

Anderson: Profile of An Industrial City

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Introduction.—The northeast quarter of the State of Indiana has a well-defined manufacturing region which extends from Indianapolis to Fort Wayne. In this district there has been an intrusion of important manufacturing interests into productive agricultural territory. In the cities of this region trade and distribution are still important activities. In the entire area the importance of farming is still evident. With the rise of the automobile industry the importance of industry increased rapidly; factory workers now outnumber farmers throughout the district. According to Harold H. McCarty the Indianapolis-Fort Wayne Manufacturing Belt accounts for about 1.2 per cent of the nation's manufacturing, or about one-third of the total for the state of Indiana. Of this output, about one-half comes from the city of Indianapolis. The remaining output is divided among the intermediate cities.¹

Historical Development.—The advantages of the present site of the city was recognized many centuries ago. A site approximately four miles from the city was chosen by a group of pre-historic Mound Builders as the location for their village. Their settlement was located on the south bluffs overlooking the flood plains of White River. This location on high dry ground protected them from the ravages of floods, and at the same time, it furnished the settlement with an adequate water supply.

Next, the region was settled by a group of Indians, who established a settlement near the present city. This settlement was an important stopping point for Indians moving between Michigan and Kentucky. The importance of this trail has had its influence on the present city. State Highway No. 32 follows the route of this old trail between Anderson and Muncie.

Anderson is not the oldest city in the state, but it is an old city for central Indiana. It is known to have been in existence as an Indian village in 1812, for it was in 1813 that troops under the command of William Henry Harrison attacked and destroyed it. At that time, and later, the site of the city was occupied by the Delaware Indians. Their village was located on the south bank of White River, a navigable stream at that time, near where the Main Street and Traction bridges cross the river, and extended to the vicinity of Fifth and Main Streets. The city was named after the principal chief of this tribe, Kik-Tha-We-Nund, or in English, Anderson.

In 1837, by special act of the legislature, the county seat was moved from what is now Pendleton to Anderson-Town, which was a village of

¹Harold H. McCarty, *The Geographic Basis of American Economic Life* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940), p. 324.

less than one hundred people, composed of pioneers, Indian traders, and adventurers.

The year 1837 also saw the completion of the Central Canal, a branch of the Wabash-Erie Canal which not only increased the population but also gave business an impulse which created the first boom. By 1839, the population had increased to 350.

In 1851, Anderson had its first major fire and the entire business section was destroyed. To rebuild the town a railroad was built from Indianapolis. This created another major boom and growth of population.

The first gas well was drilled on March 31, 1887, and when gas was struck, newspapers carried the news all over the country. The town of Anderson again became prominent, and the people from all over the country began to come to the city. The little town began to grow rapidly. Industries started moving into the city because of the abundance of cheap fuel. For several years, this was the principal factor for the influx of new industries. As time passed, however, and the supply of natural gas was exhausted in this territory, it was found that Anderson has many advantages essential to successful and profitable operation of many types of manufacturing.

Location.—Anderson (Lat. $40^{\circ}2'$; Long. $85^{\circ}49'$) is the county seat of Madison County. It is located in the central part of Indiana, thirty-eight miles northeast of Indianapolis, in one of the best corn and wheat belts of the United States.

It is near the centers of production, distribution, and population (near Linton, Indiana). The city's location puts it in advantageous position for the receipt of raw materials and for the distribution of the finished products. It is close to all the major markets of the Middle West.

Transportation Facilities.—The city is well located from the standpoint of railway and bus facilities. Four railways and seven bus lines provide excellent service to all parts of the state and nation.

The major bus lines are supplemented by numerous companies which operate to the factories in the city. During the war buses operated from all parts of central and eastern Indiana.

Twenty trucking companies maintain terminals in the city and provide over-night delivery service to all the larger markets within a radius of 300 miles.

Three State Highways, Nos. 32, 9, and 109 and fourteen paved roads lead into the city. State Highway No. 67, which once passed through the city, bypasses the city about one mile south of the city limits. This change was made at the request of city officials in an attempt to relieve traffic congestion. State Highway No. 9 will soon be removed for the same reason.

Fuel and Water Resources.—Even though the local supply of natural gas was exhausted long ago, the city's industries still secure natural gas at one of the state's lowest rates. Formerly the Central Indiana Gas Company, which serves the city, used artificial gas made from coke; however, a change was made to natural gas in 1944. The natural gas is brought in by the Panhandle Line from Texas. In case of a break in the

line or any other emergency, the company is prepared to produce an oil gas; this means that all consumers can depend upon interrupted service.

All of the industrial plants of the city are large consumers of natural gas. Most of the plants are served from the local lines; however, Delco Remy has its own direct outlet and is not served by the local distribution system. All industrial consumption of natural gas is handled through the company's Muncie office.

The Municipal Power Plant furnishes electric power to domestic and industrial consumers at a rate lower than in 80 per cent of the cities in Indiana. The source of this electric power is coal. Most of the coal used comes from West Virginia; the plant does not have the necessary pulverizers or chain-grate stokers to use Indiana coal. The average daily consumption of coal is 250 tons or over four carloads. This amount generates approximately 4,750,000 pounds of steam during the twenty-four hour period.

In addition to the amount of electricity produced in the Municipal Plant, the city uses a minimum of 435,000 kilowatts per month from the Indiana General Service Company. This amount must be used in order to maintain a substation in the city. In case of breakdown in the local system, the city can use all the additional power needed from this substation.

Electric power is directed to the industries, in all parts of the city, through four substations. These substations are so arranged that power is furnished to industry without fear of a long interrupted service. Whenever a breakdown occurs at one substation, power can immediately be cut in from one of the other substations. This is very important to all manufacturers.

