



# Community Profile





### 3. HISTORY

AREA CONTEXT



GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



HISTORY



SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROFILE



SCHERER FAMILY

The first European settlers arrived to the Schererville area around 1840, where the first railroad station was established on the John Reeder farm. This area later became known as Reeder Station. The Town of Schererville, however, was not established until 1866 when Nicholas Scherer, a German emigrant, platted the Town on 40 acres of land, purchased from the swampland mogul Aaron N. Hart. The initial population of the Town was about 25 families, the majority of which were German Catholic immigrants.

Schererville boasted a public school, blacksmith shop, dairy, general store, grain elevator, icehouse, and cigar factory. In 1874, St. Michael the Archangel Roman Catholic Church opened on land donated by Scherer.

Schererville, Indiana is commonly known as the “Crossroads of the Nation.” The slogan “Crossroads of the Nation” came about because of the convergence of Indian trails which became wagon routes of settlers traveling west through Schererville. Many Indian trails (mostly Potawatomi) in Schererville connected with the Sauk Trail, the major east-west thoroughfare between Indiana and Illinois.



TEIBEL'S RESTAURANT

Later, the Chicago Great Eastern Ohio (Panhandle) Railroad contracted with Nicholas Scherer to build railroad beds from Richmond, Indiana, and Chicago. Other railroads crossed the Town, include the New York Central and the Michigan Central. Once the Federal Government decided to build the Lincoln Highway, the first cross country paved highway, Schererville became part of the system. In fact, the Town became the home to part of one of the “Ideal Sections” of the Lincoln Highway. The Ideal Section was a specially designed section of the road which was heavily landscaped with other amenities and allowed motorists to stop and rest in a pleasant environment during their journey. The current Joliet Street remains as part of the original Lincoln Highway.



SAUZER'S KIDDIELAND - FORMERLY NEAR CROSSROADS INTERSECTION

Schererville maintained its rural character for the next hundred years. Of particular importance was the development of the US 30 and US 41 junction. Businesses appeared around this intersection, most notably Teibel's Restaurant in 1929. By the mid-1930s, the highways were paved and the junction's traffic grew. The Town's population exceeded 700 persons.



TRAIN STATION ALONG PENNSY RAILROAD

Modern trails of motorized vehicles helped Schererville experience explosive residential and commercial growth in the latter half of the twentieth century. In 1960, the Town's population totaled 2,875 persons; in 1970, the Census reported a population of 3,663. Ten years later, however, the figure skyrocketed to 13,209, then catapulted to 19,926 in 1990, reaching 24,851 in 2000. Today, the population is estimated to be more than 28,000.

Schererville's proximity to Illinois, 29 miles southeast of the Chicago Loop, has attracted many new residents. Most of the influx from Illinois is from Chicago commuters who have taken advantage of Indiana's lower taxes while remaining in close proximity to the Loop. At the close of the twentieth century, Schererville had become a true Chicago suburb with superb amenities and an excellent housing stock nestled among mostly natural neighborhoods.

#### 4. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROFILE

##### Population Characteristics

According to the latest available Census information, the Town of Schererville had a population of 28,798 in 2007. This population occupied about 10,987 housing units. The current Town Boundary covers an area about 14.5 square miles. As such, the population density is slightly over 1,900 persons per square mile, while the housing density is about 750 housing units per square mile.

Schererville grew substantially between 1970 and 1980 when there was an explosion of population exceeding more than 260%. Over the following two decades, steady growth continued outpacing other communities and growing well above the rate of Lake County. During the decade from 1980 to 1990, population increased by 50.85% to about 19,926. The rate of growth slowed down to 24.7% between 1990 and 2000. Nonetheless, the rate was still a substantial growth for the community. Growth in the current decade shows a continued and steady rise in Schererville, with the most recent estimates (2007) by the Census Bureau reporting the Town's population as being about 28,798. Table 1 shows this change.

