

A man, a woman, and a boy are running happily in a field. The man is on the left, wearing a light-colored button-down shirt and jeans. The woman is in the center, wearing a striped dress and high heels. The boy is on the right, wearing a patterned shirt and jeans. They are all smiling and looking up. The background is a bright, hazy sky with a palm tree visible in the distance. The entire image has an orange tint.

COMMUNITY PROFILE ELEMENT

01



COMMUNITY PROFILE

Introduction

Originally founded in 1939, Garden City features a blend of industry and small business, and boasts a rich history, friendly neighborhoods, a vibrant economy, and quality services for its residents. As a full-service municipality, the city provides multiple services from police and fire protection to water/sewer service, solid waste collection, street and drainage maintenance, recreational programs and facilities, code enforcement, and more.

Garden City is defined by responsive, visionary leadership through its seven member City Council. From its founding in 1939 until 2009, it operated under a mayor-council form of government. The City has since adopted a council-manager form of government, with the mayor, one at-large council member and five district-elected council members. The City operates and funds its municipal services via a combination of property taxes, sales taxes, user fees and other sources.

GARDEN CITY

Population

As of 2018, Garden City had an estimated population of 8,936 with a population density of 616 people per square mile. U.S. Census records show the population increased rapidly from 1970–1980 and continued to grow until reaching its peak of 9,962 in 2000. By 2010, the population had decreased slightly and has remained at approximately the same level until today.

With the exception of the population snapshot found in Figure 1.3, the population data presented throughout is from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) multiyear estimates covering the 2014–2018 period and was the most current publicly available ACS multiyear data at the time of reporting.

Population Growth, 1970–2018

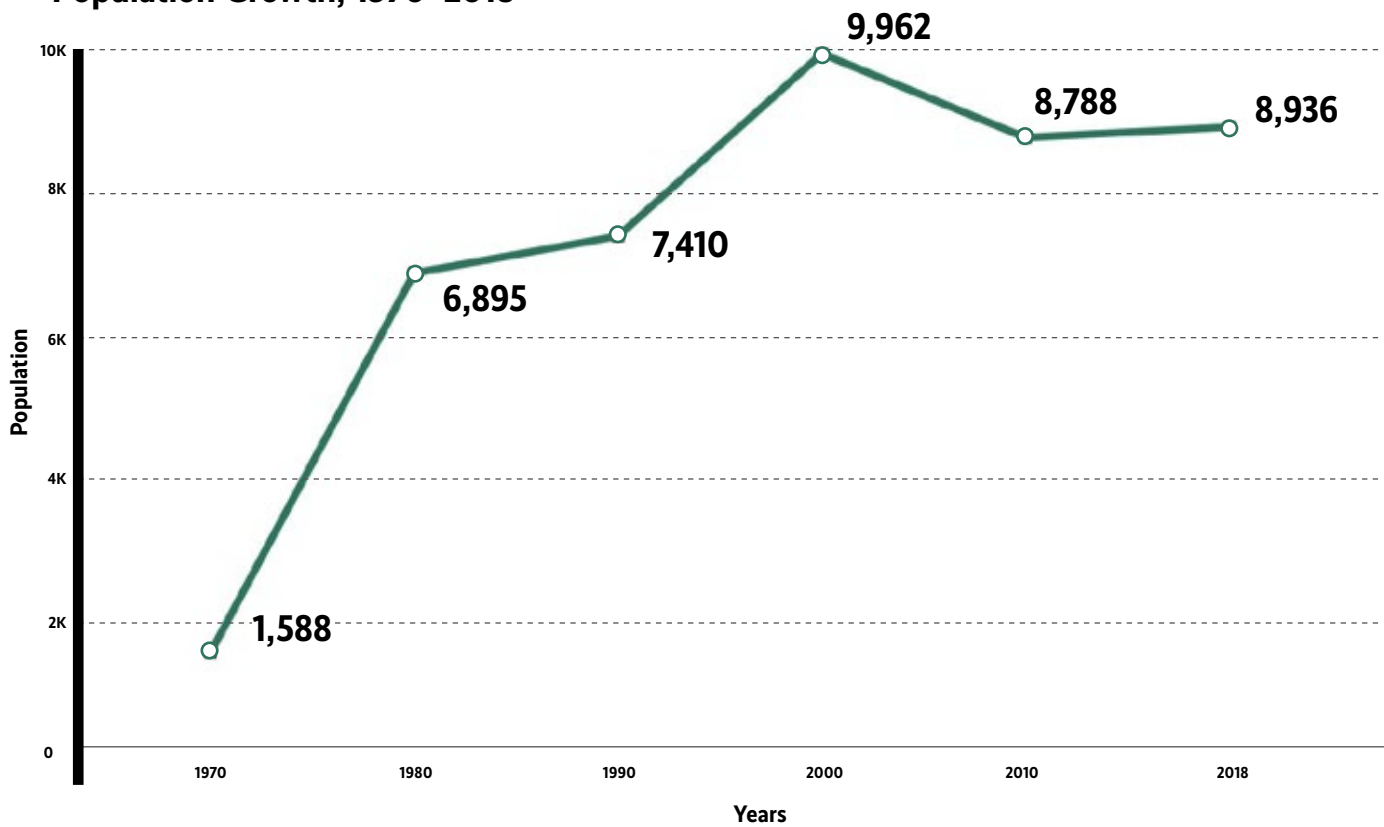


Figure 1.1–Population Growth, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

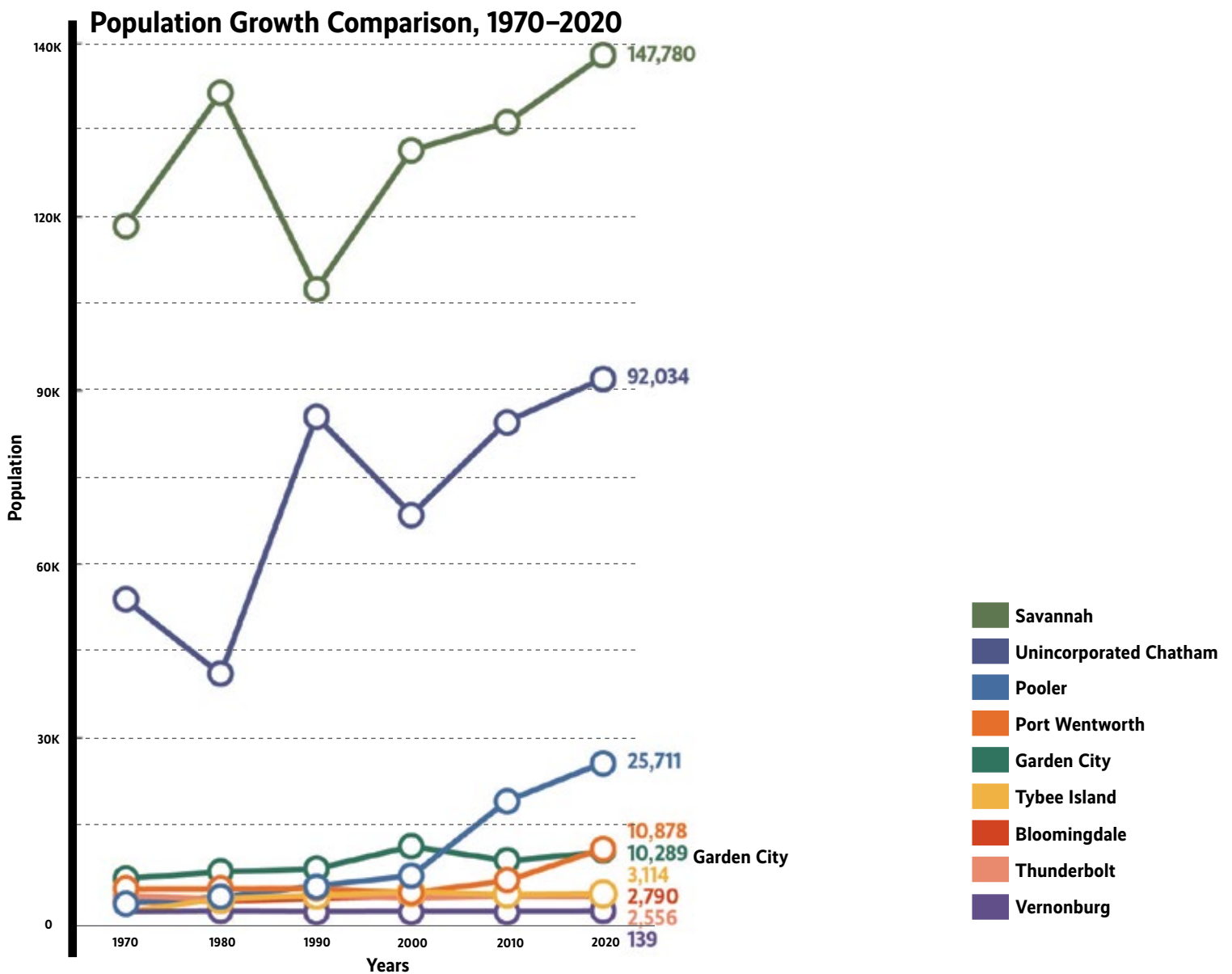


Figure 1.2–Population Comparison, 1970–2020, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Gender & Age

Of the 8,936 people living in Garden City in 2014–2018, 48.5% were female, and 51.5% were male. Residents of Garden City had the youngest median age of any municipality in Chatham County at 31.1 years, which is nearly seven years younger than the national median (37.9 years).

The population of Garden City has gotten younger since 2010, when the median age was 35.3 years. Possible reasons for this could be that younger people are moving into the city, older residents are moving away from the city, and/or that existing residents are having more children. In particular, the number of 25–34 year olds increased nearly 10% in the years since 2013–by 2018, this cohort made up more than one-fifth of the total population of Garden City.

That same year, children under the age of 18 made up 28.2% of the population, while nearly one in eight residents were over age 65 (12.8%).

