South Bend, Indiana, is located on both sides of the St. Joseph River. The area was inhabited by Potawatomi tribes when, in 1820, Pierre Navarre built a cabin on the north side of the river and established a trading post. Three years later, Alexis Coquillard, considered the city’s founding father, built a fur trading post. Originally named Southold, the town was renamed South Bend in 1830 due to its location along the river. South Bend grew slowly until 1842, when Rev. Edward Sorin, C.S.C. and six Catholic brothers established the University of Notre Dame.

Spanning 150 years of automotive history in South Bend, the Studebaker National Museum is home to approximately 120 vehicles, including presidential carriages, the Studebaker family’s Conestoga Wagon, and the last car to leave the Studebaker assembly line. The 38-room Olson Mansion (or Cophaholmen), once home to the Olson family, is one of several historic houses owned by The History Museum. The other properties are the Worker’s Home, which is decorated as a 1930s Polish working-class family home, and the Navarre Cabin, which is located in Leeper Park. The museum is also the repository for the memorabilia belonging to the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League. The South Bend Museum of Art in Century Center exhibits historical and contemporary art in its one permanent gallery and four changing galleries. The Snite Museum of Art on the University of Notre Dame campus boasts over 19,000 works representing many of the principal cultures and periods of world art history. The South Bend Chocolate Company’s Chocolate Museum displays chocolate memorabilia, including various rare boxes, tins, pots, and containers. HealthWorks! Kids’ Museum is a combination children’s museum and health education center.

Morris Performing Arts Center is home to Broadway hits on national tour as well as the South Bend Symphony Orchestra, concerts, comedians, dance, and family shows. South Bend Civic Theatre is the oldest continuously operating community theater in the company in the area. Other parks include the University of Notre Dame’s DeBartolo Performing Arts Center and Saint Mary’s College Moreau Center for the Arts.

NEIGHBOURHOODS

Situated on the west side of the St. Joseph River, downtown South Bend is surrounded by several historic residential neighborhoods. Chapin Park Register Historic District features red brick streets, Victorian lamp-posts, and housing styles that include Gothic Revival, Queen Anne, Second Empire, Shingle, Prairie, Tudor Revival, and American foursquare. Housing varies from historic mansions to workers’ cottages in the Near West Side Historic Neighborhood, also known as the West Washington National Historic District, with all the major architectural styles of the late 19th and early 20th century represented: Greek Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, Stick, Shingle, Prairie (including Frank Lloyd Wright), Tudor, and Renaissance Revival.

On the northern edge of downtown, homes in Riverside Drive Historic District were built in Queen Anne, Prairie, Colonial Revival, and other period revival styles. On the southernmost bend of the river, the Edgewater Place Historic District dates from 1871. Edgewater Place Addition was built in the 1920s. The North Shore Triangle neighborhood’s homes vary in style based on the time of their construction. Homes along the river in the West North Shore Historic District were built at the turn of the 20th century, with other sections dating from the 1920s or post-World War II period.

On the east side of the river from downtown are several neighborhoods that border the University of Notre Dame. East Bank Village, with its East Washington Street and Howard Park Historic Districts, offers such housing styles as Queen Anne, Mediterranean Revival, Gothic Revival, American Foursquare, Prairie, Craftsman Bungalow, and California Bungalow. Traditional apartments and urban loft-style homes are also available. Housing in Harrier Heights includes various period revival style houses, as well as homes in Bungalow, Craftsman, and American Foursquare vernacular, and Cape Cod styles. Eden Park offers condominiums, single-family homes, townhouses, lofts, and apartments. Housing styles on East Jefferson Boulevard include Renaissance Revival, Free Classic, Queen Anne, Prairie, Colonial Revival, French Eclectic, Tudor Revival, Mediterranean Revival, Neoclassical, International, and ranch and feature vast front lawns. The large Sunnymede neighborhood, which includes the East Wayne Street Historic District, was developed from the 1920s to the 1950s and contains a wide range of housing styles and sizes.

Other east side neighborhoods include Briarwood Estates, Cross Creek, Lincoln Manor, and Portage Crossing. Some neighborhoods contain homes built in the early 20th century, of which homes in each are located in the 2000s. Styles include Prairie, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, English Cottage styles, ranches, and Cape Cod.

In the city’s south side, the Altgeld-Victoria and Miami-Ridgedale neighborhoods date from 1920 to 1960. Erskine Manor, Deer Run, and Hermitage Estates were built at the end of the 20th century. Housing construction began in the mid-2000s in Royal Oak Estates, Pine, and Lafayette Falls.

PARKS AND RECREATION

South Bend has 55 parks with amenities that include 3 golf courses; a dog park; a skate park; softball, baseball, soccer, and football fields; basketball, tennis, and volleyball courts; pool/waterpark and splash pads; ice rink; trails/walkways, playgrounds, and disc golf. Potawatomi Park features the Potawatomi Zoo, Potawatomi Pool, the Muesel-Ellison Conservatory, and the Chris Wilson Pavilion. Other park amenities include an exercise track, a large universally accessible playground, and the community–built Kids’ Kingdom playground.

The 160-acre Run River Park is home to deer, foxes, reptiles, amphibians, and numerous species of birds. Park amenities include a nature center, an 18-hole disc golf course, and Edge Adventures, which offers self-guided courses of obstacles and zip lines.

Other parks provide many sports options. The almost 44-acre Phil St. Clair Park features 5 softball fields, 2 baseball fields, 4 basketball courts, 2 tennis courts, and a volleyball court. O’Brien Park has a 13,000 square foot skate park, football field, multifuse field, playground, and splash pad. Howard Park offers ice skating, an ADA compliant playground, fishing, a recreation center, and a trail. Kennedy Park has 2 playgrounds, 2 softball fields, a baseball field, 4 tennis courts, and an aquatic center.

The South Bend Cubs baseball team is an Chicago Cubs affiliate.

EDUCATION

South Bend Community School Corporation educates approximately 18,000 students in 18 primary centers (grades kindergarten through 8), 10 intermediate centers (grades 5 through 8), and 5 high schools (grades 9 through 12). Higher education is available at Indiana University South Bend, which offers undergraduate and graduate degree programs in the Vera Z. Dwyer College of Health Sciences. Purdue Polytechnic South Bend grants bachelor’s and associate’s degrees in selected engineering fields. The University of Notre Dame is a Catholic university that provides undergraduate and graduate degree programs. Holy Cross College is a Catholic, coed, residential college offering bachelor degree programs. Saint Mary’s College is a Catholic, liberal arts university for women. Bethel College is an evangelical 4-year Christian college of the arts and sciences affiliated with the Missionary Church.

IU School of Medicine-South Bend offers a community medicine experience emphasizing small-group learning and one-on-one clinical training. In partnership with the University of Notre Dame, medical students can pursue combined degrees, including an MD/PhD or MS/MD in Global Health, and participate in research at the Harper Cancer Research Institute and the Eck Center for Global Health.

 Ivy Tech is Indiana’s community college system and has a South Bend campus.

HEALTH CARE

South Bend is served by Memorial Hospital of South Bend with 416 licensed beds.

CITY STATS

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Photograph courtesy of Visit South Bend Mishawaka.