Chapter 3

Community Profile & Demographics

Munster Parks

Munster Matters
Together, we can make a difference!
Help Shape the Future of Parks and Recreation in your Town!

Community Profile and Demographics

Lake County & Northwest Indiana

Munster, Indiana

Munster, Indiana has a population of 23,103, as estimated by the American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates from 2016. Munster's land area is 7.5 square miles, with roughly 3,024 people per square mile. There is a slightly greater presence of females than males in Munster (see Figure 1).

The town is a suburban community, 26 miles from Chicago, with the town officials and departments offering many public resources and accommodations such as quality sanitary organization and quality public safety. The recreational opportunities are abundant, as well, with open spaces and parks spread throughout the Town.

The population and demographic information referenced for the Town of Munster is derived from multiple sources, including the U.S. Census Bureau and City Data/Open Street Map.

Munster, Indiana is located within the Northwest Region of Indiana, the second most populated area in the state after Indianapolis and its surrounding metropolitan region. According to a 2016 Indiana Economic Digest report, Northwest Indiana not only is the state's second largest population area, but it also is the second biggest economic hub, with a gross domestic product of $28.64 billion in 2015.

Lake County, where Munster is located, borders Lake Michigan at its north, three Illinois counties on the west (Cook, Will, and Kankakee), Indiana counties of Porter County on the east, and Newton and Jasper counties on the south.

The surrounding municipalities are Hammond (to the north), Highland (to the east), Schererville (to the Southeast), Dyer (to the south), Lynwood, Illinois and Lansing, Illinois (to the west). Of these municipalities, Hammond has the largest population of approximately 80,000.

Much of the region has a past and present economy of heavy industry, given its location in the Rust Belt. Steel mills and oil refineries are present throughout.

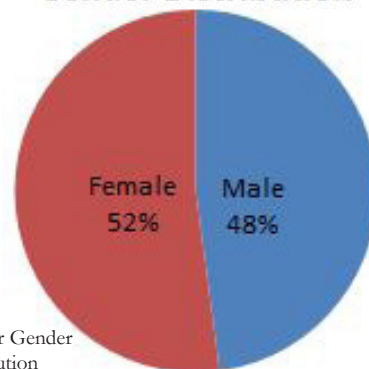**Town of Munster Gender Distribution**

Female 52% Male 48%

Figure 1: Munster Gender Distribution

Population Changes

Munster's population growth from the mid 20th century until 1990 is even more dramatic than the greater societal population growth in America. During that time, Munster's population grew by roughly 1000%, whereas the United State's population overall grew by roughly 110%.

The arrival of the baby boomer generation could likely explain this significant increase in the town's population between 1940 and 1980, after the end of WWII and Americans were returning home to begin their family lives in a post-WWII era.

Additionally, after World War II came the Cold War and the arms race with the USSR. An abundance in manufacturing opportunities could have contributed

to an interest in relocating to communities, such as Munster, where missile defense sites were present.

The presence of the Nike-Zeus Missile defense base C-46 (that was operational until the 1970's) as an employment center may explain, in part, the population increase as well.

The 1990's saw a slight population drop in Munster compared to the prior decade. The Cold War had ended at this point, and the missile defense site was decommissioned. Still, for the following decades there was a slight population increase that peaked in 2010. By 2010, much of Munster had been developed and little land was available within Munster's existing boundaries for residential development.
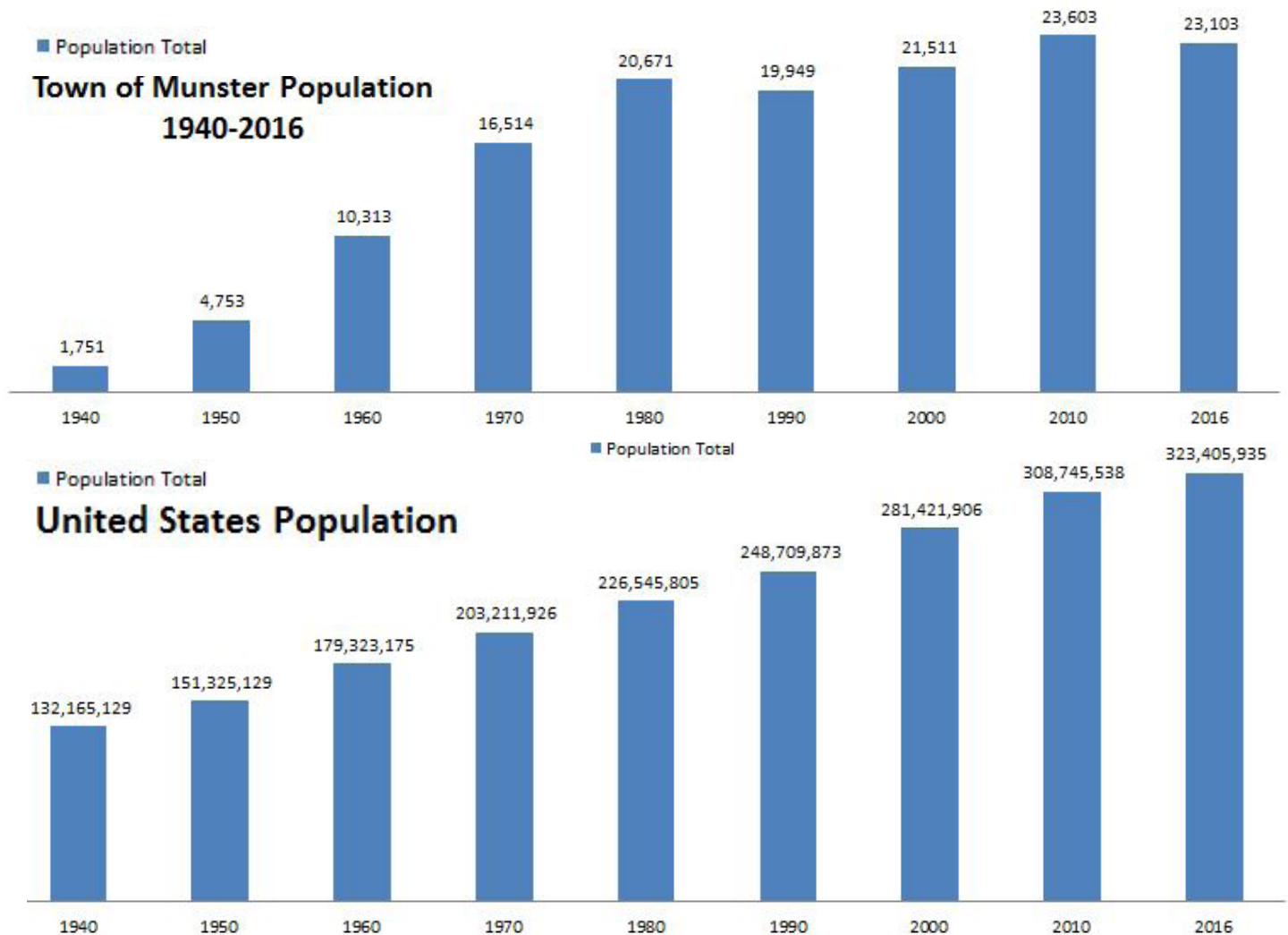