Gender Characteristics, 2014–2018



Median Age Characteristics, 2014–2018

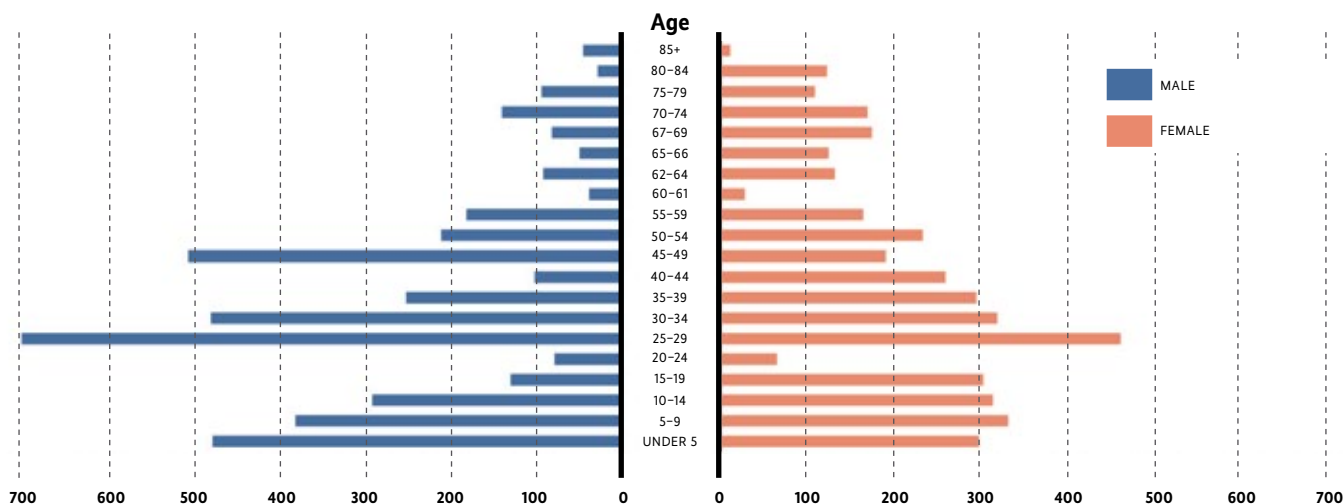
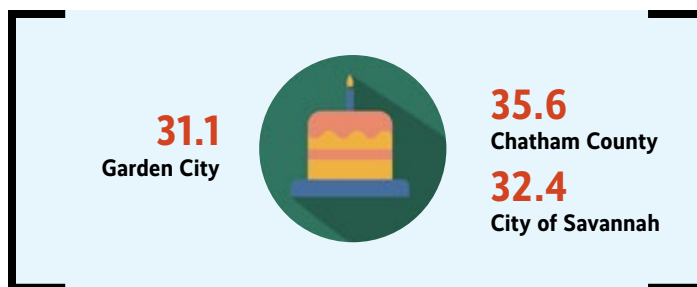


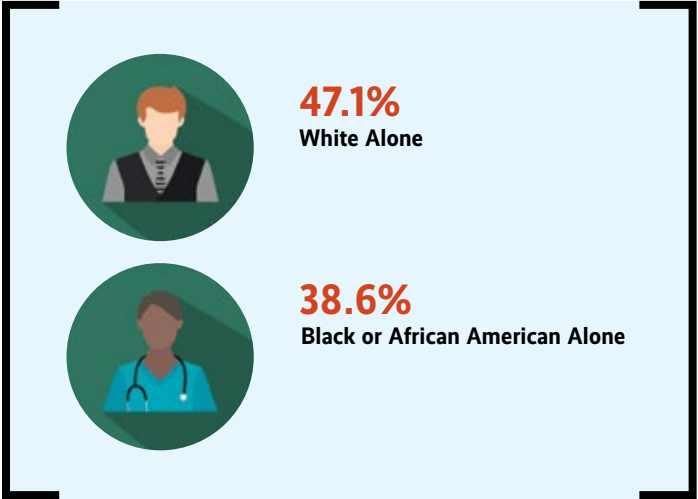
Figure 1.3–Population Pyramid, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Population Diversity & Ethnicity

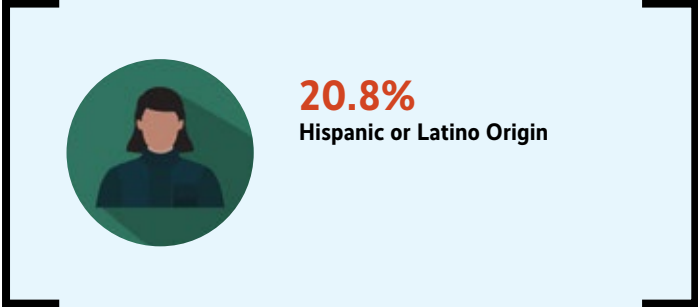
In 2014–2018, Garden City was one of the more diverse municipalities in Chatham County. While the largest racial group was white (47.1%), 38.6% of residents identified as black or African American and 5.8% identified as being of two or more races. These racial breakdowns represent people who reported only one race (aside from the "two or more races" category). One in five residents in Garden City identified as Hispanic or Latino (20.8%). Those who identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race(s), which is the largest proportion of Hispanic or Latino residents in the county.

Garden City’s population has been growing more diverse since the 1970’s. In the past 50 years, the non-white share of Garden City’s population has doubled from roughly 25% in 1970 to 52.9% 2018.

Racial Majority Characteristics, 2014–2018



Ethnicity, 2014–2018



Population by Race, 2014–2018

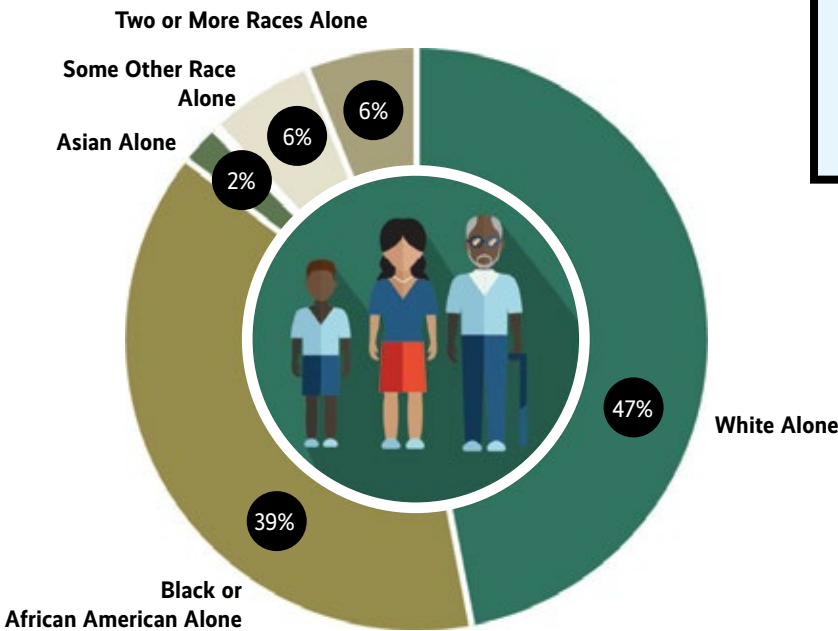


Figure 1.4–Population by Race, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Diversity Index

The diversity index determines the likelihood that two people chosen at random from a given area will be from different racial or ethnic groups. Higher values indicate more diversity in an area and lower values indicate less diversity.

On Map 1.1, block groups with high racial and ethnic diversity index scores are shown in blue. These calculations are based on the methodology described in “Mapping the USA’s diversity from 1960 to 2060” in USA TODAY.

Philip Meyer, Shawn McIntosh, THE USA TODAY INDEX OF ETHNIC DIVERSITY, International Journal of Public Opinion Research, Volume 4, Issue 1, SPRING 1992, Pages 51–58

Race & Ethnicity Changes, 1970–2010

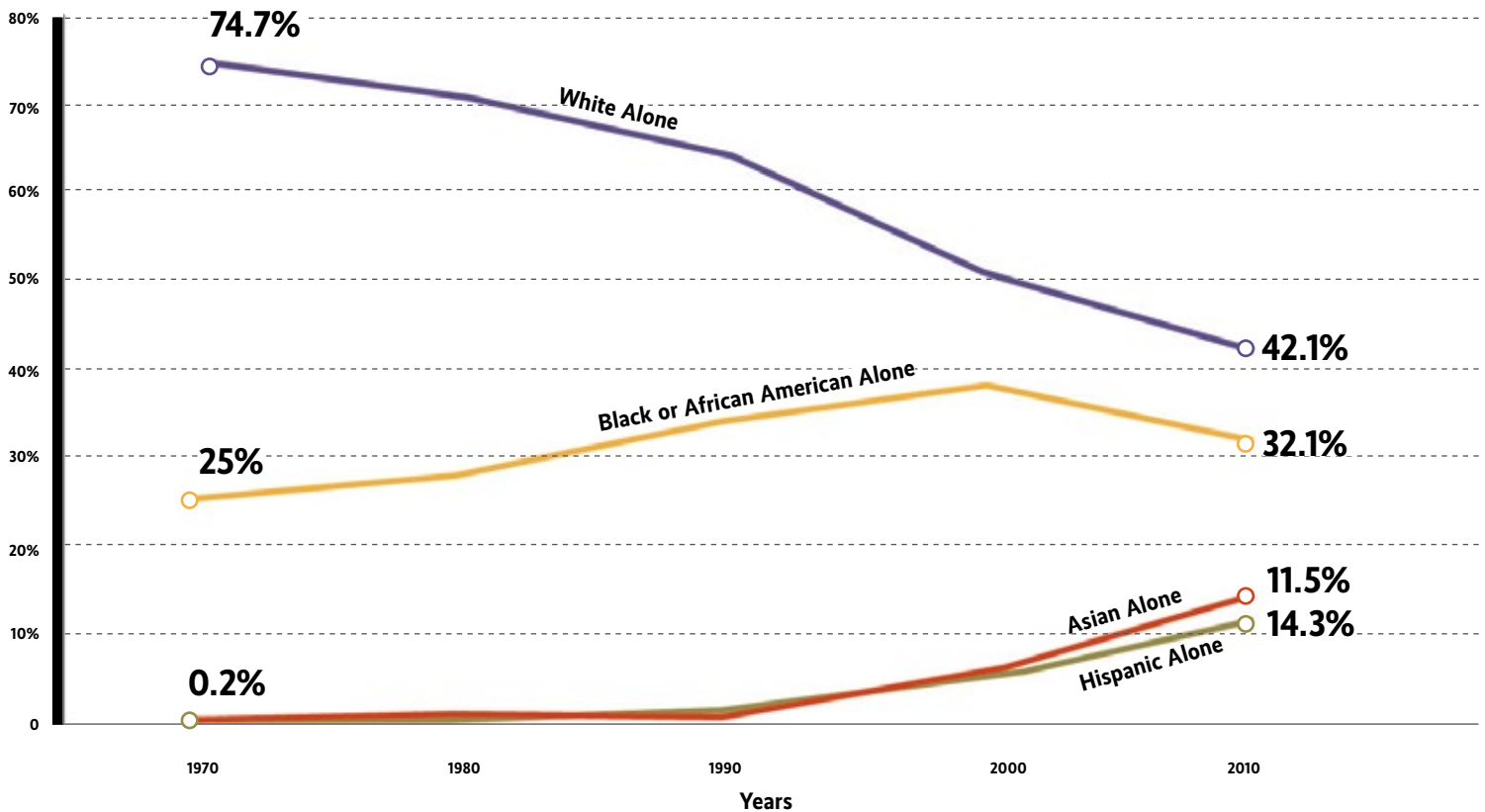
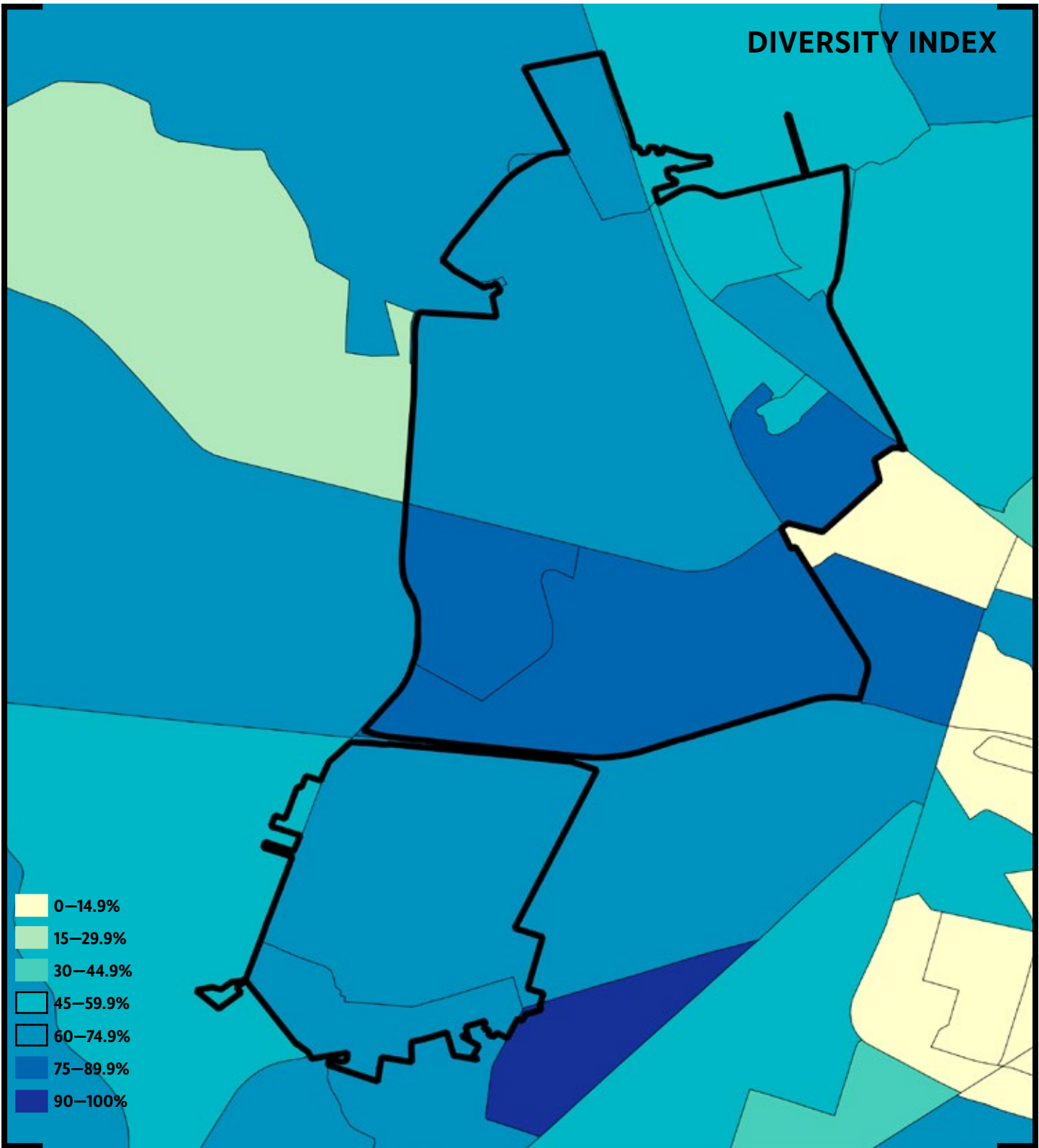


