



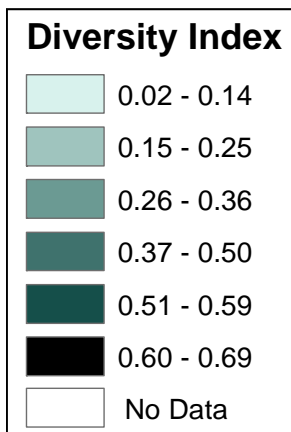
Changing Diversity in Marion County (1990-2010)

How can we look beyond the demographic snapshot of our city and begin to explore the social dynamics within and between neighborhoods? An increasingly important concept in public life, diversity can be described in the most basic sense as the number of groups represented in a place and the proportions of each. A deeper understanding of the state of diversity in our community can include how and why these proportions change over time and how the groups interact with each other.

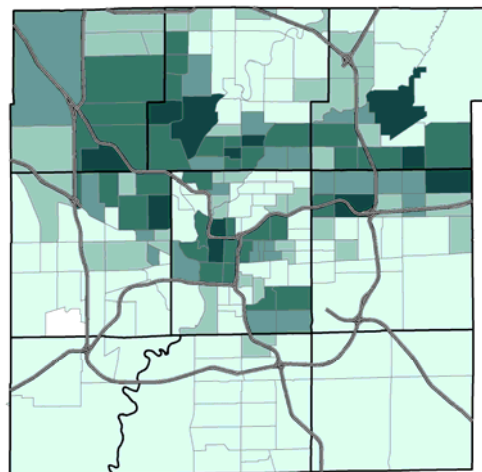
A useful tool for exploring the racial/ethnic makeup of neighborhoods throughout Indianapolis is the Diversity Index. This index is a measure of the heterogeneity of each unit. The scale ranges from 0 (only one group represented) to 1 (more than one group, each equally represented).

The maps to the right depict the diversity index at the census tract level when accounting for three groups: non-Hispanic African Americans, non-Hispanic whites, and Hispanics. In 1990, no segment of Marion County carried a diversity index higher than 0.60. By 2010, several areas across the county showed diversity at or above this level. In the southern portion of the county, namely Decatur, Perry, and Franklin townships, the index was near zero in 1990 and 2000, indicating a homogenous racial/ethnic profile. In 2010, these areas showed a marked increase in diversity; very few areas had indices as low as in previous years and some areas displayed indices above 0.50.

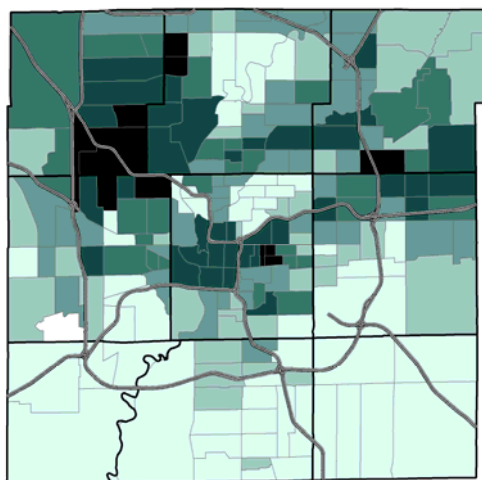
What does an increasing Diversity Index indicate? Certainly demographic changes at the county level have been noted for decades. Out-migration to the suburbs has increased minority representation in many areas. At the same time, well-documented increases in the Hispanic community have increased diversity, even creating Hispanic majorities in some neighborhoods (see following page).