Town of Munster Population 1940-2016

■ Population Total

1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2016
1,751	4,753	10,313	16,514	20,671	19,949	21,511	23,603	23,103

United States Population

■ Population Total

1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2016
132,165,129	151,325,129	179,323,175	203,211,926	226,545,805	248,709,873	281,421,906	308,745,538	323,405,935

Figure 2: Munster and United States Population Growth

Population Density

Munster, Indiana is considered a low-density community. Hammond to the north has a slightly higher population density, and Chicago population density is much higher than both Munster and Hammond. There are 11,868 people/square mile in Chicago, 3,549 people/square mile in Hammond, and 3,147 people/square mile in Munster.

The least densely populated areas in Munster are to the south of 45th Street. North of 45th street there is slightly more population density. Certain industrial/commercial regions contribute to an area's overall low population density, and there are several of them in Munster.
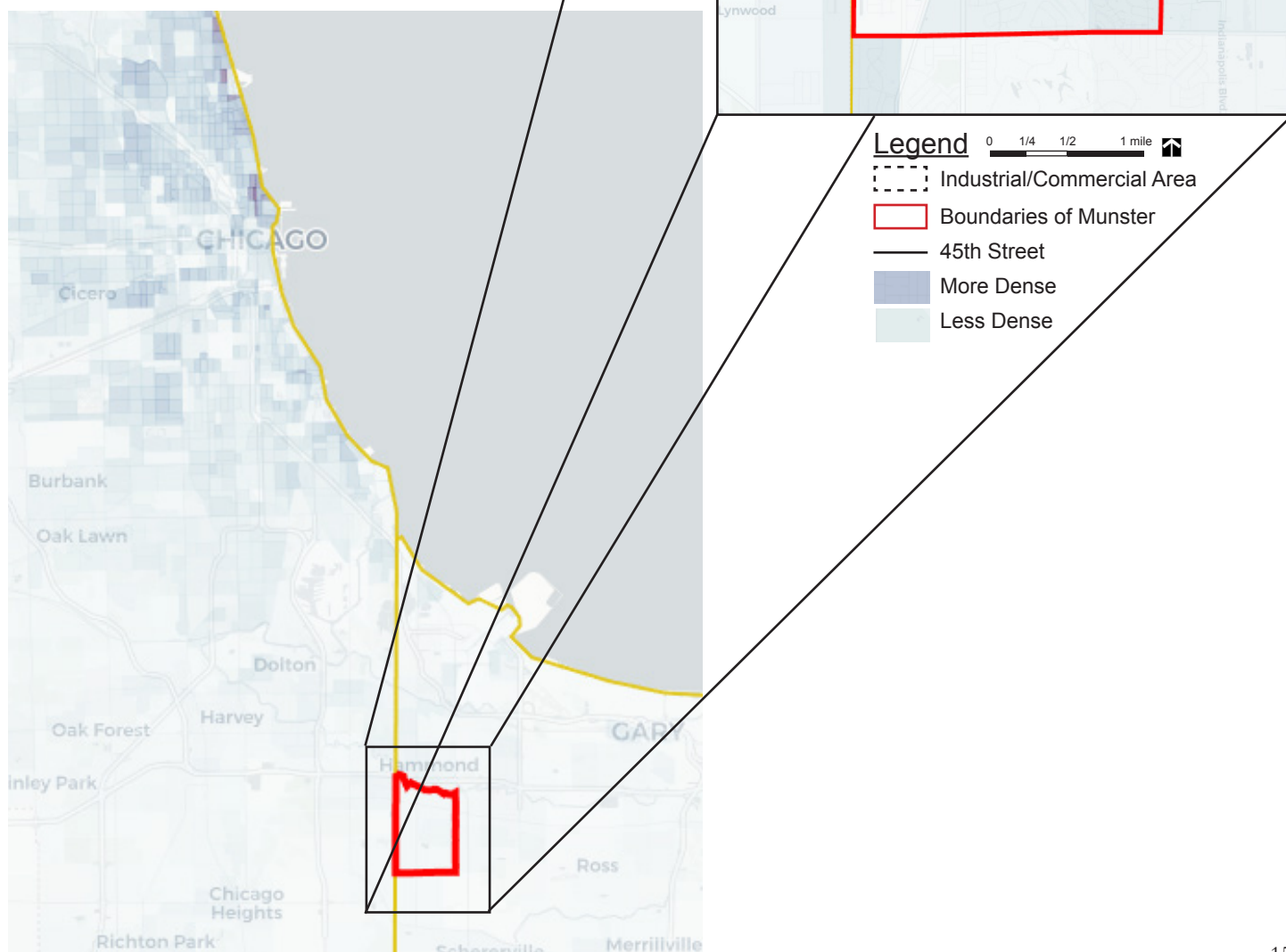
This information comes from city-data.com