Figure 1.5–Race & Ethnicity Over Time, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Map 1.1-Diversity Index by Block Group, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Employment

In 2014–2018, 66.0% of people 16 years and older were employed in the civilian labor force and 3.4% were unemployed; 30.7% of residents over 16 were not in the labor force. This is significant progress over the 2009–2013 period, when just 52.8% of residents were employed in the labor force. An estimated 81.0% of employed people in Garden City were private wage and salary workers in 2018; 10.2% worked in federal, state, or local government; and 8.8% were self-employed in their own (not incorporated) business.

The unemployment rate in Chatham County had been declining steadily from mid-2011 until March 2020, when the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic were felt across the country. In April 2020, the monthly unemployment rate skyrocketed to 16.5%, higher than the rates of both Georgia (12.2%) and the United States (14.8%).

Unemployment Rate, 1992–2019

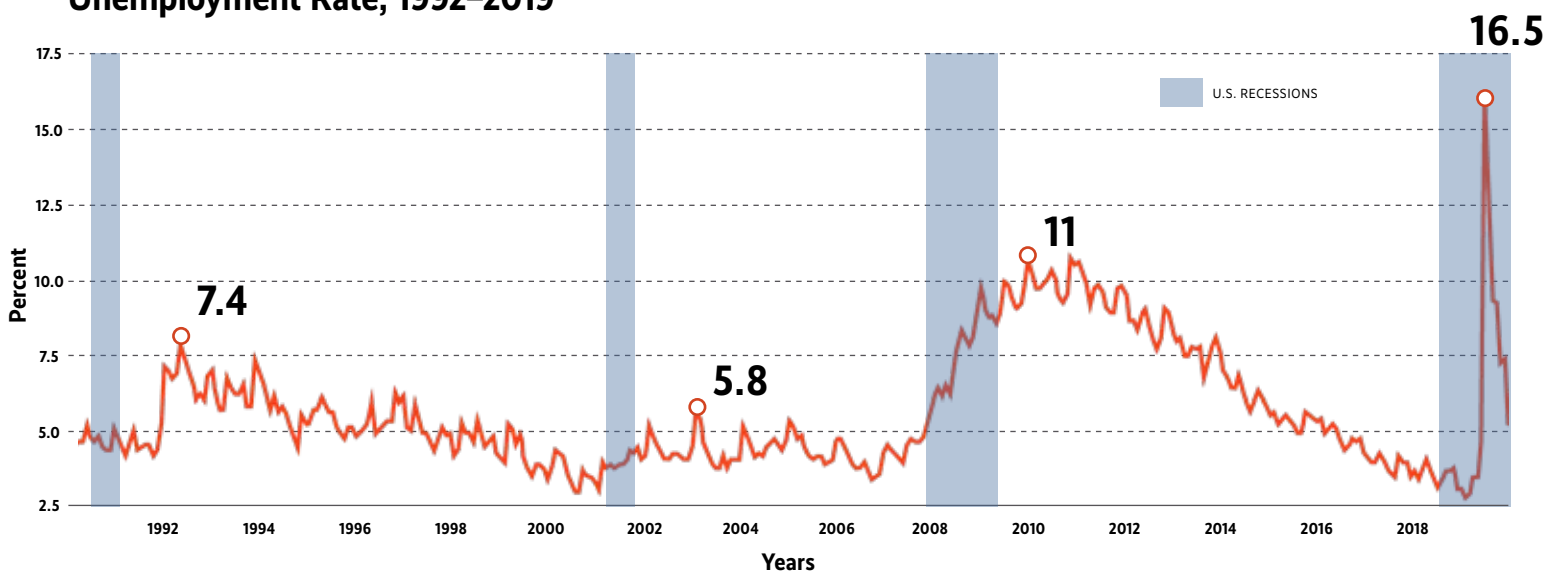


Figure 1.6–Unemployment Rate in Chatham County
Federal Reserve Economic Data (FRED)

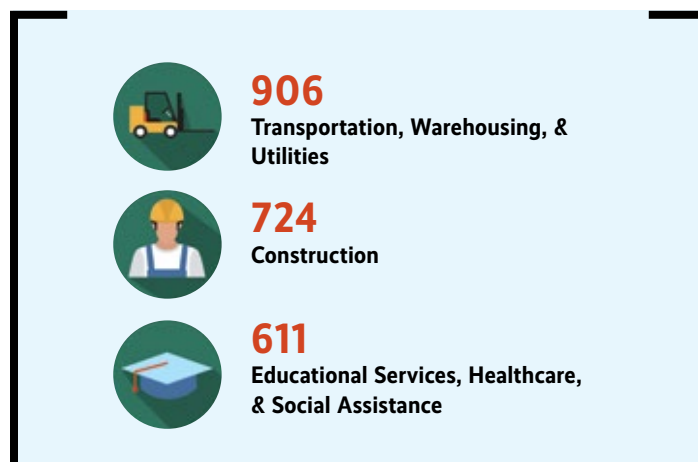
Industry

In Garden City, the three largest industries by employment in 2018 were transportation, warehousing, and utilities (906 employees); construction (724); and educational services, health care and social assistance (611). Collectively, these industries added nearly 1,000 jobs over the 2009–2013 period, more than half of which were in the transportation, warehousing, and utilities industry. This industry also saw the greatest growth in employment during that time, increasing by 10.8 percentage points.

Location quotient (LQ) is a measurement of how concentrated a particular industry is in an area relative to the nation as a whole. It compares the industry's share of local employment to the U.S. average. A LQ of 1 indicates an industry is providing the same share of jobs locally as it is nationally, a LQ above 1 indicates a higher-than-average concentration locally, and a LQ below 1 indicates jobs in that industry are less concentrated locally than the national average. The LQ for industries in Garden City is shown in Figure 1.7.

The transportation, warehousing, and utilities industry was nearly four times more concentrated than the national average in 2018. As discussed above, this industry made up the largest share of Garden City's workforce—one in five residents were employed in it in 2018—and experienced the most growth between 2014–2018. The construction industry was also nearly 2.5 times more concentrated in Garden City than the country as a whole.

