

WHITTIER COMMUNITY PROFILE, 2009 (Rev. IV)

Location

Zip Codes: 90601 to 90606 **Area Code:** 562
Latitude: 33.97 N, **Longitude:** 118.02 W, **Elevation:** 365 ft.
Land area: 14.6 square miles. **Incorporated city area:** 12.4 square miles
Whittier Hills (7 blocks north of church) preserved from development for recreation and wildlife by community activism and city action
Whittier Blvd. (NW-SE, through city) connects city with Los Angeles [30 minutes to 1 hour].
Beach Blvd (Rte.39, N-S, beyond city limits) connects city with beach or mountains [up to 1 hour, either direction].
Nearest Freeways (all beyond Whittier city limits): I-60 & I-10 (E-W), I-5 (NW-SE), I-605 (N-S).

Climate

Hot months, June – October, average high above 80, average low around 60, with daily afternoon breeze from the ocean which moderates the temperature.
Rain falls mainly Dec. through March; rainfall was below avg. for 3 years, nearly avg. in 2008/09. Freezing temperatures rare, flowers bloom all year, snow-capped mountains visible from Whittier area in winter.

Within 4 blocks of First Friends Church: several churches (including Christian-Disciples, Episcopal, Family Bible, Korean, United Methodist), Whittier College, Central Park with larger-than-life sculpture of John Greenleaf Whittier, Whittier Historic Neighborhood, Central Public Library, shopping, banks, restaurants, Whittier Senior Center, several residences for seniors, Radisson Hotel, Whittier City Hall, Whittier police station, Whittier courts.

Transportation (Car necessary for much local business)

Commute: average one-way commute to work about 30 min., but 15 min. or less for 20-25%, over 1 hour for more than 10%. (www.bestplaces.net/zip-code/Whittier...)
Dial-a-Ride vans serve seniors and the physically handicapped.
Buses to local mall and downtown Los Angeles stop beside church. (Other bus routes exist).
Airports serving Whittier: LAX (by the coast), Ontario (east of Pomona), Long Beach (14 mi. south), John Wayne (in Santa Ana, 24 mi.) [all reachable by shuttle (shared reserved van) or car (up to one hour via freeway; drop-off or long-term parking available). LAX can also be reached from Whittier during the day by bus + rapid transit + airport shuttle.]
Amtrak's Coast Starlight train to Oakland, Sacramento, Portland, Seattle originates at Union Station in Los Angeles (12 miles NW).
Amtrak station at Fullerton (10 miles SE, with long-term parking) serves: SW Chief to Chicago through Albuquerque, Kansas City; Sunset Limited to Louisiana through Tucson, San Antonio; Pacific Surfliner to San Diego or San Luis Obispo.

First Friends Church membership, attendance

1960: membership of 1451, avg. attendance of 476
1980: membership of 582, avg. attendance of 217
2000: membership of 416, avg. attendance of 147
2005: membership of 372, avg. attendance of 101
2008: membership of 312, avg. attendance of 87

Population: 2000 Census [WDN = Whittier Daily News]

Population total: 84,000

Ethnicity: Population 56% **Latino**. (WDN 8/15/2006 article on "Latinos Increase"; LA Times 3/22/2008 article on "Upscale Latinos") 14% say **speak English "less than well."** (same WDN article) English only spoken at home, 60%; **Spanish spoken at home**, 34% (per MK). Of the Latino 56%: 82% Mexican, 3% Central American. [www.la Almanac.com/]

“...about **70% of [Whittier’s] young people are Hispanic.**” (*WDN* 3 April 2001 article on “Census Shows a younger, more Hispanic Whittier.”)

