

# Fast-Growing Cities and Changes to their Government Structure

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COMMON COUNCIL OFFICE

MARCH 2026



# Projected populations

The Regional Data Group sees growth in the future for a number of Dane County municipalities.

■ 2020 ■ 2050 (est.)

## Madison

269,840

437,000

City of Madison Expected Growth

# City of Madison Change Attempts

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## Task Force on Government Structure (2019):

- Madison should transition to a full-time Common Council
- Madison should reduce the size of the Common Council to ten members elected concurrently with the Mayor
- Madison should increase Common Council member pay to 80% of the area median income for a single parent with two children
- Madison should increase aldermanic terms to four years
- Madison should impose term limits of twelve consecutive years
- Madison should increase Council leadership terms to two years if the Council terms are increased to four years

## 2023 Advisory Referendum Questions

- Should the City of Madison establish staggered two-year terms for members of the Common Council?
  - **Yes: 83.1%**
  - No: 16.9%

## 2021 Advisory Referendum Questions

- Should the City of Madison transition to a full time Common Council?
  - Yes: 41.7%
  - **No: 58.3%**
- Should the size of the City of Madison Common Council:
  - Be reduced: 16.4%
  - Be increased: 13.4%
  - **Remain the same: 70.2%**

Fast Growing  
Cities  
Throughout the  
United States

**The 10 Fastest-Growing Cities and Towns Between July 1, 2023,  
and July 1, 2024, With Populations of 20,000 or More as of July 1,  
2023**

RANK	AREA NAME	STATE NAME	PERCENT INCREASE	2024 TOTAL POPULATION
1	Princeton city	Texas	30.6	37,019
2	Fulshear city	Texas	26.9	54,629
3	Leesburg city	Florida	18.5	37,815
4	Celina city	Texas	18.2	51,661
5	Anna city	Texas	14.6	31,986
6	Haines City city	Florida	12.1	42,073
7	Foley city	Alabama	12.0	28,043
8	Fate city	Texas	11.4	27,467
9	Rosemount city	Minnesota	10.6	30,581
10	Garner town	North Carolina	10.4	39,345

Fast Growing  
Cities  
Throughout the  
United States

**The 10 Cities With the Largest Numeric Increase Between July 1, 2023, and July 1, 2024, With Populations of 20,000 or More as of July 1, 2023**

RANK	AREA NAME	STATE NAME	NUMERIC INCREASE	2024 TOTAL POPULATION
1	New York city	New York	87,184	8,478,072
2	Houston city	Texas	43,217	2,390,125
3	Los Angeles city	California	31,276	3,878,704
4	San Antonio city	Texas	23,945	1,526,656
5	Fort Worth city	Texas	23,442	1,008,106
6	Charlotte city	North Carolina	23,423	943,476
7	Chicago city	Illinois	22,164	2,721,308
8	Phoenix city	Arizona	16,933	1,673,164
9	Seattle city	Washington	16,813	780,995
10	Jacksonville city	Florida	16,365	1,009,833

# Changes Made in these Fast-Growing Cities

(Percent Increase)

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## Fulshear, Texas (26.9% growth):

- Redrew districts to account for increased population (2025)
- Staggered Council terms

## Leesburg, Florida (18.5% growth):

- Changed from three single-member districts and two at-large districts, to five single-member districts (2021)
- "In preparation for residential development that is expected to occur in the next few years."

## Anna, Texas (14.6% growth):

- Staggered Council terms (2025)

# Changes Made in these Fast-Growing Cities\*

(Numeric Increase)

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## Los Angeles (County\*), California:

- Voters approved Measure G in 2024
  - Create a County Executive who will be directly elected
  - Expand the number of Supervisors from 5 to 9
  - Create of an Ethics Commission
  - Changes to be implemented gradually
- Had the same structure since the mid-1800s, which had failed to keep up with demographic changes

## •Charlotte, North Carolina:

- No changes officially adopted
- City Council approved (6-4) a resolution of intent to further discuss the following changes (2023):
  - Change term lengths for councilmembers and the mayor from 2 years to 4 years
  - Add an eighth district
  - Stagger election terms
- Ultimately decided against putting to referendum

## Phoenix, Arizona:

- Approved new district maps that had significant population shifts following 2020 Census

# Other Relevant Cities with Changes

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## Portland, Oregon

- 2022: Portland Voters Approved Ballot Measure 26-228
  - Replaced the commission form of government.
  - Created four geographic districts.
  - Increased size of the City Council from 4 to 12.
  - Created role of City Administrator.
- Reasoning behind changes: "Portland has not increased the size of the City Council in a century. Over the past 100 years, Portland's population has grown more than threefold, but the size of its City Council has remained at five people (including the mayor). Peer cities, such as Denver and Boston, both have 13 council members"
  - However, Portland is not currently a rapidly growing city. In fact, it saw a population decline from 2020-2024.

## Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

- 2022: Wauwatosa Voters Approved Referendum
  - Reduced size of the Common Council from 16 to 12
  - Increased number of districts from 8 to 12
- Wauwatosa is a growing city, though that was not referenced in their materials regarding the changes