Largest Industries by Employment, 2014–2018



Industry Sector Concentration, 2014–2018

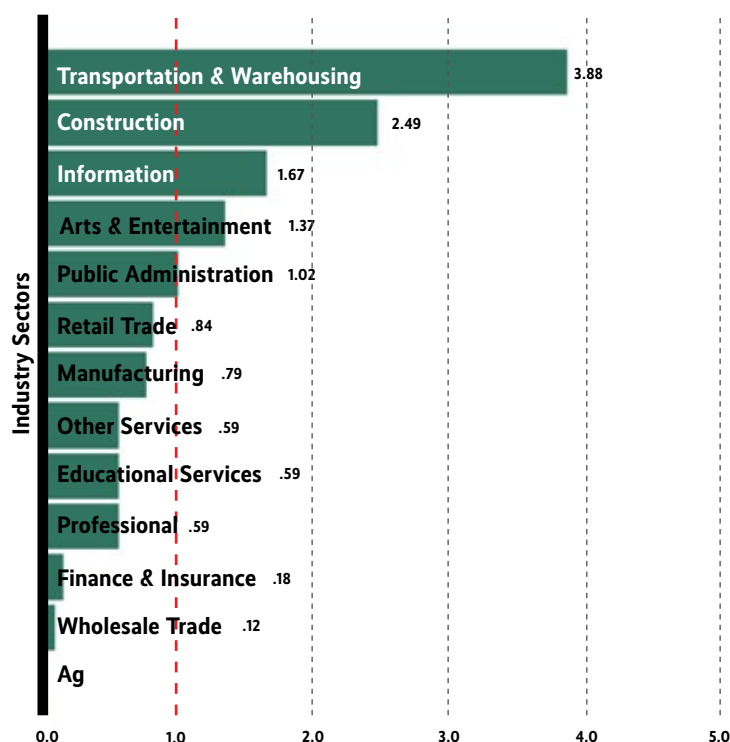


Figure 1.7—Industry Sector, Garden City

U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



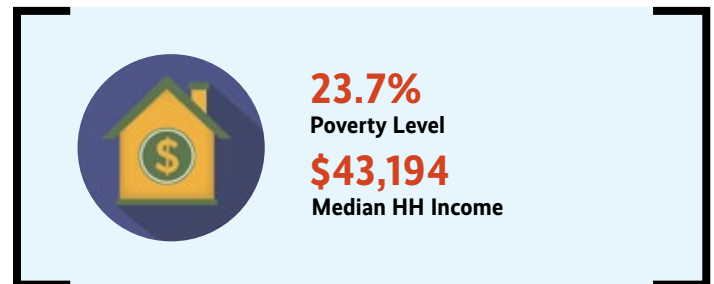
Income & Poverty

In general, household incomes in Garden City have increased significantly in recent years. In 2014–2018, the median income of households was \$43,194, an increase of more than \$10,000 over the 2009–2013 period. The distribution of household incomes in 2009–2013 and 2014–2018 is shown in Figure 1.8.

The recent rise in median household income was driven by both a decrease in the share of households making less than \$35,000 and an increase in households making \$35,000 to \$150,000. Households making \$50,000 to \$150,000 annually saw the greatest growth between the two periods of time, and by 2018, one in four households fell into this income category.

An estimated 23.7% of people in Garden City lived below poverty level in 2018. Nearly four in ten children under 18 lived in poverty (39.2%), compared with adults aged 18–64 (18.3%) and seniors aged 65 and older (13.9%).

Poverty & Income Characteristics, 2014–2018



Likewise, females were overrepresented in the population living below poverty level: while females made up only 48.4% of the total population, they made up 57.0% of the population living in poverty.

Median Household Income Change

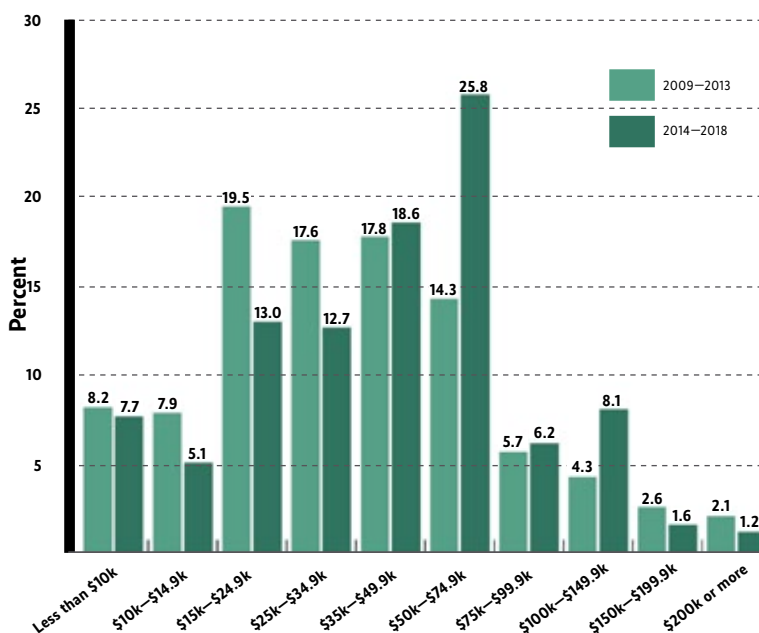


Figure 1.8–Median Household Income Change, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Status of Poverty by Age, 2014–2018

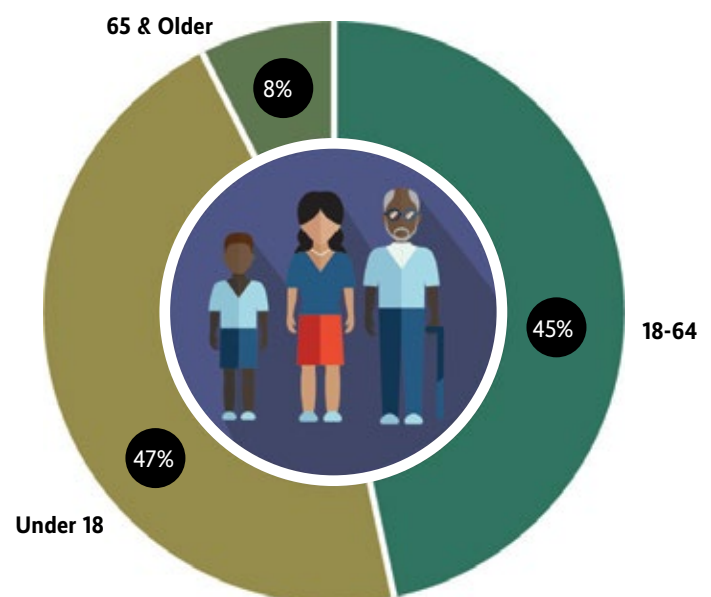
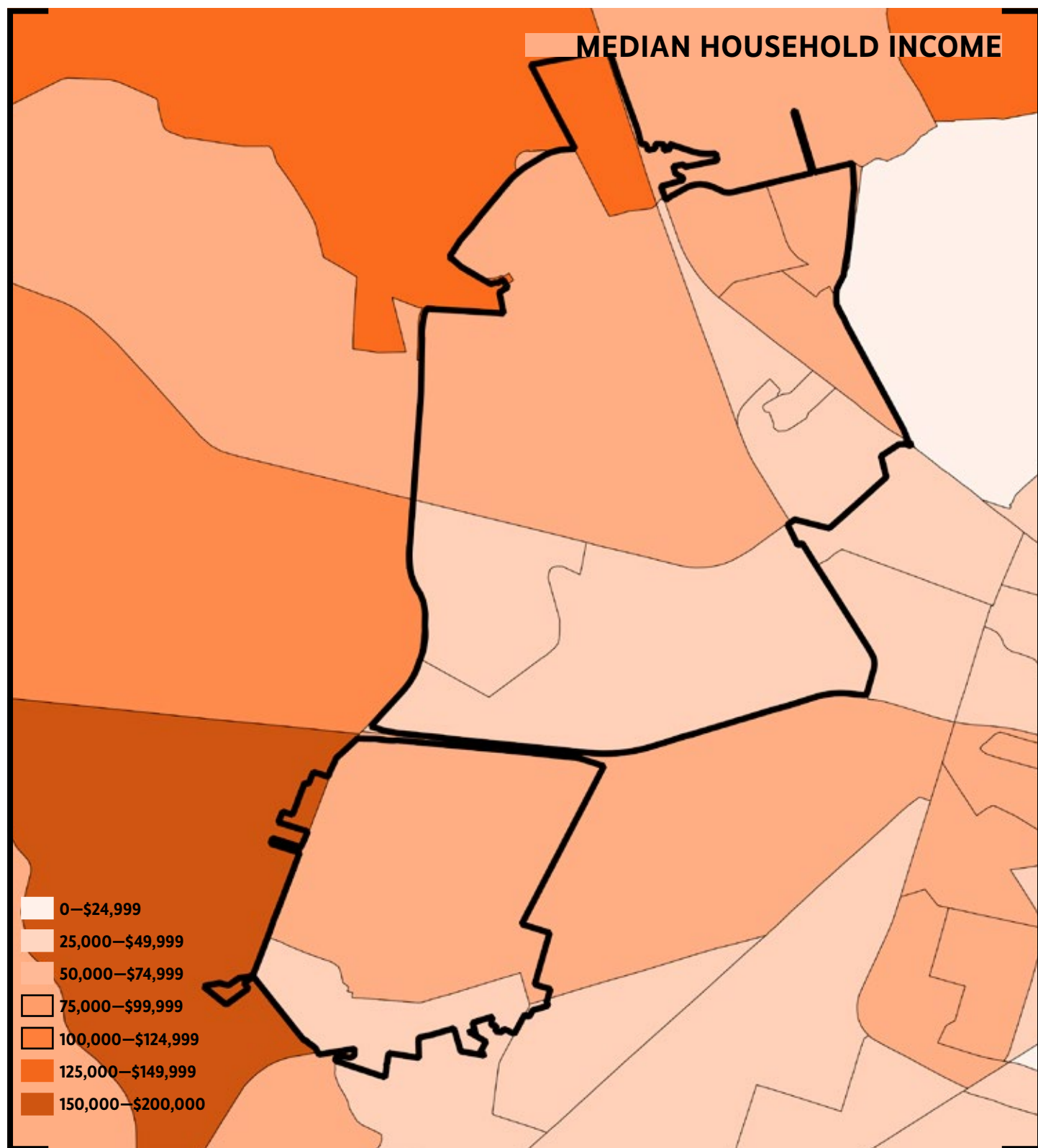


Figure 1.9–Poverty Age Status, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Map 1.2—Median Household Income by Block Group, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

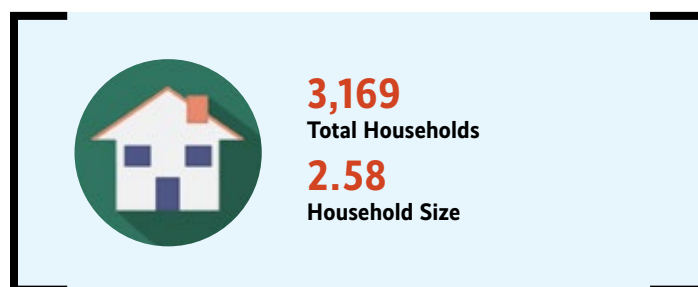


Households & Families

National trends throughout the 20th Century that saw a long-term decline in household size as families had fewer and fewer children began to reverse in the 21st Century. This is mirrored in the change in average household size in Garden City from 2000 to 2010, growing slightly from 2.56 to 2.58 people. In 2014–2018, the average household size had increased to 2.88 people. This rise is likely driven by changes in household composition in recent years; although families are postponing childbearing and having fewer children overall, the share of young adults living with their parents has increased at a greater pace, as has the share of multigenerational households.

