are still the majority in the county and in Santa Cruz.

Michael Brown, UC Santa Cruz politics professor, said the growing Latino populations in Watsonville and the county has political implications. The majority of the county votes Democratic, but the priorities of wealthier North County Democrats, which include environmental protection and growth control, differ from many Latino Democrats, who place economic opportunity and housing at the top of the list.

Traditionally voter turnout is much higher among whites than Latinos.

"But over time that's going to change," Brown said.

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### Setting it straight

A headline on Page A1 Friday about the 2000 U.S. Census incorrectly stated that Latinos are the majority population in California. Latinos accounted for more than three out of four new Californians and now make up nearly a third of the total state population, while non-Latino whites have slipped to less than half the state's population, according to census figures.

## Two cities

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Dick Wilson, Santa Cruz city manager, had not had a chance to review the census data, but he said the rate of growth was what he expected. But because of the city's lack of developable land, most of the growth comes from increased density in existing homes rather than new construction, he said.

One surprising change he has seen is a recent decline in the city's school-age children. He suspects the high cost of housing is encouraging residents to hold onto their homes, making it difficult for young families to move in.

Geoff Dunn, Santa Cruz County historian and filmmaker, said now that Watsonville has a Latino majority on the City

### Santa Cruz County Census figures

CITY	POPULATION	WHITE	LATINO	BLACK	AMERICAN INDIAN	ASIAN
County	255,602	167,464	68,486	2,160	1,180	8,464
Capitola	10,033	7,870	1,267	109	35	387
Santa Cruz	54,593	39,304	9,491	871	248	2,607
Scotts Valley	11,385	9,694	729	48	33	517
Watsonville	44,265	8,574	33,254	206	163	1,358

Council, it is time for more Latinos to enter government in Santa Cruz.

"Santa Cruz is behind the times," he said.

The racial and economic differences between the north and south ends of the county have been growing for years, Dunn said.

But he hopes new leadership on the city councils of the two cities will bridge some

of those differences. Toward that end, the Watsonville and Santa Cruz council's will hold their first joint meeting in May.

"Hopefully the gap between the two cities will ease up a bit," he said.

Local census numbers were released Friday. Some large news agencies obtained the information as early as Wednesday by buy-

### About this report

The U.S. Census Bureau changed how it asked questions on race and ethnicity in the 2000 census, making exact comparison with the 1990 figures difficult.

Also, the Census Bureau now treats Hispanic as an ethnic category rather than a racial category, of which there are 63. Hispanics may be of any race. For analysis, many news organizations, including the Sentinel, are treating Hispanic and Latino as racial distinctions.

ing a CD-ROM from the state Department of Finance.

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