Legend

- Industrial/Commercial Area
- Boundaries of Munster
- 45th Street
- More Dense
- Less Dense

Figure 3: Population Density Map and Legend

Age Distribution

A resident's age can indicate the tendency for active or passive recreation activities, as well as help the Parks and Recreation Department adjust programming to meet future age-sensitive trends. The following age breakdowns are used to separate the population into age sensitive user groups and to retain the ability to adjust future age distribution trends.

These groups are:
- Under 5- this group are those with limited physical abilities; users of preschool programs/ facilities and are the future youth activity participants
- 5 to 14-this group represents children's needs and programming, the teens will be slowly moving out of youth programs and into young adult programs
- 15 to 24- this group represents young adults who use facilities and programs independent of their family
- 25 to 34- this group represents those whose needs primarily center on relationships and starting families
- 35 to 54- this group represents users of a wide range of adult programming and park facilities, as well as people whose needs generally revolve around their family

- 55 to 64- this group includes empty nesters, those focused on new grandchildren and preparing for retirement
- 65+ - this group of senior adults are more active than at any point in history

The general indication from the data in Figure 4 is that, while some age groups in the town of Munster have less presence in 2016 than they did in 2010 or 2000, there will be a growing number of young families as well as retired people in the community. This is because of an increase in people within the baby boomer generation, as well as millennials and children they may have.
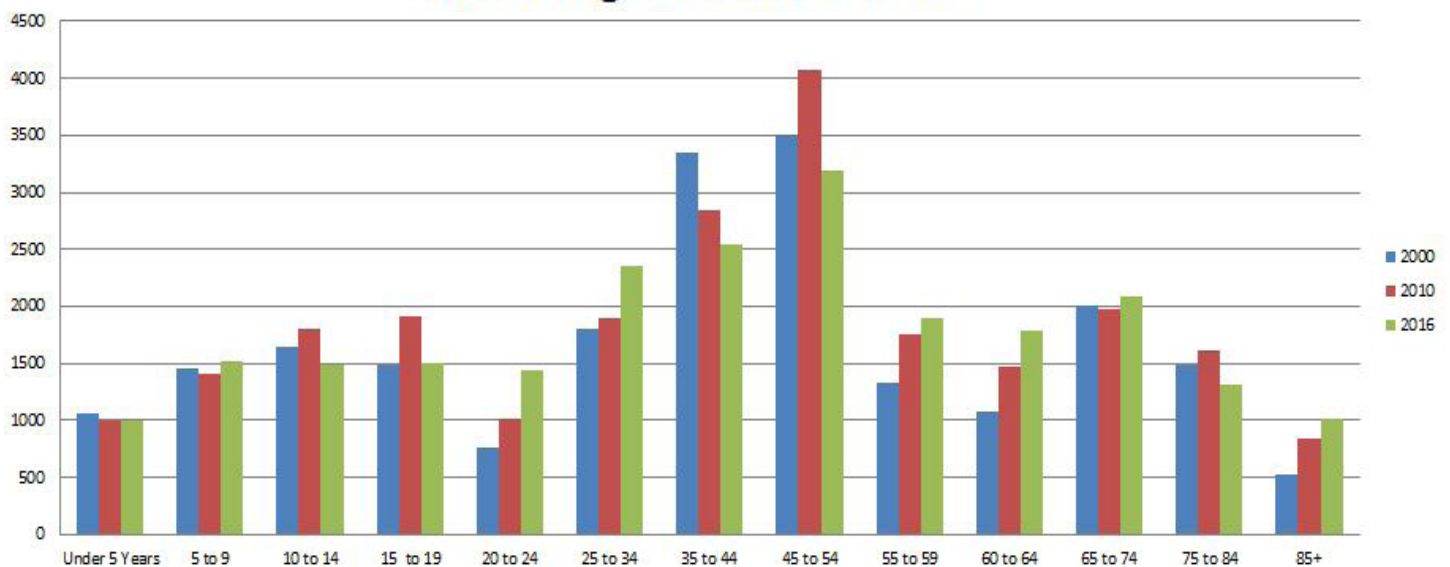