In 2014–2018, there were an estimated 3,169 households in Garden City. Families made up 58.7% of households, while 41.3% were people living alone or with other nonfamily members.

Household & Size Characteristics, 2014–2018



Household by Type, 2014–2018

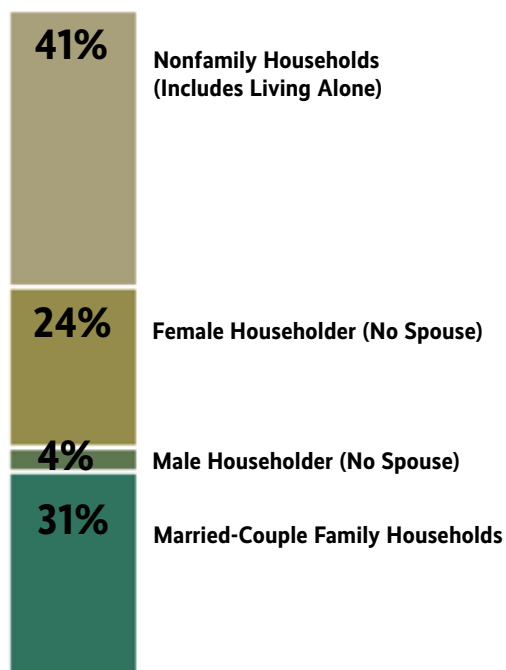


Figure 1.10–Household by Type, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Marital Status, 2014–2018

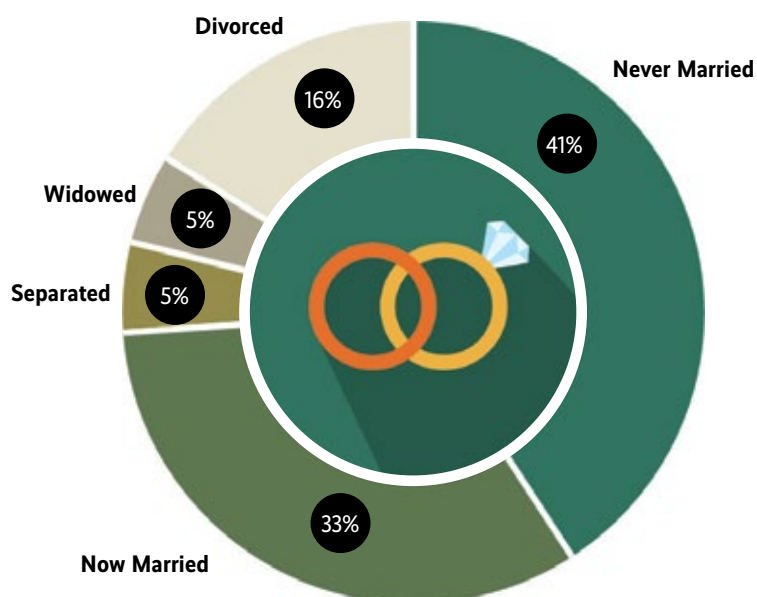


Figure 1.11–Marital Status Population 15 Years and Over, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Housing Units, Ownership & Tenure

There were an estimated 3,552 housing units in Garden City in 2014–2018, roughly half of which were single-unit structures, which includes both detached and attached residences (i.e., townhomes). Nearly 90% of units were occupied, primarily by renters (65.3%), with homeowners inhabiting roughly one out of every three occupied housing units (34.7%).

The estimated rental vacancy rate, or amount of rental stock that is vacant for rent, was just 2.7% while the homeowner vacancy rate was 7.6%. For comparison, the national rental and homeowner vacancy rates for the same year were 6.0% and 1.7%, respectively.

Housing Characteristics, 2014–2018



Housing Types, 2014–2018

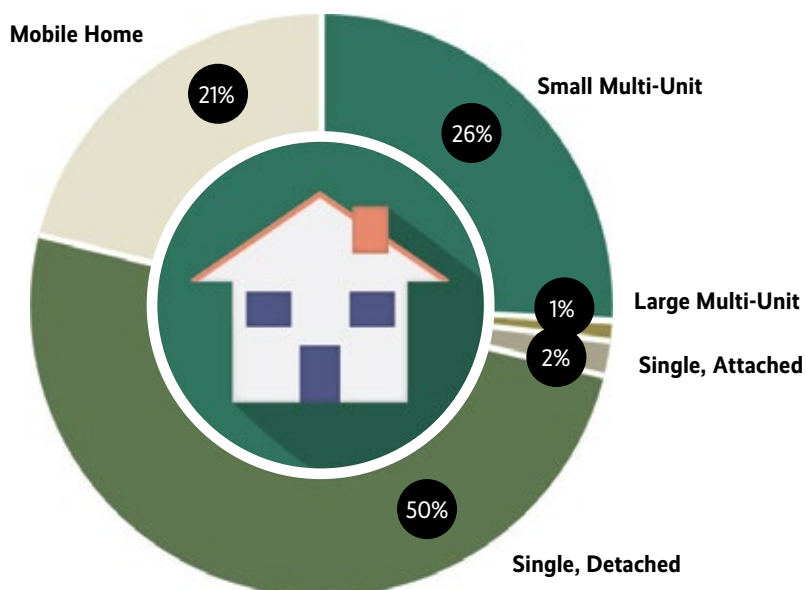
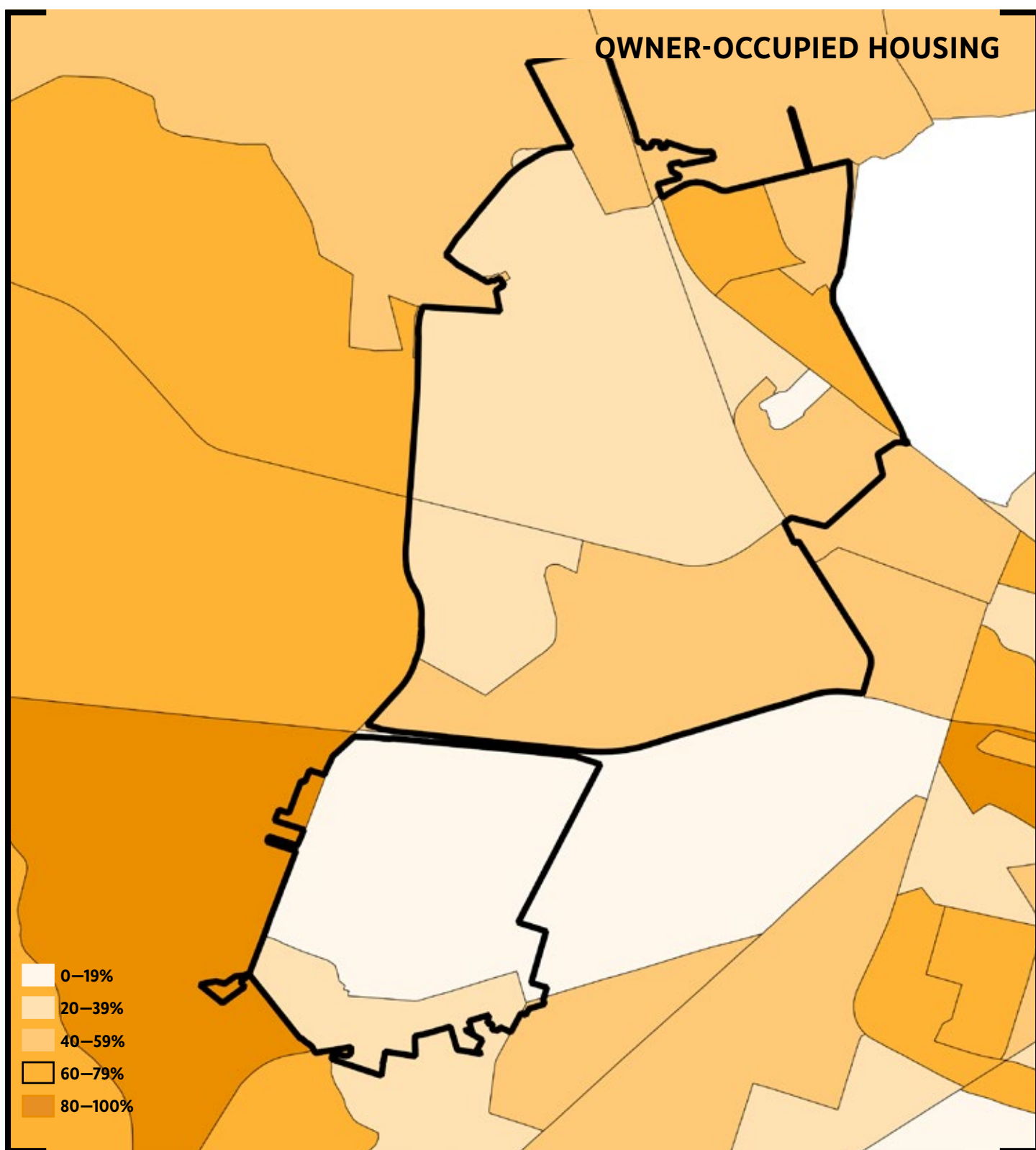
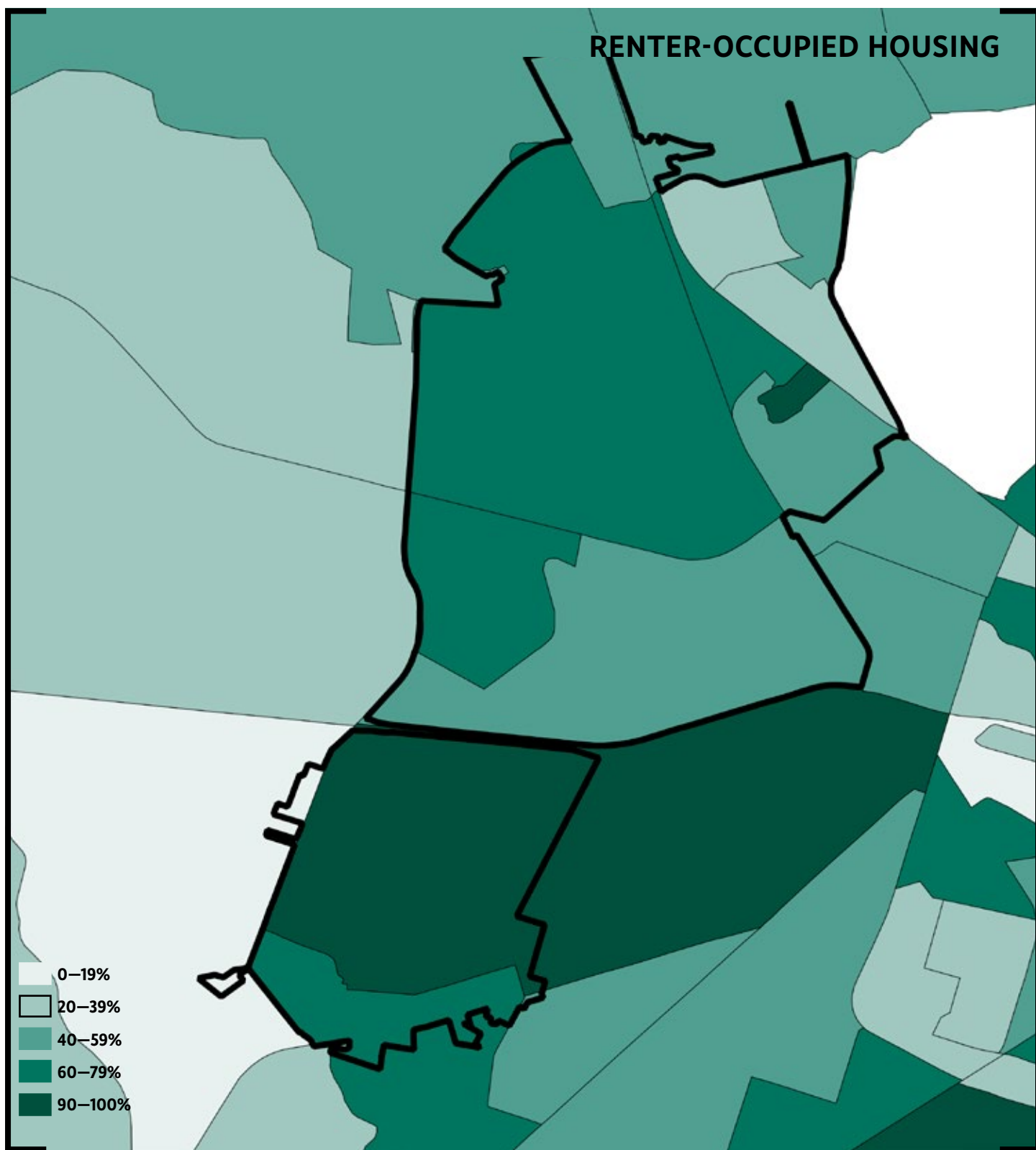


