

LOCAL

## Sunbury, Pickerington are some of the fastest-growing cities in central Ohio



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### Key Points AI-assisted summary ⓘ

The fastest-growing areas are on the outskirts of Columbus, with some suburbs seeing double-digit population increases.

Union County is the fastest-growing county in the region, followed by Delaware County.

However, not all areas are experiencing growth, with Hocking and Perry counties experiencing slight population declines.

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While the population of most Ohio counties is shrinking, central Ohio has been on the upswing in recent years. However, growth is not evenly distributed throughout the region.

A majority of the municipalities and census-designated places in the Columbus Metropolitan Statistical Area have grown over the past decade, according to a Dispatch analysis of American Community Survey data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

## Which suburbs are growing the most rapidly in the Columbus area?

The Columbus metropolitan area for census purposes is comprised of Franklin County and several surrounding ones, including Delaware, Fairfield, Hocking, Licking, Madison, Morrow, Perry, Pickaway and Union.

Many of Ohio's fastest-growing cities, which are incorporated areas with more than 5,000 people, are on the edges of the Columbus area.

Delaware city, Grandview Heights, Canal Winchester, Marysville, Pataskala, Pickerington and Powell all had double-digit population growth, census data shows.

Several central Ohio suburbs closer to the urban core in Columbus had modest or stagnant population growth, such as Bexley, Hilliard, Upper Arlington and Worthington.

Sunbury, in Delaware County, is one of the fastest-growing cities in central Ohio, increasing in population by about 40% between 2018 and 2023 to more than 7,000 people. The municipality became a city after the 2020 census, and Amazon announced it plans a \$2 billion data center there in November.

## **Where is the fastest-growing county in central Ohio?**

Union County is the fastest-growing county in population in central Ohio, jumping by 17% or 9,600 people. Delaware County grew by 12%, or 24,000.

Fairfield and Licking counties each grew by around 8,000 people, but the latter is expected to grow even more as work continues to complete the Intel chip fabrication facility in the portion of New Albany in the western portion of Licking County.

While Union, Delaware, Fairfield and Licking are growing at a faster percentage rate than Franklin County, the home of the state capital added more people than any other place in central Ohio with a growth of about 46,000 people.

Galena, a village in Delaware County with about 1,400 residents, was one of the fastest-growing municipalities in central Ohio.

## **Where is the population decreasing in central Ohio?**

Although most places in central Ohio remain steady or have been growing population, a few counties in the Columbus Metropolitan Statistic Area are not.

Hocking and Perry counties dropped population slightly between 2018 and 2023, each losing about 500 people.

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