Figure 4: Munster Age Distribution Trends

Race and Ethnicity

Race, culture, and ethnicity also play a role in a community's parks and recreation needs and desires. Trends can be found in the ways different ethnic groups use park and recreation facilities and the types of programming they seek. An analysis of the town's racial and ethnic makeup reveals a predominantly Caucasian population that has been gradually diversifying over the last decade.
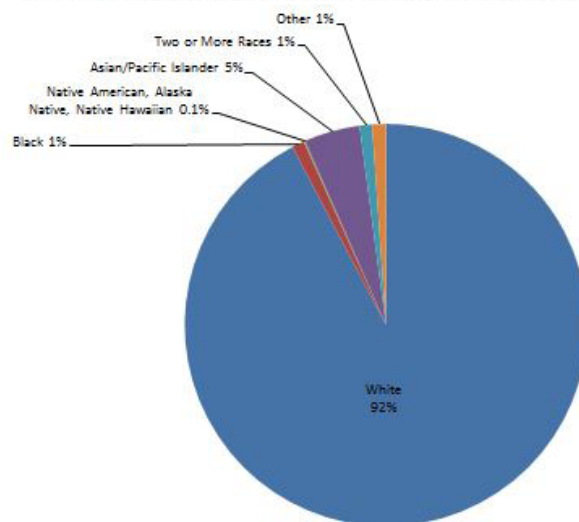
As seen in Figure 6, there is an increased representation among every racial and ethnic minority group in Munster, as the percentage of people living in the town who are white reduced from 92% in 2000 to 86% in 2010. Overall, this trend of gradually increasing diversity indicates a community open to change and acceptance, particularly in a large metropolitan region like Chicagoland/Northwest Indiana.

This is also a reflection of the greater demographic trend in America as a whole. Within the past century, the United States' white population dropped roughly 16%, and continues to decrease as representation from minority groups increase. Furthermore, more people classify themselves as either "Other race" or "Two or more races" now than ever before.
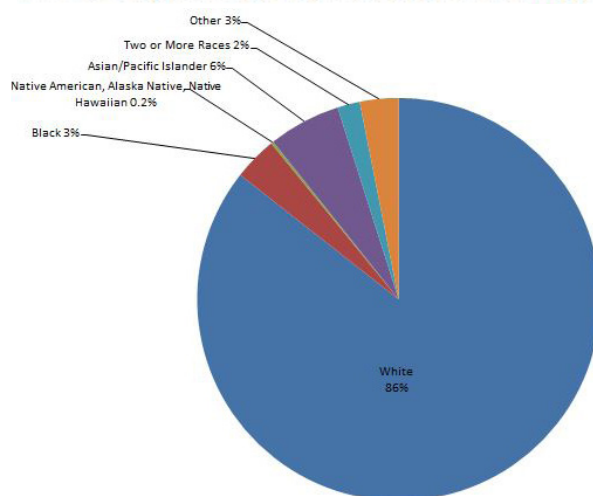
Another trend is the increasing ethnic presence of people who are Hispanic or Latino; this also will contribute to more of the Town of Munster's diversity in the future.

In acknowledging these findings of increased diversity, there are opportunities to understand the various experiences of others who don't appear to represent the existing racial or ethnic majority in the community. Enhanced consideration of everyone's perspectives will generate an even stronger sense of trust among public officials and private residents that will reflect in even greater satisfaction in the parks and recreation services.
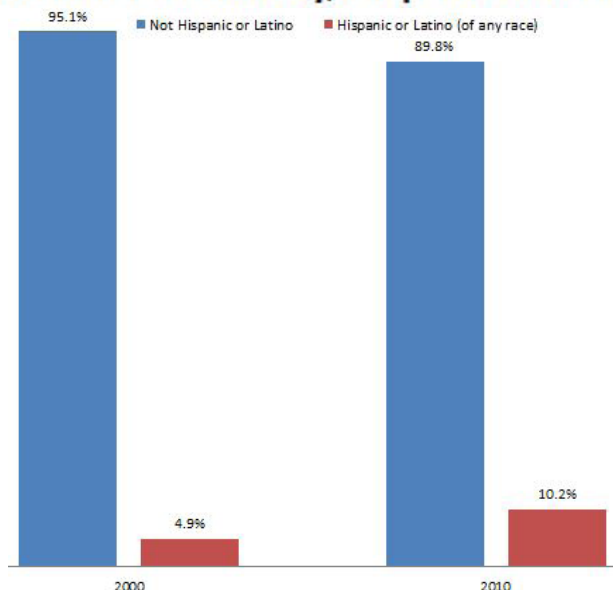

Figure 5: Ethnic Representation Chart

Figure 6: Race Representation

Language Use

In addition to the diversity of race and ethnicity, it's worth considering how many people within the Munster population speak a language other than English. Information on local language use can aid in planning purposes, such as for accommodations in public wayfinding and cultural place-making. According to a 2016 estimate by the U.S. Census Bureau, 80% of people in Munster speak only English while the remaining 20% can also speak a language other than English. Most of these languages spoken originated from either the European or Asian continents.