Figure 1.12–Housing Type, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates





Map 1.3—Percent Owner-Occupied Housing by Block Group, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Map 1.4—Percent Renter-Occupied Housing by Block Group, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

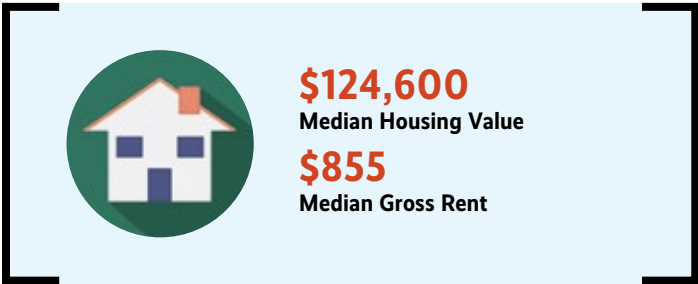


Housing Value & Costs

In 2014–2018, the median property value of owner-occupied residences in Garden City was \$124,600. The 45.5% of owner-occupied units that had a mortgage typically spent an estimated \$1,119 per month on housing costs, while those without a mortgage (54.5%) spent an estimated \$430 per month. Of households with a mortgage, 24.6% were considered cost-burdened, paying at least 30% of their monthly income toward housing expenses.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, cost-burdened households “may have difficulty affording [other] necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care.” This is a notable increase from 2006–2010, when 18.9% of households with a mortgage were cost-burdened.

Housing Characteristics, 2014–2018



For renters in Garden City, the median gross rent was \$855 in 2018 and 37.3% of rental households were cost-burdened, down 7.5 percentage points from the share of cost-burdened renters in 2006–2010.

Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income, 2014–2018

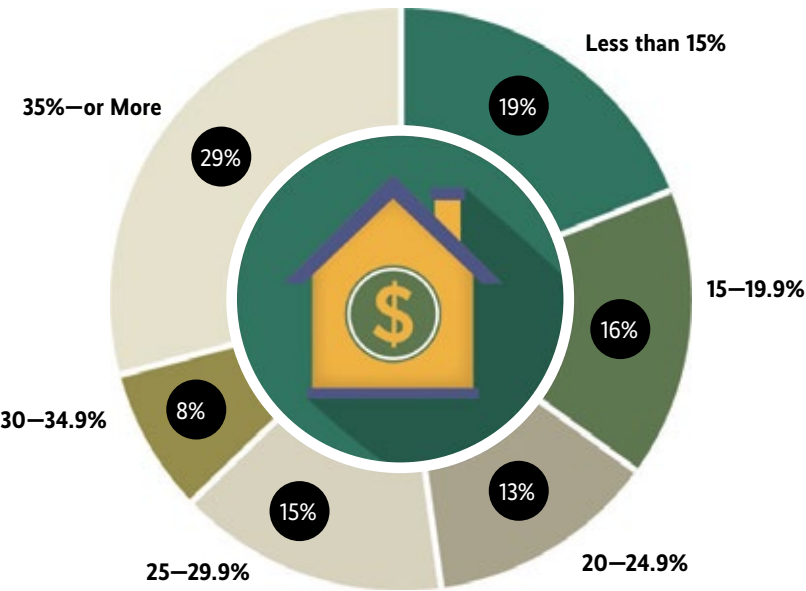
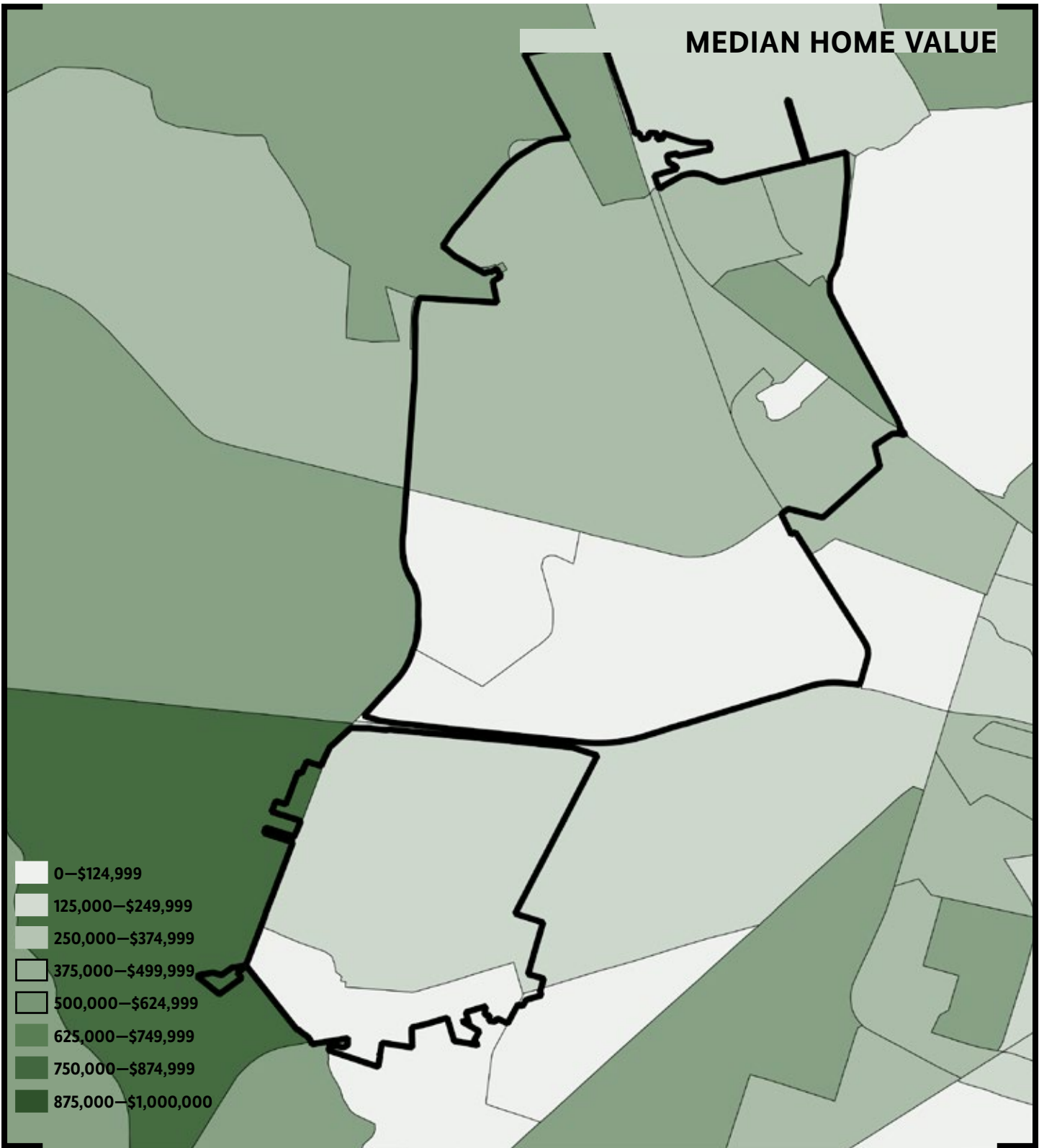


Figure 1.13–Cost Burdened Renter, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



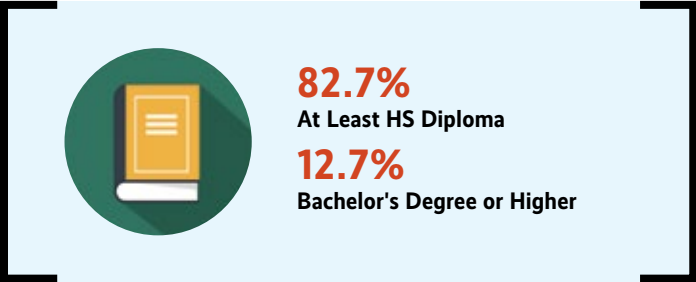
Map 1.5—Median Home Value by Block Group, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Educational Attainment

In Garden City, most people over age 25 held a high school diploma (including high school equivalency degree) or higher in 2018 (82.7%), while 12.7% held a bachelor's, graduate, or professional degree. These are roughly the same proportions as 2009–2013. Of note, however, is the increase in the share of residents who had some college experience but did not obtain a degree, which rose from 19.4% in 2013 to 26.6% in 2018. Figure 1.14 illustrates the breakdown of educational attainment in Garden City.

