

Then and now: See how the Treasure Valley has grown in the last 100 years

Use our interactive sliders to see Boise's growth since the turn of the century.

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BOISE, Idaho — **Editor's note:** [Growing Idaho](#) is a month-long series of KTVB special reports. Read Part 1 below and watch Part 2 Thursday night at 10 p.m. on Idaho's News Channel 7 or streaming live on [KTVB.COM](#).

While the Treasure Valley's landscape has dramatically changed in recent decades with [ballooning populations](#), rapid population growth is not a new occurrence in the region, according to [U.S. Census data](#).

In fact, Idaho and the Valley's population didn't experience one massive boom. Instead, there has been consistent growth since the turn of the century.

Comparing aerial images from the 1930s and 1980s to present day aerial and satellite graphics show some of the stark landscape changes that came with the [Treasure Valley's steadily growing population](#). Scroll down to see the results as well as interactive sliders looking at historical images of downtown Boise, Parkcenter Boulevard, the Village at Meridian and more.

WATCH BELOW: This timelapse from 1984 to 2016 shows Meridian's expansion. [Mobile users should tap here](#).

KTVB examined [data from the U.S. Census](#) and the nonprofit [Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho](#) (COMPASS) to track the rate of population growth in Treasure Valley counties and cities.

How many people lived in the Treasure Valley in 1900?

The [oldest available U.S. Census data](#) dates back to 1900 and shows that Idaho only had 161,772 residents at the turn of the century, which is less than a tenth of [Idaho's](#) estimated 1.75M population in 2018, according to [population estimates by the U.S Census Bureau](#).

In 1900, Ada County and Canyon County had a combined population of 19,056. That's nearly 3,000 people less than what [COMPASS estimates](#) as the City of Kuna's 2019 population.

INTERACTIVE PHOTO BELOW: Use the center slider bar to compare two photos of downtown Boise, one from 1930 and another from 2019.

Mobile users, [tap here to use the slider](#).

Annual growth rates, which averages how much a population grows per year, help put the population increases into perspective.

RELATED: [What could ease the Treasure Valley's traffic congestion?](#)

Between 1900 and 1930, Idaho's annual growth rate was 5.8 percent. There were 445,032 people calling the Gem State home in 1930, an increase of nearly 300,000 in 30 years.

Ada and Canyon counties' annual growth rate between 1900 and 1930 was an eye-catching 8.7 percent, reaching a combined population of 68,855.

See how the Treasure Valley has changed since the 1980s

For the next 50 years, Idaho's annual growth rate stayed steady at 2.24 percent. During that time, the population more than doubled from 445,032 in 1930 to 943,935 in 1980.

The combined growth rate for Ada County and Canyon County from the same time range, 1930 to 1980, was higher at 5.46 percent.

From 1980 to 2010, the same region had a 4.2 percent growth rate, ballooning from 256,792 residents in combined Ada and County counties to a total of 581,288.

The Treasure Valley's growth can be seen in satellite images between 1985 and 2018, where the cities west of Boise have expanded.

INTERACTIVE PHOTO BELOW: Slide to compare Treasure Valley development in 1984 and 2018. Mobile users, [tap here.](#)

Boise's population has more than doubled since 1980, from 102,036 residents to the current 236,000 population, according to [U.S Census data from 1980](#). The city has grown by 2.2 percent per year between 1980 and 2010.

Idaho's population has also nearly doubled since 1980, when 943,935 people called the Gem State home.

1980 Census data was not available for any other individual Idaho cities.

Satellite images show how much the Boise River and downtown Boise has as grown in the last 30 years.

INTERACTIVE PHOTO BELOW: Slide to compare Boise's Parkcenter Blvd. in 1985 to 2018. Note: The 2018 Parkcenter Blvd. satellite image is 2D, which makes it appear flat. Mobile users, [tap here.](#)

The turf turns blue as Boise State booms

As the Treasure Valley has grown, so has Boise State University. [In 1980, the university](#) had 10,426 students. Enrollment doubled in nearly 40 years, with 25,500 students enrolled in 2018.

In 1992, the university offered its first doctorate program in education. Now Boise State offers 66 different doctorate programs.

The university's athletics also underwent major changes since the 1980s. The Broncos installed their iconic blue turf at (what was then) Bronco Stadium in 1986. The Broncos made the leap from FCS/Division II of college football to the FBS in 1996, joining the Big West Conference.

INTERACTIVE PHOTO BELOW: Slide to see what Albertsons Stadium looked like before the turf turned blue. Mobile users, [tap here.](#)

Growing Treasure Valley showing no signs of slowing

The Treasure Valley's consistent growth has yet to slow down. This growth has [strained the housing market](#), leading to [record home prices](#) and [rising rents](#).

Between 2010 and 2019, the Valley's annual growth rate stayed steady at 2.5 percent. During that time, Ada and Canyon counties' population grew by 131,000 people. The total population hit 712,200 in 2019, [according to COMPASS population estimates](#).

MORE: [Forbes: Boise fastest-growing city in the U.S.](#)

In 2017, Forbes ranked [Boise as the fastest growing](#) city in the country, even though it's technically Meridian that has been especially expanding.

Between 2017 and 2019, Meridian grew at an annual rate of 5.55 percent, with the addition of 16,380 people.

Even in just the last 20 years, [Meridian's population has tripled](#), according to COMPASS.

In the same three-year span of 2017-2019, Boise saw an estimated increase of 7,380 residents, with an annual growth rate of 1.07 percent. Nampa actually grew slightly faster during this three-year span, with a 1.79 percent annual rate.

MORE: [Forbes: Boise fastest-growing city in the U.S.](#)

While these recent annual growth rates may not be the highest the Treasure Valley has seen in its history, more people are moving to and living in the Valley than ever before.

In the Treasure Valley's latest economic growth spurt, development has completely changed downtown Boise's skyline.

Downtown Boise has seen the addition of the Zions Bank building, Clearwater Building, JUMP Boise and multiple new hotels.

INTERACTIVE PHOTO BELOW: Slide the white line to compare downtown Boise in 1987 to 2019. Mobile users, [tap here](#).

MORE: [Growing Idaho: How is growth impacting schools and education?](#)

Meridian has also seen drastic development, especially near the Villiage at Meridian.

INTERACTIVE PHOTO BELOW: Look at changes at Eagle Road and Fairview Avenue, now home to the Village at Meridian. Mobile users, [tap here](#).

Meridian's population was 9,596 in 1990, according to Census data. Not even 30 years later, it nearly grew ten-fold and became Idaho's second largest city with an [estimated 114,680 people](#).

Eagle also experienced a significant population explosion since 1990, growing from 3,327 residents to an estimated 31,270 in 2019, according to the same [COMPASS report](#).

[MORE: Nampa becomes third Idaho city to reach 100,000 residents, Treasure Valley passes 710,000 population mark](#)

In Canyon County, COMPASS [estimated population models for 2019](#) projects a total population of 224,530, with Nampa becoming the [third largest city in Idaho](#) with a population of 102,030.

Caldwell is the next largest city in the Valley, with a projected population of 58,830 in 2019.

INTERACTIVE BELOW: Click through our timeline to see the Treasure Valley and Idaho's growth milestones. Mobile users, [tap here](#).