For those who do speak a non-English language, there is a higher percentage of children who speak English "very well" and a lower percentage who speak English less than "very well". In terms of senior citizens who speak a non-English language, this pattern is different; a lower percentage speak English "very well" compared to young people, while a higher percentage speak less than "very well" compared to young people.

This information will be useful in instances where the Parks and Recreation Departments' programming involves activities that are notably multi-generational or multi-cultural.

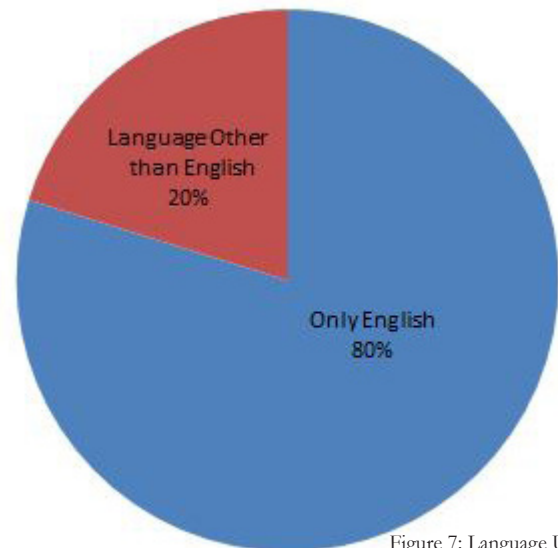**Munster Population Language Use**

Language Other than English 20%

Only English 80%

Figure 7: Language Use

English Proficiency of Second Language

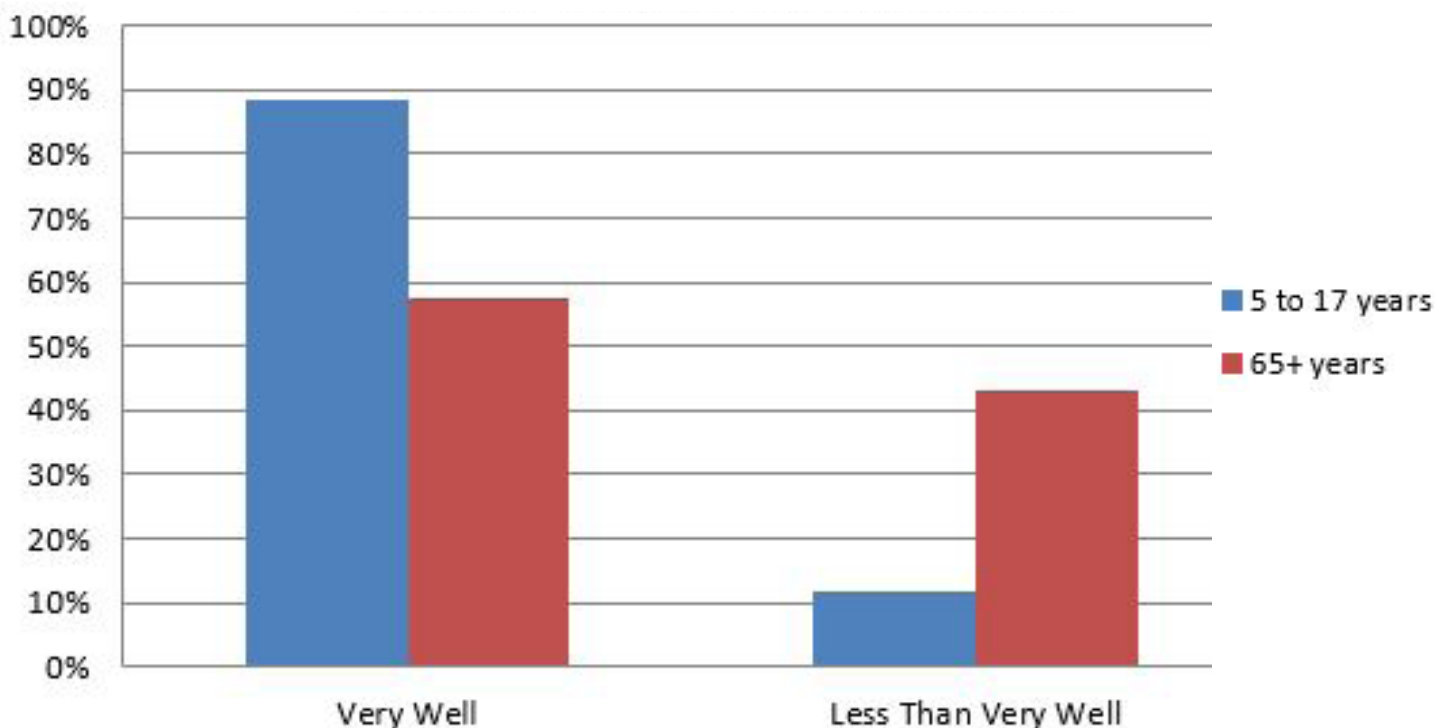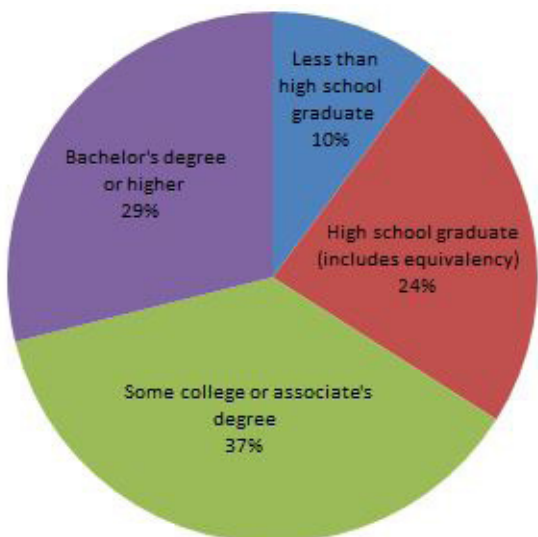Very Well — Less Than Very Well
5 to 17 years
65+ years