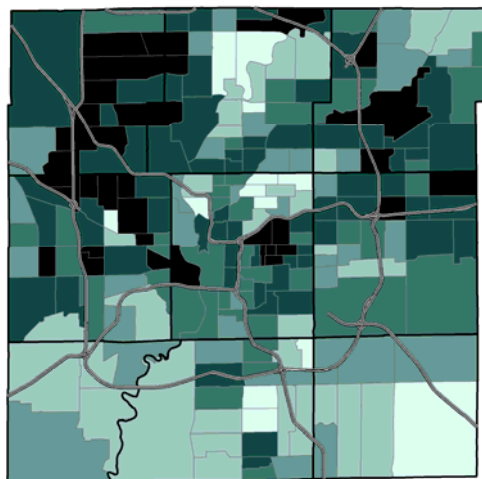
1990



2000



2010

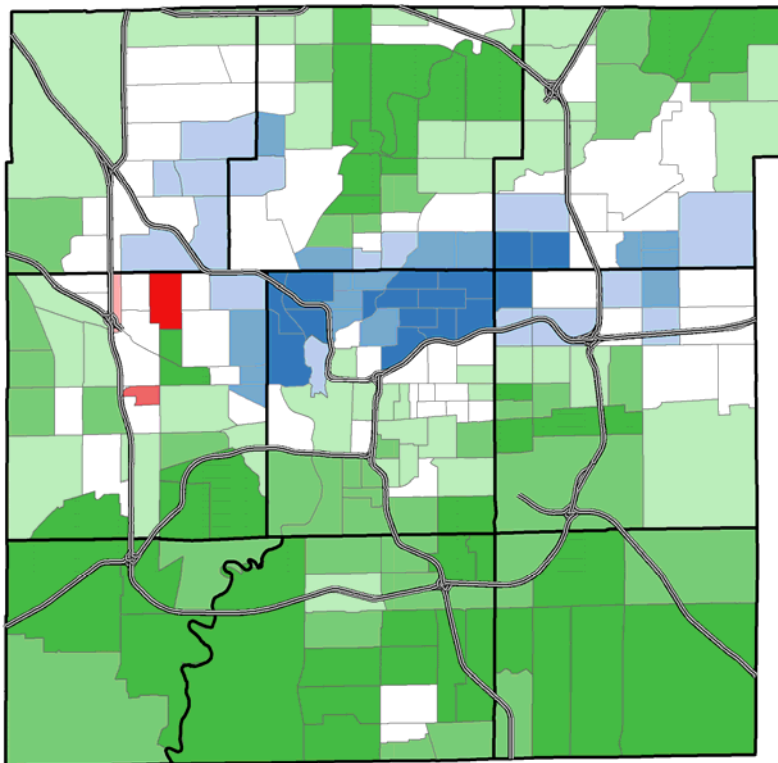
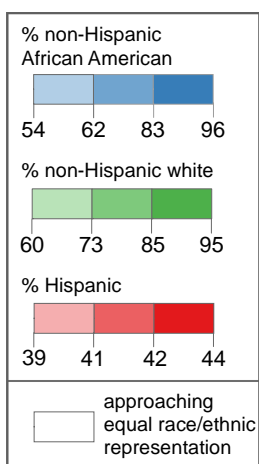




Race/Ethnicity: Largest Group by 2010 Census Tract

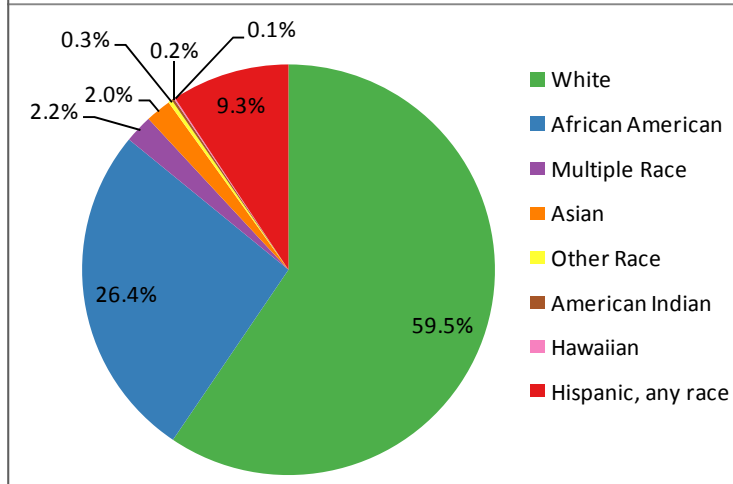
A limitation to the Diversity Index is that in areas with low index values, we cannot interpret which groups have large representations. The map to the right displays which of the three groups included in the index calculations on the previous page are predominant.

Darker shades represent areas where a given group holds a large majority. Census tracts displayed in white have race/ethnicity percentages that are relatively equal to each other; in other words, no group holds a large majority. In general, these areas rank very high on the Diversity Index.



