

Dothan Eagle
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Census estimates show Dothan, Wiregrass growth

Lance Griffin
lgriffin@dothaneagle.com

The city of Dothan grew steadily in 2008 and has tripled Alabama's rate of growth during the first eight years of the decade.

Population estimates recently released by the U.S. Census Bureau indicate Dothan added about 1,126 residents in 2008, bringing the estimated population of the city to 66,505. Dothan began the decade with a population of 57,737.

Population growth

City	2007	2008
Enterprise	24,384	25,351
Eufaula	14,478	14,502
Ozark	14,638	14,711
Dothan	65,379	66,505

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

"This is good growth," said Matt Parker, president of the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce. "We expect to continue to grow, but we have to continue to build our infrastructure and capacity."

Parker said Dothan's low cost of living has helped attract new residents. A national publication recently listed Dothan as 8th among metropolitan areas in lowest cost of living. Parker said Dothan continues to attract transplants from Florida seeking lower property taxes and a safer place than the often hurricane-plagued coast.

Dothan's 15.1 percent growth rate from 2000-2008 exceeds the national growth rate (8 percent) and the Alabama growth rate (4.8

percent) for the same period.

Parker said he expected Dothan to grow near 18 percent in this decade, far outpacing the growth rate from 1990-2000.

Parker said a proposed toll road connecting to Interstate 10 is vital to future growth throughout the Wiregrass.

"We are making tremendous headway on the limited access highway to open up our market," Parker said. "The international airport (near Panama City) will compliment that process."

Houston County inched closer to surpassing 100,000 residents. Estimates state Houston County grew 1,425 residents for a 2008 population of 98,488. The Wiregrass cities of Ozark, Eufaula and Enterprise also grew, according to the estimate.

Population estimates for all Alabama towns and municipalities can be found at www.census.gov by clicking "estimates."

The Census Bureau uses several factors to estimate population, including births, deaths and housing unit change.