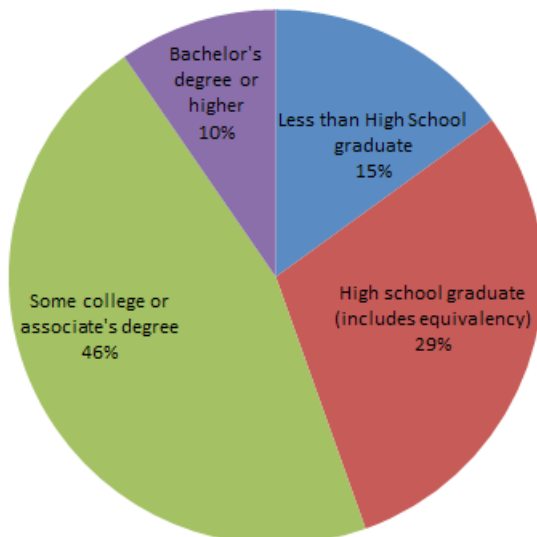Figure 8: English Proficiency by Age Group

Education

The Town of Munster has a greater proportion of people with post-secondary degrees when compared to the national average. Whether it be among the age group of young adults who are in the prime years of obtaining a post-high school degree (18 to 24) or the age group of adults who generally are immersed in the workforce, the majority have received education beyond high school levels.
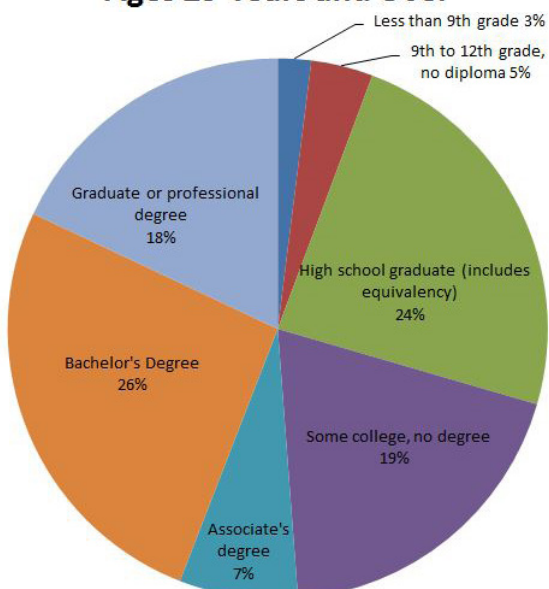
Munster Educational Attainment Ages 18 to 24 Years

- Less than high school graduate 10%
- High school graduate (includes equivalency) 24%
- Some college or associate's degree 37%
- Bachelor's degree or higher 29%

U.S. Average Educational Attainment Ages 18 to 24 Years

- Less than High School graduate 15%
- High school graduate (includes equivalency) 29%
- Some college or associate's degree 46%
- Bachelor's degree or higher 10%

Munster Educational Attainment Ages 25 Years and Over

- Less than 9th grade 3%
- 9th to 12th grade, no diploma 5%
- High school graduate (includes equivalency) 24%
- Some college, no degree 19%
- Associate's degree 7%
- Bachelor's Degree 26%
- Graduate or professional degree 18%

U.S. Average Educational Attainment Ages 25 Years and Over

- Less than 9th grade 6%
- 9th to 12th grade, no diploma 8%
- High school graduate (includes equivalency) 28%
- Some college, no degree 21%
- Associate's degree 8%
- Bachelor's degree 18%
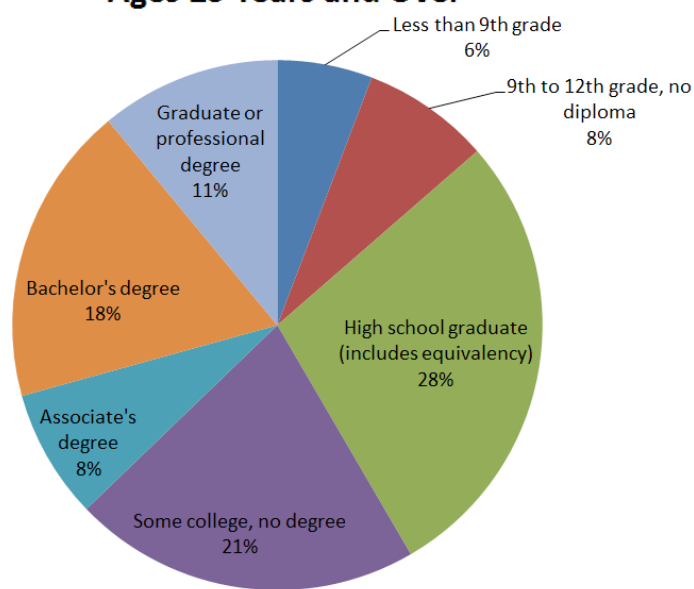- Graduate or professional degree 11%

Figure 9: Various Charts on Educational Attainment in Munster, U.S.