Population	Year				
	1970	1980	1990	2000	2007
	3,663	13,209	19,926	24,851	28,798

TABLE 1 - SCHERERVILLE POPULATION CHANGE

The growth of the Town has primarily been due to the housing boom that the Town has experienced for the last three decades. Proximity to Illinois, the Chicago Loop, lower taxes, and available amenities are factors that may have contributed to the population growth. Table 2 shows this comparison between Schererville and Lake County.

YEAR	Schererville		Lake County	
	Total	% Change	Total	% Change
1980	13,209	260.60%	522,965	0
1990	19,926	50.85%	475,594	-0.90%
2000	24,851	24.72%	484,564	1.90%
2007	28,798	15.88%	493,297	1.80%
Annual Average	600	2.08%	(1,141)	-0.23%

TABLE 2 - POPULATION CHANGE COMPARISON

##### Future Population

The Arsh Group Inc. has used historical trends and projected growth patterns to estimate the magnitude of the population change for the next 20-30 years. A potential factor that may impact future growth is the availability of buildable land within the Town and how aggressive Schererville plans to pursue or encourage annexation. The Town is almost landlocked, and the potential for expansion is becoming very limited. As a part of this Plan, the Town has established a growth boundary. The growth boundary (identified in Chapter 5, Exhibit 8) is not binding, but for the purpose of this Plan, it is used to measure potential future population. The future population growth is estimated using two different methods.

- AREA CONTEXT
- ✱
- GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE
- ✱
- HISTORY
- ✱
- SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROFILE



1. *Historical Growth Pattern*

This method employs historical growth patterns to project the estimated future population growth trends. Recent Census Bureau reports indicate a population growth of more than 29% for the nation for the next twenty years. These reports also show a population growth rate of more than 12% for the State of Indiana. For Illinois, the Census reports indicate a growth rate of about 8%. Table 3 shows the reported estimates.

Area	2000 - 2030	
	Change	% Change
United States	82,162,529	29.2
Indiana	729,623	12.0
Illinois	1,013,599	8.2

TABLE 3 - POPULATION GROWTH

A similar report for Schererville and the region shows substantial growth for the Town. Accordingly, the estimated population of the Town is projected by the Census Bureau to be about 46,375 by 2030. However, the recent economic downturn and other factors, including growth patterns for Illinois, may prove that the projected population may not be sustainable. For these reasons, The Arsh Group has assessed a lower rate of growth of about 1% over the next twenty years. This assessment projects a population of about 41,477 for the Town by 2030. Regardless of the rate of growth, the Town shows a population gain of about 12,697 for a low scenario and 17,577 for a high growth scenario. Table 4 shows the projected population based on the historical method for high and low ends.

Area		Actual	Projections		
		2007	2010	2020	2030
Schererville	High	28,798	30,658	37,706	46,375
	Low		29,662	33,724	41,477
Lake County		492,104	485,043	491,576	492,304
Region		846,078	834,516	874,247	897,794
State		6,345,289	6,427,236	6,739,126	7,018,710

TABLE 4 - POPULATION PROJECTIONS

2. *Land Use Growth Potential*

A second method of population projection is the land use growth potential. In this method, the potential number of households will determine the future population of the Town. The growth of housing units, however, is substantially influenced by available vacant land in the Town and to the degree to which the Town is able to annex additional land outside its current corporate boundaries.

The Arsh Group has assessed two potential growth scenarios. The first scenario, Limited Growth, is based on the premise that the Town will maintain substantially the same density and development patterns as its current conditions. The second scenario, High Growth, assumes the Town will support a progressive growth and development policy. The Arsh Group has assessed the population for the build-out using the current household size. A low range figure has also been provided. This figure uses a lower household size as indicated by current trends. Both of these scenarios assume that future sewer, water, and other infrastructure capacities will be available, and that such facilities will not impede orderly growth of the Town.