Educational Characteristics, 2014–2018



Educational Attainment, 2014–2018

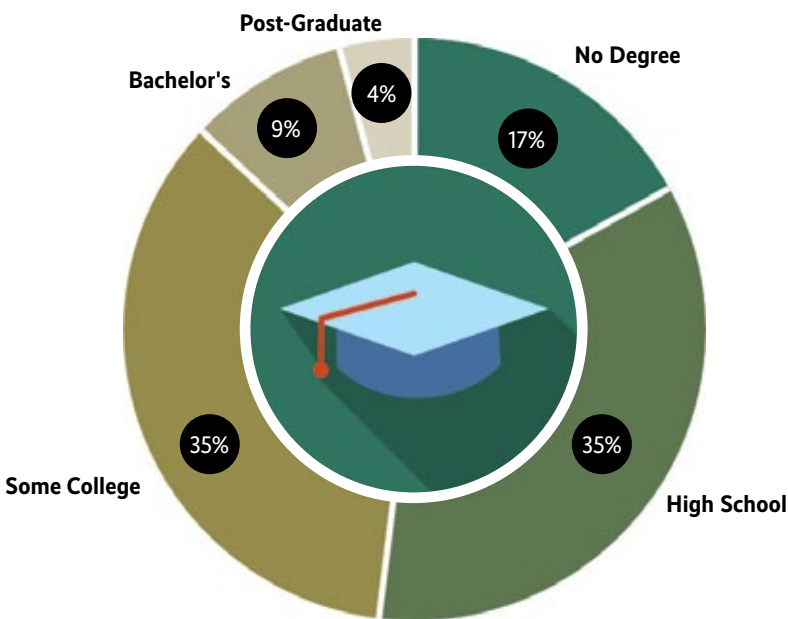
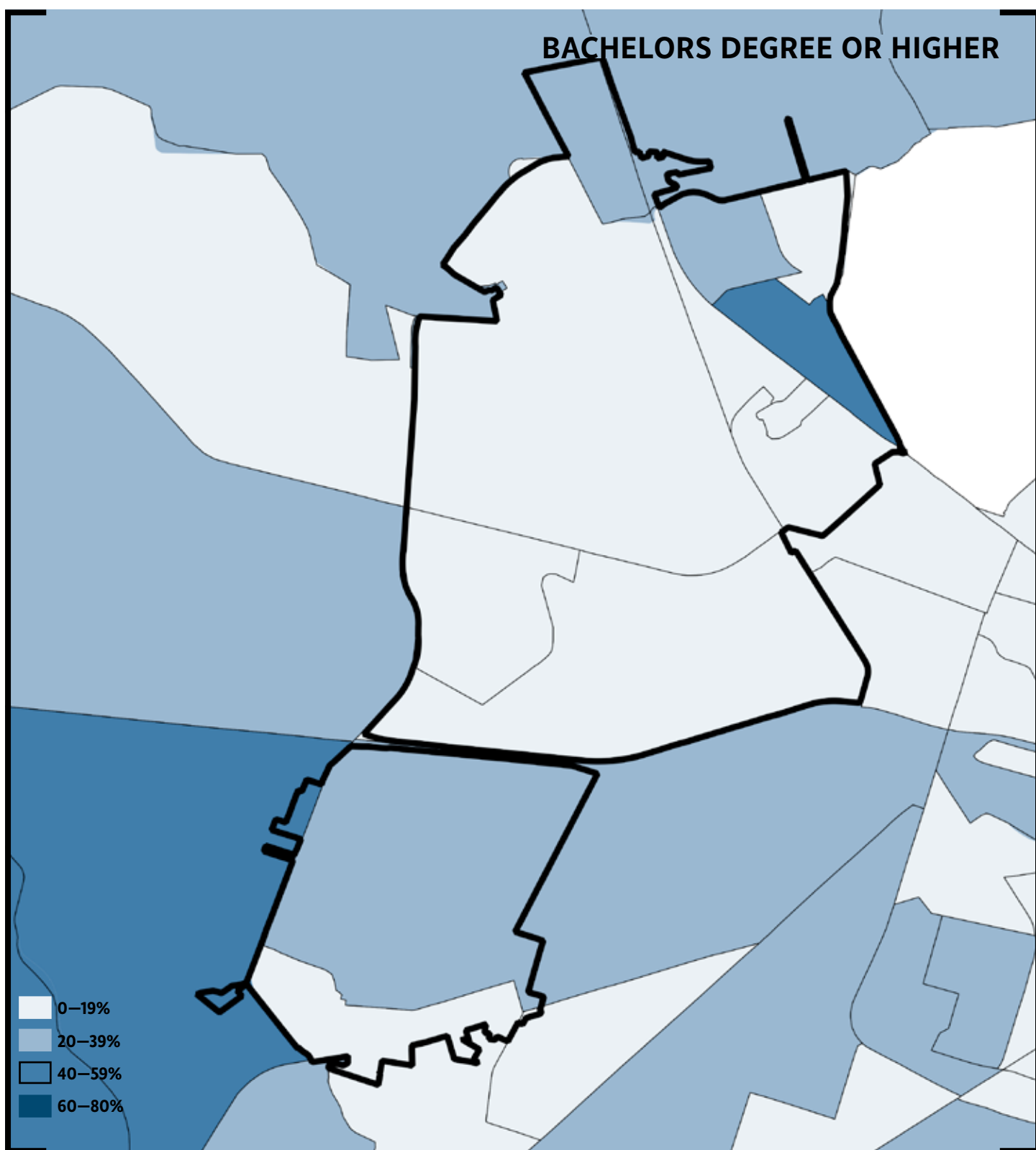


Figure 1.14–Educational Attainment, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

BACHELORS DEGREE OR HIGHER



Map 1.6—Percent Bachelors Degree or Higher by Block Group, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Nativity

In 2014–2018, 85.5% of the population in Garden City were U.S. natives and 14.5% were foreign-born. This is the highest percentage of foreign-born residents of all of the municipalities in Chatham County, and is a significant increase of 6.2 percentage points from the 2009–2013 period. Of those residents born outside the United States, nearly 90% came from Latin America (including the Caribbean, Central America, and South America). While the foreign-born population has increased in recent years, the percentage of residents from Latin America has remained approximately the same since 2013.

In 2018, nearly one in four people over the age of five spoke a language other than English at home, with Spanish (18.3%) being most prevalent among non-English speaking households.

Languages Spoken at Home, 2014–2018

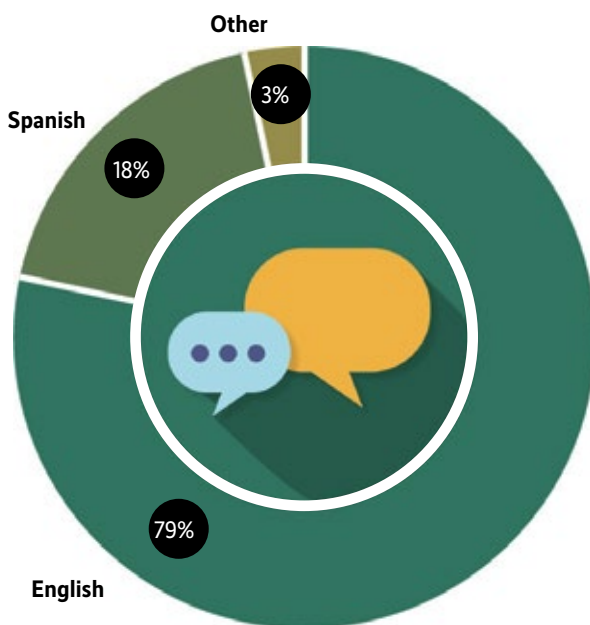


Figure 1.15–Language Spoken at Home, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Veteran Status

In 2014–2018, approximately 9.6% of adults living in Garden City were veterans, which is a slightly higher percentage than the state of Georgia (8.2%) and the country as a whole (7.5%). The period of military service for veterans living in Garden City is shown below. Please note that some veterans may have served in more than one of the periods listed, so percentages in the graph may not sum to 100%.

Veteran Characteristics, 2014–2018



Military Service for Adult Veterans

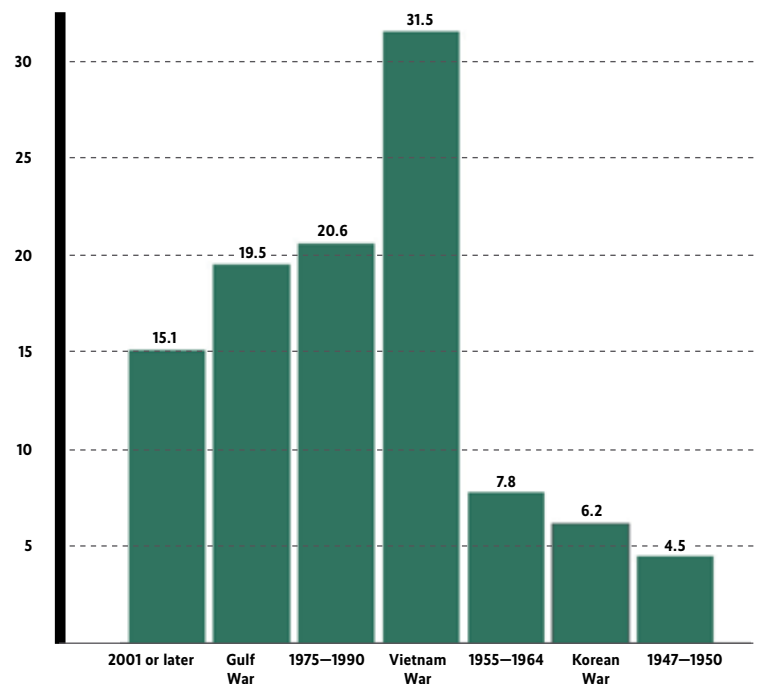


Figure 1.16–Period of Military Service for Adult Veterans, Garden City
U.S. Census Bureau: 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Construction

The construction of residential buildings can be a good indicator of a community's growth. Figure 1.17 shows the residential construction trend in Garden City from 2010 to 2018. Estimating the population based on the number of building permits is useful in planning for roads and utilities because a residential dwelling unit represents the potential for population regardless of the occupant's official residence.

High demand for industrial and commercial uses in the northern part of the city along with the lack of water and sewer infrastructure in the southern portion of the city has led to minimal residential growth in since 2010.