Family Incomes

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the majority of families, 57%, in the town consist of incomes greater than $75,000. The other 43% includes a range of income levels below $75,000. The median family income is $70,065 (2015 US dollars). The 2016 population below the poverty line averaged to 8%.

In contrast, the overall U.S. statistics show that 45% of families have incomes greater than $75,000, with 55% having incomes less than $75,000. On average, families in this northwest Indiana suburb of Chicago have more wealth in comparison to families in America overall.
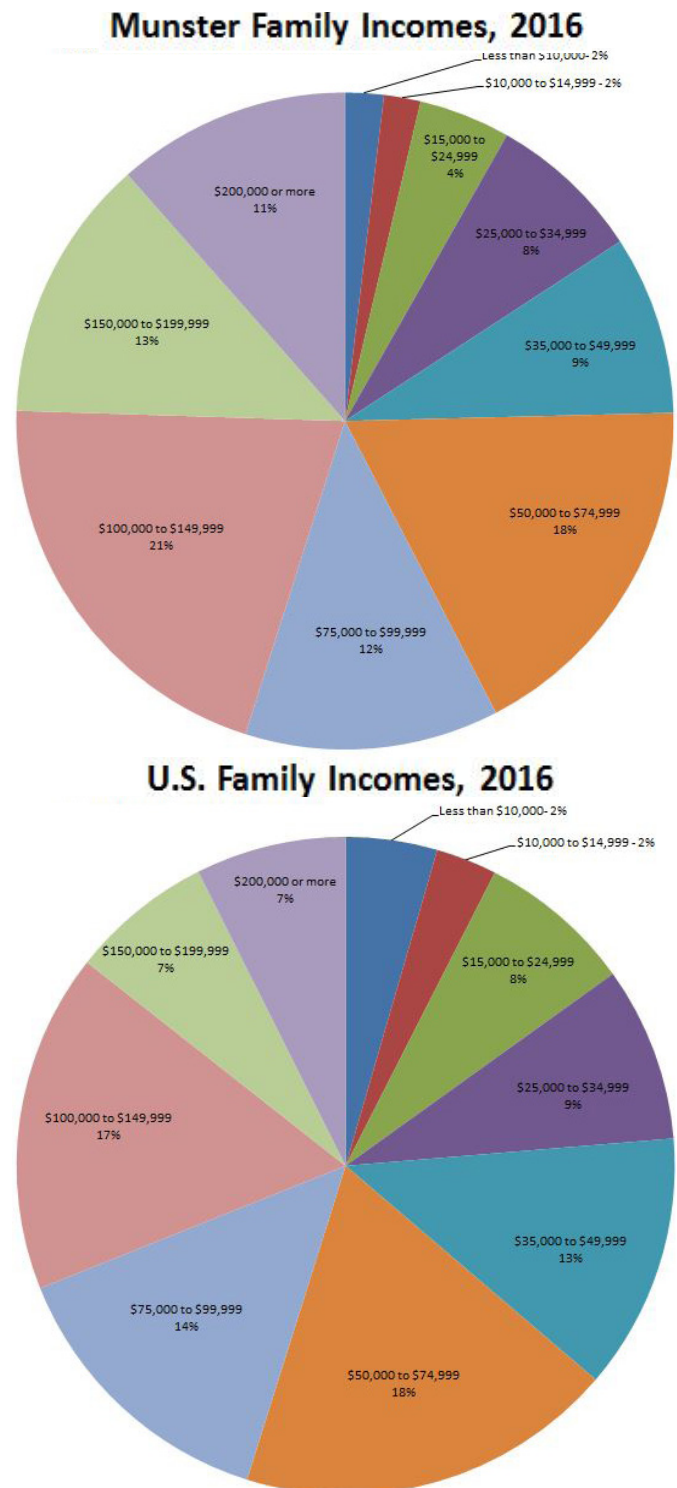
Munster Family Incomes, 2016

- Less than $10,000- 2%
- $10,000 to $14,999 - 2%
- $15,000 to $24,999 - 4%
- $25,000 to $34,999 - 8%
- $35,000 to $49,999 - 9%
- $50,000 to $74,999 - 18%
- $75,000 to $99,999 - 12%
- $100,000 to $149,999 - 21%
- $150,000 to $199,999 - 13%
- $200,000 or more - 11%

U.S. Family Incomes, 2016

- Less than $10,000- 2%
- $10,000 to $14,999 - 2%
- $15,000 to $24,999 - 8%
- $25,000 to $34,999 - 9%
- $35,000 to $49,999 - 13%
- $50,000 to $74,999 - 18%
- $75,000 to $99,999 - 14%
- $100,000 to $149,999 - 17%
- $150,000 to $199,999 - 7%
- $200,000 or more - 7%