[2000 **quote** from State Sen. Martha Escutia: **Whittier is “a place of destination for Latinos...you know you’ve made it when you have moved to Whittier.”]**

Age: under 18, 28.3%; 18-24, 10%; 25-44, 30.6%; 45-64, 18.6%; 65 and older, 12.5%. (Wikipedia online article on “Whittier”)

Density: 2.88 persons per household, 5,700 persons per square mile (lower **density** by both measures than neighboring Pico Rivera, La Mirada, or La Habra)

Population estimates since last Census [USP = *Uptown Specific Plan* data, 2005]

2005: **Population total:** 87,000, with 3 **persons per household** (City and USP data)

By race (Census categories): 61% White, 5% Asian, 1% Black, 33% other, but by “**ethnicity**”: 61% Hispanic, 39% non-Hispanic. (USP data) 2% Native American (www.city-data.com)

Median **age:** 34.7; minors in population 26% (*WDN* 8/15/2006 article: “Census shows 4% growth, residents better educated, aging”)

2007: **Population total:** 89,000 (*WDN* 12/21/2008 article “Latino Population Growing”)

Ethnicity, citizenship: 64% Latino, 31% non-Latino white, 3% non-Latino Asian, 29% speaking English “less than very well”, 20% foreign-born, 11% non-citizen. (Census estimates in *WDN* 12/21/2008 article “Latino Population Growing”)

2008: **Households** in population: 28,000 (<http://profiles.nationalrelocation.com/>)

2020: **Population projection:** 93,000 (S. CA Assn. of Governments, per MK)

Cost of Living

Median **home price** for 1/2009: \$310,000, “down 31%” over previous year.

(“Home Prices” article in *WDN*, 2/27/2009, from CA Assn. of Realtors stats.)

Median est. **house/condo value** in 2000: \$210 000; 2005: \$415,000; 2007: \$614,000.

(www.city-data.com/city/Whittier..., City data, 2008)

Avg. **home value** in 1/2009: \$297,000 but varies by neighborhood

(<http://realestate.aol.com/Whittier...>)

Owner occupied end 2008: 56%; **Renter occupied** end 2008: 42%; **Vacant:** 2%.

(<http://realestate.aol.com/Whittier...>)

Avg. **monthly rent** for a house, end 2008: \$1,361 (<http://realestate.aol.com/Whittier...>)

Cost of living index in Whittier, 2008: 156.9 (“very high” with US avg. = 100)

(from Whittier Profile for realtors, at www.city-data.com)

Income, Poverty, Homelessness

Median household income, 2000: \$49,000; 2007: \$62,000.

(<http://www.city-data.com/city/Whittier...>)

Median family income, 2008: \$68,657 (*WDN* 11/30/2008 article “Top Cities”; *Money Mag.*; CNNMoney.com online 2/2009)

Ave. household income, 2008: \$71,000. with 34% earning over \$75,000 (City data, 2008)

In “**low/moderate income**” category in 2000: 34% of population (USP data)

Poverty rate in Whittier in 2000 Census: 8% of families, 11% of individuals (per MK)

Living in poverty, 2007: 6.4% of residents (Whittier Profile for realtors, at www.city-data.com)

Unemployment rate, 1/2009: Whittier 6.8%; L.A. County 9.9% (*WDN*, 1/24/2009, state figures)

Homeless: A continuing concern in Uptown, Whittier homeless are part of an est. 90,000 in L.A.

County. FFC and other churches collaborate to provide overnight winter hospitality to about 40.

FFC helps support the First Day Shelter, which provides transitional housing and services to others.

Crime

Crime Index for Whittier: 212 in 2000, 241 in 2003, 271 in 2006 (U.S. average = 321)

(Whittier Profile for realtors, at www.city-data.com)

Whittier’s **crime rate rank** for 2007 was 252, better than the national city average (FBI figures)

Hospitals

Presbyterian Intercommunity Hospital: a regional medical center with 444 beds.

Whittier Hospital: 178 beds

Whittier residents may be referred to medical facilities in Los Angeles or surrounding towns.

Elections

2000: Whittier "is now a Democratic town. Al Gore out-poll...Bush by...51% to 45%"

(*WDN* 12 Nov. 2000 article "Whittier Reinvents Itself...")