Construction Permits, 2010–2018

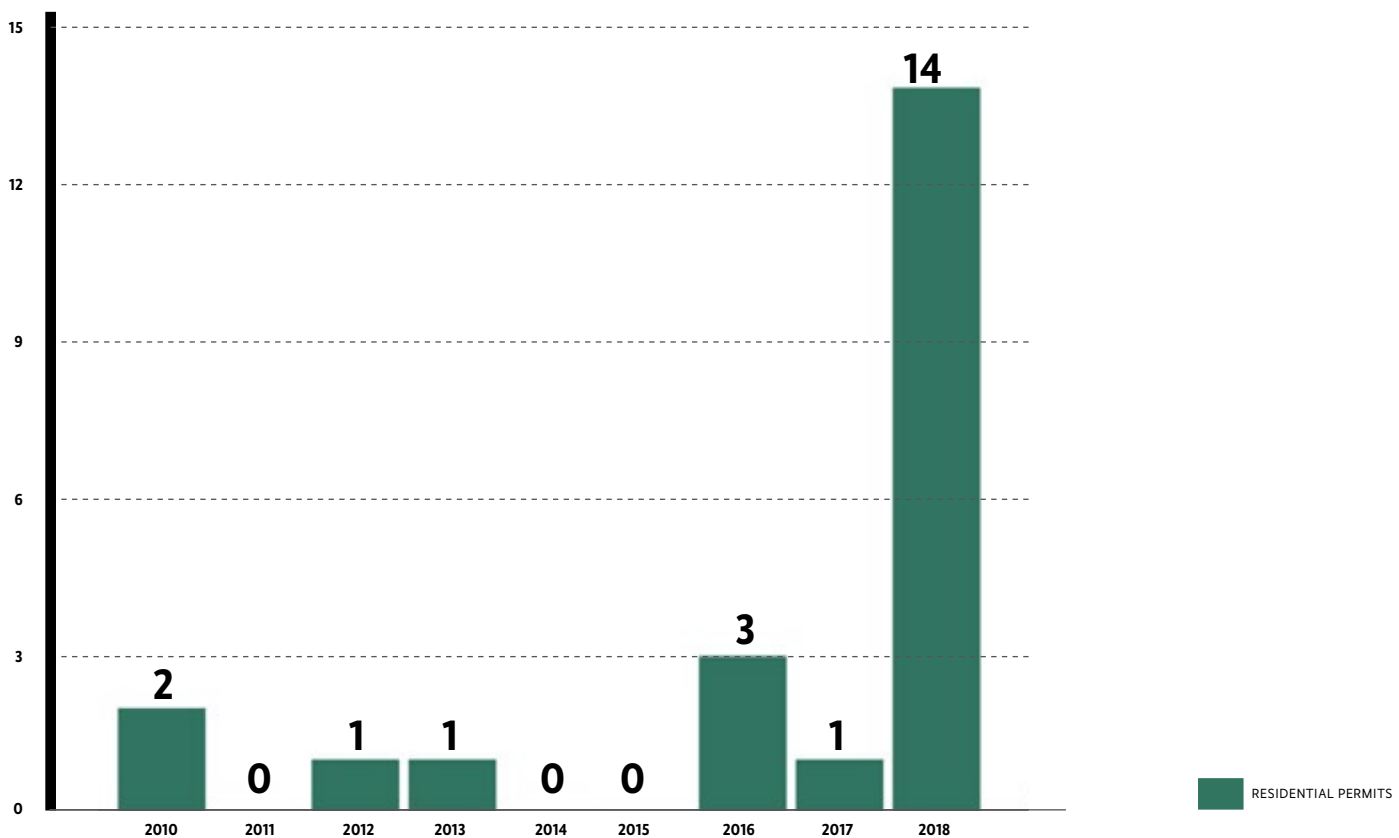


Figure 1.17–Construction Permits, Garden City
Chatham County Building Safety & Regulatory Services



COVID-19 Pandemic

COVID-19 has touched nearly every aspect of our community and our lives in the past year. Chatham County, like every county in the country, suffered the economic, social, educational, and health consequences of the pandemic that, at the time of writing, has killed over 569,000 Americans. As of April 5, 2021, Chatham County had a total of 19,608 confirmed COVID-19 cases, 394 confirmed deaths, and 1,561 hospitalizations due to COVID-19. At the time these data were acquired, there were an additional 24 probable deaths due to COVID-19 in Chatham County as well.

At the time of writing, the world is still seeing the impacts of COVID-19. Although Garden City-specific data is unavailable, limited data is available at the county level and is represented here. As of February 2021, the employment rate in the county had decreased 5.8% compared with January 2020. These job losses have been concentrated primarily in low and middle wage jobs; in fact, the employment rate among workers in the top wage quartile has been above January 2020 levels since statewide stay at home orders were lifted on April 30, 2020. Workers in the bottom wage quartile, however, have remained hardest hit since last March, when the employment rate for low wage jobs dropped nearly 45% by mid-April 2020.

Unemployment claims in the county reached their peak the first full week of April 2020, when roughly 14,500 people filed an initial claim for unemployment benefits. This corresponds to a rate of 10.4 claims per 100 people in the labor force. The number of unemployment claims has generally been decreasing since then-as of the week ending October 31, 2020, there were 0.88 unemployment claims per 100 people in the county's labor force.

Small businesses have also been negatively impacted. As of February 2021, 33% fewer small businesses were open in Chatham County compared to January 2020 and total small business revenue had decreased by 38.5%. By mid-March 2021, however, total consumer spending in Chatham County had nearly rebounded back to January 2020 levels.

Overall, Chatham County residents spent 5% less time away from home in April 2021 compared to the start of last year when the pandemic began. When people did leave their residence during this time, the average amount of time spent elsewhere varied significantly depending on their destination.

- The total time spent at grocery stores in Chatham increased 2.9%
- Total time spent in parks increased 64.7%
- Total time spent at retail and restaurant locations increased 1.6%
- Total time spent at transit locations decreased 24%
- Total time spent in the workplace decreased 29.6%



Percent Change in Employment

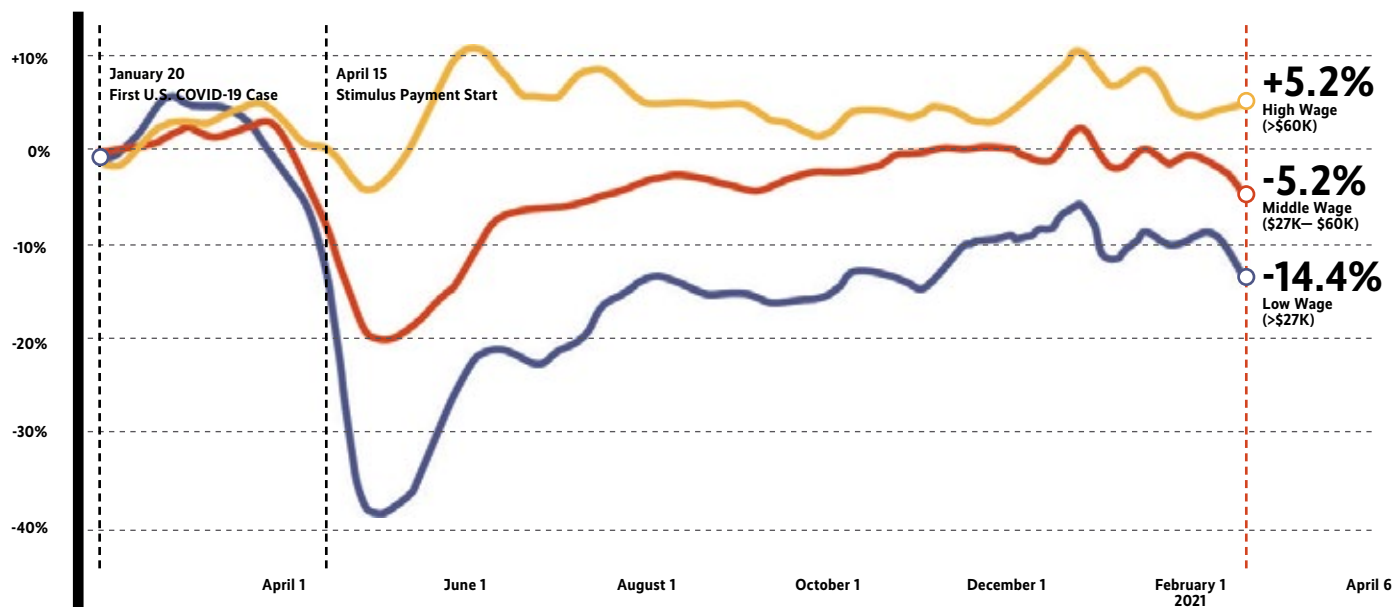


Figure 1.18–Percent Change in Employment, Chatham County

Time Spent Outside Home Chatham County

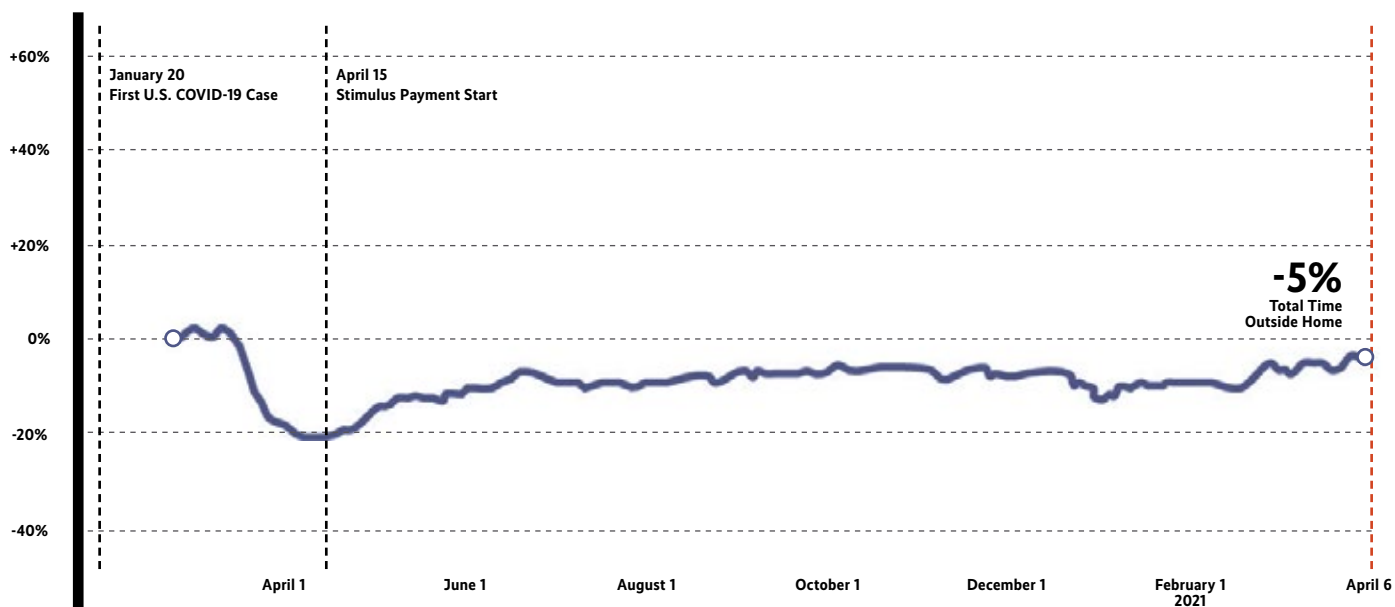


Figure 1.19–Percent Change in Time Spent Outside Home, Chatham County