All the major industries secure power from the city plant. In addition to the power furnished by the city, Delco Remy and Guide Lamp have direct connections with the Indiana General Service Company. Even with these connections, Delco Remy takes approximately 140,000 kilowatts and Guide Lamp approximately one hundred thousand kilowatts from the local plant.

Anderson has a Municipal Water Works, which furnishes the necessary water to industry and domestic consumers at a very low cost. Most of the water used in the city is derived from White River; however, one well is used in supplying the city. The city plant pumps approximately 2,500,000,000 gallons of water a year. The average daily consumption of water is 6,800,000 gallons. The maximum amount of water pumped during a twenty-four hour period was 9,000,000 gallons; the minimum was 4,500,000 gallons. Approximately 750,000 gallons of water are derived daily from a well located near the Madison Avenue bridge.

Many of the factories, such as Delco Remy, Guide Lamp, and Nicholson File Company, have their own wells to supplement the supply from the city. Delco Remy recently leased from the city a well which is used to operate the air conditioning system of one of its plants. Most of the factory wells, however, are declining in output; so that the city is preparing to furnish a greater supply of water to industry.

Population.—Anderson had, according to the Federal Census of 1940, a population of 41,472 inside the corporate boundaries of the city, with an estimated population of 45,000 in Greater Anderson. According to a recent Post Office survey, the present estimated population of Greater Anderson is 55,759.

The census figures show two decades in which the city's population increased approximately 10,000 people. The increase during the first period (1890-1900) was a result of the exploitation of the city's natural gas resources. The rapid development of the Delco Remy and Guide Lamp divisions of General Motors accounts for the second period (1920-1930) of growth.

The most rapid period of growth has occurred since the 1940 census. The Post Office estimate for 1944 shows a population increase of over 10,000 for Greater Anderson. A large part of this increase was absorbed by the city. This increase came as a result of increased industrial production during World War II.

The city's increased growth shows a slight change in the elements which make up its population. The Census of 1930 showed the population was composed of 95 per cent native whites, 3 per cent negroes, and 2 per cent foreign born. In contrast, the present Chamber of Commerce estimate lists the city as containing approximately 90 per cent native whites, 8 per cent negroes, and 2 per cent foreign born. The increase of 5 per cent in the negro population was probably due to the attraction offered by the industries of the city.

The city stands second to Muncie in population; however, Madison County is far ahead of any county between Marion County and Allen County in population. The reason for this condition is that Anderson is not the only industrial city in the county. The cities of Elwood and Alexandria are manufacturing centers in their own right.

Industry.—Anderson boasts of 106 manufacturing enterprises producing 176 different articles which are shipped to all parts of the world. Two of the largest automobile accessory plants and the largest religious publishing plant in the world are located in the city.

In normal times, there are approximately 18,000-20,000 industrially employed, with a payroll of approximately three and one-half million dollars per month. The city has an annual industrial output of \$60,000,000.00 or over \$1,000 per inhabitant.¹

The location of the city's industries offers an interesting study in urban geography. Like most industrial cities, in the belt of cyclonic disturbances, the major industrial development is in the southeast section of the city. A section fifteen blocks square in the extreme southeast section of the city contains nineteen industrial plants. These plants have excellent highway connections with State Highways Nos. 32, 109, and 67. In addition, railway switching facilities are available from all major lines entering the city. The location of the industries in this section of the city helps to eliminate the smoke problem, the prevailing westerly winds

¹ Otis W. Freeman, "Major Cities of Indiana," *Economic Geography*, XXI (April, 1945), pp. 122-124.

tend to keep the smoke and odors from the commercial and newer residential sections of the city.

Other sections of industrial development have been established in the west and northwest section of the city. These industries, with the exception of the Guide Lamp, are small industries, which cause no major smoke or dirt problem.

Urban Pattern.—The city in its street plan follows, for the most part, a rectangular pattern. The east-west streets are numbered from First Street on the north to Thirty-eighth Street on the south. The north-south streets are named, however, with no particular plan being followed in the naming. Meridian Street is the principal north-south street and is the starting point for the numbering of east-west streets. A few diagonal avenues keep the rectangular plan from being perfect.

The city's street pattern was established before the present extensive use of the automobile. However, since the removal of the street car lines, the streets are adequate for two way traffic. These facilities are taxed to capacity for a period of about one-half hour before the beginning of the morning shift and for another short period after work in the evening.

The urban profile of the city is characterized by smokestacks, which reflects the city's industrial activity. The city's low buildings suggest a close proximity to its rural surroundings. The tallest building in the city is the incompleated Tower Hotel Building. This building which is 12 stories high, was begun in the late 1920's; with the depression of the 1930's work was stopped because of lack of funds. The outer shell of this building is a silent reminder of one of the city's greatest periods of expansion.

Business Indicators.—The importance of Anderson as a wholesale and retail trading center is decreased by its close proximity to Indianapolis.

A study of such business indicators as first-class mail distribution, long-distance telephone calls, express shipments, and hotel registrations show that business and industrial activity in Anderson is dependent upon Indianapolis and the out-of-state cities of Chicago, Detroit, Cincinnati, Dayton, and Cleveland.

Summary.—The profile of Anderson shows the following outstanding features:

1. Although, historical incidents have been important in the growth of the city, geographical advantages have maintained the city's importance.
2. The growth of the city has been dependent upon the growth of industries.
3. The growth of industries, in turn, has been dependent upon the availability of raw materials.
4. The proximity of the city of Indianapolis decreases its importance as a wholesale and retail center.
5. The study of business indicators shows that Anderson is economically related to Indianapolis, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Dayton, and Cincinnati.