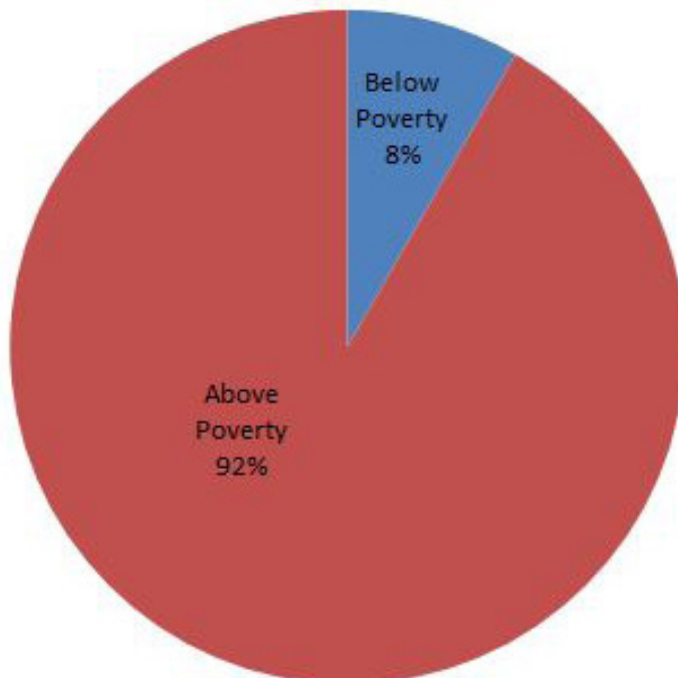Figure 10: Family incomes in Munster and U.S.

Poverty

When breaking the 8% poverty rate down by each age group, there are some notable characteristics. For example, 61% of people in the Town of Munster who live in poverty are under the age of 34, and only 9% of people living in poverty in the community are over the age of 65. This lower number for senior citizens could likely be explained, in part, by the years of preparation for retirement as well as collecting social security benefits.

Because living in poverty is notably distressing and often cyclical in families, the fact that over a quarter of people in Munster who live in poverty are 17 years or younger, as seen in Figure 11, suggests the opportunity to uplift the living conditions of younger generations through various public relief efforts, such as after school youth programming. This will support the youth's efforts to maintain a path of achieving the highest level of education they desire.

This is worth taking into account to confirm specific economic struggles facing a vulnerable portion of Munster's population, and to then consider justifiable planning measures in terms of offering local services and assistance programs.

Munster Population Before Poverty Level

Below Poverty 8%

Above Poverty 92%

Munster Population Poverty Level by Age Group

65 and over 9%

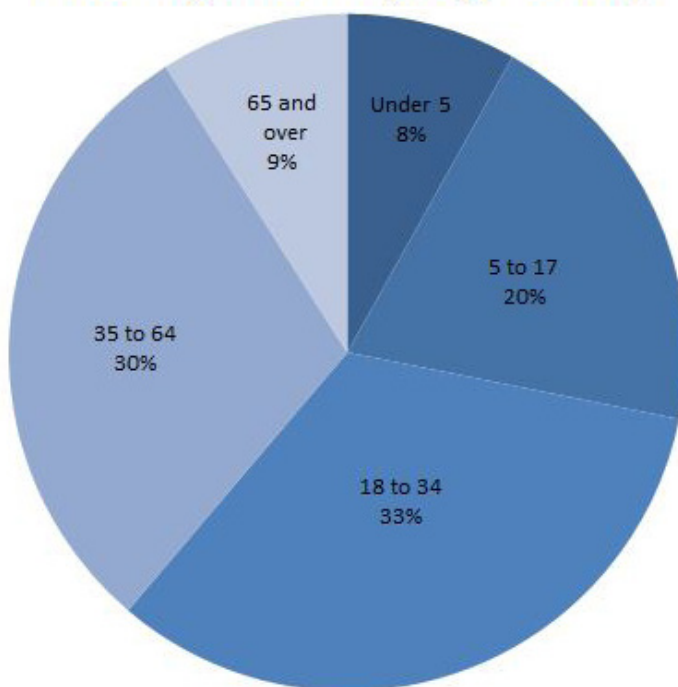Under 5 8%

5 to 17 20%

35 to 64 30%

18 to 34 33%

Figure 11: Charts, Below Poverty Level and by Age

Major Employers

While obtaining data for a list of Munster's largest employers was a challenge, a list of notable employers stationed in Munster is included in this plan.

According to bestplaces.net, the top occupations in Munster are: healthcare and social assistance (with 15.2% in this field), educational services (12.1%), retail trade (11.2%), manufacturing (10.5%), professional, scientific, technical services (8.7%), construction (6.8%), and finance (5.7%). Over 70% of Munster is employed in one of the aforementioned industries.

With this information, the following companies are likely to be Munster's major employers:

-Community Hospital
"healthcare and social assistance"

-School Town of Munster
"educational services"

-Peoples Bank
"finance"

-Pepsi Co.
"manufacturing"

-Three Floyds Brewery
"retail trade" and "manufacturing"

-The Times Media Company
"professional services"

Figure 12: Icons of Munster's Major Employers