This map also begins to depict patterns of segregation in the county. Areas with large non-Hispanic African-American majorities are clustered around the near north side, while in the southern half of the county no census tract has a majority of African-Americans. In a city with stark segregation, any unit chosen to map diversity, such as census tracts, may possibly straddle these "lines" between races and ethnicities and therefore be counted as very diverse. If we are to interpret increasing diversity as a community asset, a sign of an increasingly rich cultural patchwork in Indianapolis, we must take into account our knowledge of on-the-ground phenomena such as segregation.

Race/Ethnicity in Marion County, 2010





Race/Ethnicity: Largest Group by Census Tract, 1990-2010

Images to the right display, as on the previous page, which group in a given census tract has the largest representation. Shading is not used here, therefore the maps do not display the degree to which a group is represented in any tract. For example, where non-Hispanic African Americans and whites are the only two groups present, the predominant group may make up anywhere between 50% and 99% of the population. If three racial/ethnic groups are present, as is the case in the 2010 map, the predominant group may make up any proportion above 33%.

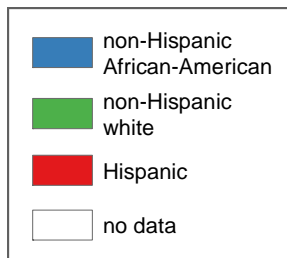
These maps help visualize shifts in “minority-majority” neighborhoods. Notably, the southern half of the county does not change in this aspect over the 20-year period, although we know that diversity has in fact increased. However, the African-American community has expanded significantly on the northwest, northeast, and east sides (Pike, Lawrence, and Warren townships, respectively). Some census tracts in the downtown and near-northside areas that were previously high-minority have shifted to non-Hispanic white majorities. Again, the growth of the Hispanic community is also evident here. A more detailed analysis would reveal relatively high percent Hispanic tracts in a much larger area of the west side, with increases higher than any other ethnic group.

The early reputation as a “big city with a small-town feel” possibly carried with it notions of a racially/ethnically homogenous community, or less open and inclusive one than found in other cities. However, the data visualized here indicates Indianapolis is becoming a more culturally dynamic city, and many different kinds of changes can be seen at the neighborhood level. How do changes in diversity relate to other key demographic indicators such as poverty, economic mobility, and health? Further analyses are needed to explore the relationships between these patterns and how the moving picture of diversity impacts communities.

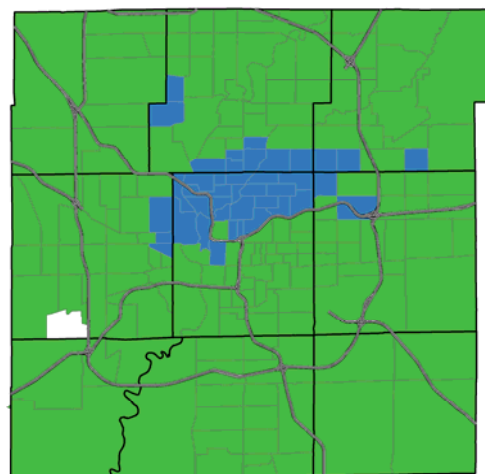
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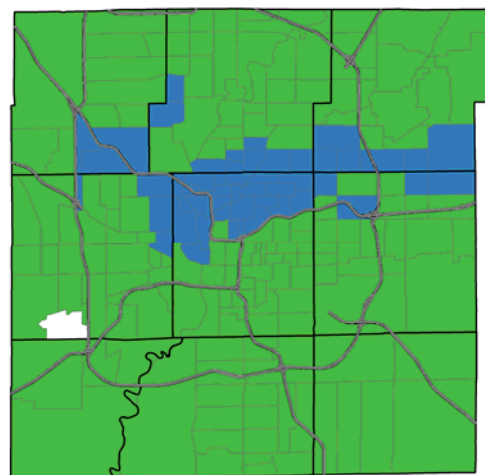
Source: The SAVI Community Information System; 1990, 2000, & 2010 US Census. SAVI is created and managed by The Polis Center, a center in the IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI, in partnership with United Way of Central Indiana as community trustee.



1990



2000



2010