2004: Whittier voted 51% for Kerry (D), 48% for Bush (R). (*WDN* election returns 11/2004)

2008: Whittier voted 56% for Obama (D), 41% for McCain (R).

Whittier voted 58% for Prop.8, approved statewide, banning same-sex marriage, 42% against.

(*WDN* 9 Nov. 2008 article "How We Voted")

Education level

2000 Census: 23% HS grad., 14% bachelor's degree, 7% graduate/prof. degree (per MK)

2000: 21% have less than HS ed., 23% grad. from HS, 34% have some college, 22% a college degree.

2005: 17% have less than HS ed., 27% grad. from HS, 35% have some college, 22% a college degree. (*WDN* 8/15/2006 article: "Census shows 4% growth, residents better educated...")

Schools (sources: websites for California School Rankings, Public Schools Report, Public School Review, SchoolMatters, and individual schools)

Whittier Friends School (licensed pre-school + small K – 6)

Several **private and parochial schools** at nursery, elementary, middle, high school levels

Public schools that admit students from the church parsonage location:

Ocean View Elementary School (686 students; state ranking 9 out of 10)

East Whittier Middle School (1,114 students; state ranking 6 out of 10)

La Serna High School (2,410 students; highest SAT scores of high schools in city)

Rio Hondo College (2-year non-residential community college; around 20,000 students, equivalent to nearly 10,000 full-time)

Whittier College (4-year private liberal-arts, 1,300 undergrad. students in 2006 from 16 states, 5% international, 27% Hispanic, 55% women + 110 in post-graduate/graduate programs)

Seminaries and schools of religion in the area

Talbot School of Theology, Biola University (La Mirada CA)

Claremont School of Theology (Claremont CA)

Friends Center, Azusa Pacific University (Azusa CA)

Fuller Theological Seminary (Pasadena CA)

Interdenominational and Interfaith Activities in Whittier

Church Women United

Intercommunity Counseling Center

Interfaith Food Center of Whittier

Whittier Area Clergy Association (helps plan joint Thanksgiving and Easter Sunrise services)

Whittier Area Evangelical Clergy Association (holds annual meeting with above Association)

Whittier Area Interfaith Council (sponsor of winter homeless shelter)

Whittier Area Uptown Church Association (formed 2006 to respond to development plans)

Other Quakers and Quaker-Related Sites

In Western Association of Friends (WARSF) with FFC: Berkeley Friends Church, Bakersfield Meeting

Closest Friends churches: E. Whittier, Granada Heights, and Pico Rivera Friends Churches

(all of Evangelical Friends Church SW, headquartered in Yorba Linda)

Whitleaf Meeting (unprogrammed, meets on Whittier College campus as a worship group under the care of Orange Grove Meeting, Pasadena, of Pacific Yearly Meeting)

Southern California Quarterly Meeting of Pacific Yearly Meeting (unprogrammed meetings)

American Friends Service Committee, Pacific Southwest Region (office in downtown Los Angeles)

Quaker Gardens (life care retirement home in Stanton, CA, under EFC SW)
Nixon Library and birthplace (Yorba Linda CA)
Nixon and Lou Henry Hoover historic sites in Whittier
Bailey House (first house in Whittier, occupied by Quaker founders Jonathan and Rebecca Bailey, site of first meeting for worship held in Whittier)

Community events held near the church:

Founders Day: celebrated since 1894, with small parade and fair in Central Park: First Friends, Whittier Friends School, the Whittier Historical Society, other groups set up booths in the park
Antiques Fair: with old car and quilt displays at FFC in conjunction
Family Fair with Farmers Market: each Wednesday evening during summer
Farmers Market: each Friday morning year-round
Christmas parade: several members ride or walk for community organizations

(First version compiled by Sabron Newton, 1/2009)

(Revision I: rearranged, incorporating statistics supplied by Marie Kaneko)

(Revision II: incorporating more statistics found by Marie Kaneko)

(Revision III: rearranged by SN, some figures eliminated, some updated)

(Revision IV: some updated figures, some corrections suggested by Marie Kaneko, completed 3/2009)