

Foreword

Over the years, cities undergo changes in their economy, demographics and overall physical makeup. However, an examination of a city from one decade to another will give a more profound description of the direction a city is taking in comparison to other cities. This report was prepared to explain how the City of Houston compares nationally in terms of population, housing, economics and other variables, as well as note the changes that have taken place in some of the areas since 1990.

Chapter One provides a synopsis of the differences in the **populations** of the ten largest cities in the country and the changes occurring between 1990 and 2003. It also gives the **household characteristics** such as number of persons per household and types of households.

Chapter Two contains comparisons of **poverty and education**, such as the educational attainment of persons 25 years and older, and the poverty status of individuals living in the ten largest cities in the country.

Chapter Three provides a snapshot of **public safety** detailing the number of crimes that took place in the ten-city comparison, as well as the number of available officers for those cities.

Chapter Four identifies **housing characteristics** with regard to the number of total housing units, median values and percentages of homeownership by race, along with the changes that occurred between 1990 and 2003.

Chapter Five gives a profile of **transportation** conditions in terms of mode of travel to work, length of commute time to

and from work, the congestion costs per capita and the hours of delay due to congestion.

Chapter Six deals with the **economic well-being** of each city by examining the number of jobs available, median household income, bank deposits and annual retail sales.

Chapter Seven, the final chapter, charts population changes in relation to the actual area of land governed by the city, and population **density** changes along with the physical growth of these cities.

This report was prepared utilizing the Decennial Census information that has been collected since 1790. The Census is taken in order to determine representation in the lower House of Congress. The various types of demographic data are also used to assess the social and economic characteristics of each city, county, and major metropolitan area, as well as for smaller geographic units. For certain data, the Census Bureau provides yearly estimates for non-Census years.

Another data source is the American Community Survey. This survey, conducted by the Census, is taken yearly from a small sample of the population (1% to 2.5%) and represents an effort to track demographic and economic changes between Census years. The latest data currently available are from 2003. Other sources of data used in this publication include the Federal Bureau of Investigations (data on crime and police officers), the 2004 Urban Mobility Report published by the Texas Transportation Institute and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC).

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The 2000 Census and 2003 Census estimate indicate Houston continues to be the fourth largest city in the country by population behind New York, Los Angeles and Chicago, respectively.

Since 1990, the City of Houston's population has increased 23%, the third largest increase in the country behind Phoenix and San Antonio.

According to the 2003 American Community Survey, 88.1% of the U.S. population was native-born, with the remaining 11.9% being foreign-born. The Houston population, however, is more diverse: 26.9% of the Houston population is foreign-born while 73.1% were born in the United States.

When comparing the Census records between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of births has decreased in eight of the ten-largest cities in the United States, including Houston.

The number of births in Houston has increased slightly in the past decade from 39,752 in 1990 to 44,738 in 2000. However, the percentage of births versus the actual population percentage has decreased in comparison.

During the past two decades; there has also been a shift in the racial demographics throughout the country, and in Houston, in particular. From 1990 to 2000, there was a 9.2% decrease in the White population in Houston. In contrast, the Black population increased by 8.9%, the Asian

population by 59.2% and the Hispanic population grew significantly by 62.2%. These trends continued through 2003.

Of the total households in Houston, 63.6% are traditional family households. This puts the city in third place in the ten-city comparison.

Finally, the findings of the American Community Survey indicate the median age of Houston's residents is 31.4 years, making it the third youngest population in the ten-city comparison. The overall median age for the U.S. population is 36 years.