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# Chapter

# 1

# Introduction



# Introduction

The Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan was developed to guide future growth, conservation, and development decisions throughout the community. It is intended to relate to other town plans, policies, and ordinances in place, or that may be developed in the future, and provide guidance to other government agencies preparing plans or programming projects that may affect the town's planning area.

The document builds upon the vision, guiding principles, and recommendations presented in the 2018 Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan, and provides more focus and clarity related to expectations for community character, land use mix, and quality development expected in the planning area. Important and relevant items from the 2018 plan are presented again in this version of the document. The new document also contemplates a future where Garner is a major center of economic activity in eastern Wake County.

The ability to look across many topics at once is an asset for the comprehensive plan. It allows the opportunity to both prioritize outcomes and balance needs within the community in a single document. It moves the community to "intended outcomes" and "coordinated efforts" for the future. The plan is a visionary document, a blueprint for the future, and one of the few times the community dreams big and really challenges itself to think about its long-term future.

The comprehensive plan will help town leaders make decisions that will guide future development and achieve the goals of the community. Patience may be needed for some aspects of the plan to evolve as it sets a long-term vision for growth and conservation over an extended period of time.

## Emphasis on Community Character

Early ideas in the planning process for the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan helped reprioritize "land use", "development", "open space", and "infrastructure" topics all as contributing factors to "community character" for the document. The emphasis on physical form and design considerations over simple land use and density criteria (demand) and available infrastructure

capacity (supply) for determining the town's best path forward is a significant change from past comprehensive plans.

The chapters that follow in the document focus on identifying, preserving, and perpetuating desirable development patterns in the community, while also making deliberate changes to areas that do not meet the community's expectations for character or sense of place. Policies and recommendations in the document strategically accommodate future growth and change while preserving and enhancing the qualities and characteristics that make the town a desirable place to live, work, learn, and play. They aim to enhance the town's neighborhoods, downtown, development districts, and public spaces with an attractive mix of uses and amenities that expand the local economy, enhance social interaction, protect environmental resources, instill a unique sense of place, and improve the overall quality-of-life for residents.

Ideas about community character extend to all chapters of the comprehensive plan, and together reinforce a unified vision for community character and a positive community image that create functional, aesthetically-appealing, and people-oriented places.

## Document Organization

The Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan is divided into seven chapters: (1) Introduction, (2) Growth Framework, (3) Land Use and Community Character, (4) Parks, Recreation, and Cultural resources, (5) Transportation, (6) Community Facilities and Services, and (7) Implementation. Each chapter is grounded in the need to promote and protect a unifying character for the Town of Garner.

Some chapters of the comprehensive plan incorporate other town plans or studies by reference. These documents, as amended, should have the same standing and authority provided under Chapter 160D of the North Carolina General Statutes and the town's Unified Development Ordinance as if they were physically included in the comprehensive plan document. Collectively, the comprehensive plan and the documents incorporated by reference ensure a comprehensive and coordinated plan for future growth,

conservation, character, and development topics in the Town of Garner.

More information about the comprehensive plan and its relationship to other town documents is presented in the Library of Town Plans and Ordinances section of Chapter 1.

## Planning Area Description

The planning area for the new Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan includes town limits plus the town's extra-territorial jurisdiction and urban services area. Each of the geographies is described below.

### Garner Town Limits

The town limits of Garner — its corporate limits — represent the official boundaries of the town as referenced in the original Town charter plus any alterations (annexations) made over time (the area shaded in red on the map). Residents living inside town limits are empowered to vote for local officials, and may pay additional taxes for town services.

### Garner Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction

The State of North Carolina grants cities and towns extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) for areas outside corporate limits that are expected to be inside corporate limits sometime in the future. It is intended to allow for smoother transitions from county to town services, and makes areas of the county subject immediately to the town's zoning and subdivision rules and requirements and floodway management regulations.

All cities and towns in North Carolina may exercise extraterritorial jurisdiction for a distance of one mile from corporate limits. With Wake County approval, the ETJ may be expanded up to two miles if the population is greater than 10,000; or up to three miles if the population is greater than 25,000. The population numbers used to determine eligibility are the most recent state-certified statistics at the time ETJ expansion is requested. The certified population of Garner is currently 32,393 using data published by the North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management. The certified population estimate for Garner is used for distribution of state funds and per the N.C. Office

of State Budget and Management should not be used for planning purposes. For planning purposes, the comprehensive plan assumes a base year population of 30,617 per Claritas (2020).

The Town of Garner generally maintains a three-mile ETJ that was approved by Wake County on March 16, 2017 (the area shaded in gold on the map). The three-mile buffer is reduced in some locations to recognize the agreed-upon jurisdictional boundaries with Raleigh, Fuquay-Varina, Wake County, and Johnston County.

Residents living inside the ETJ may not vote for town officials that enforce local zoning and subdivision rules and requirements and floodway management regulations. However, one or more positions on the town's planning commission and board of adjustment are reserved for an ETJ resident, which provides a platform for expressing official comments and voting on development applications considered in the Garner planning area.

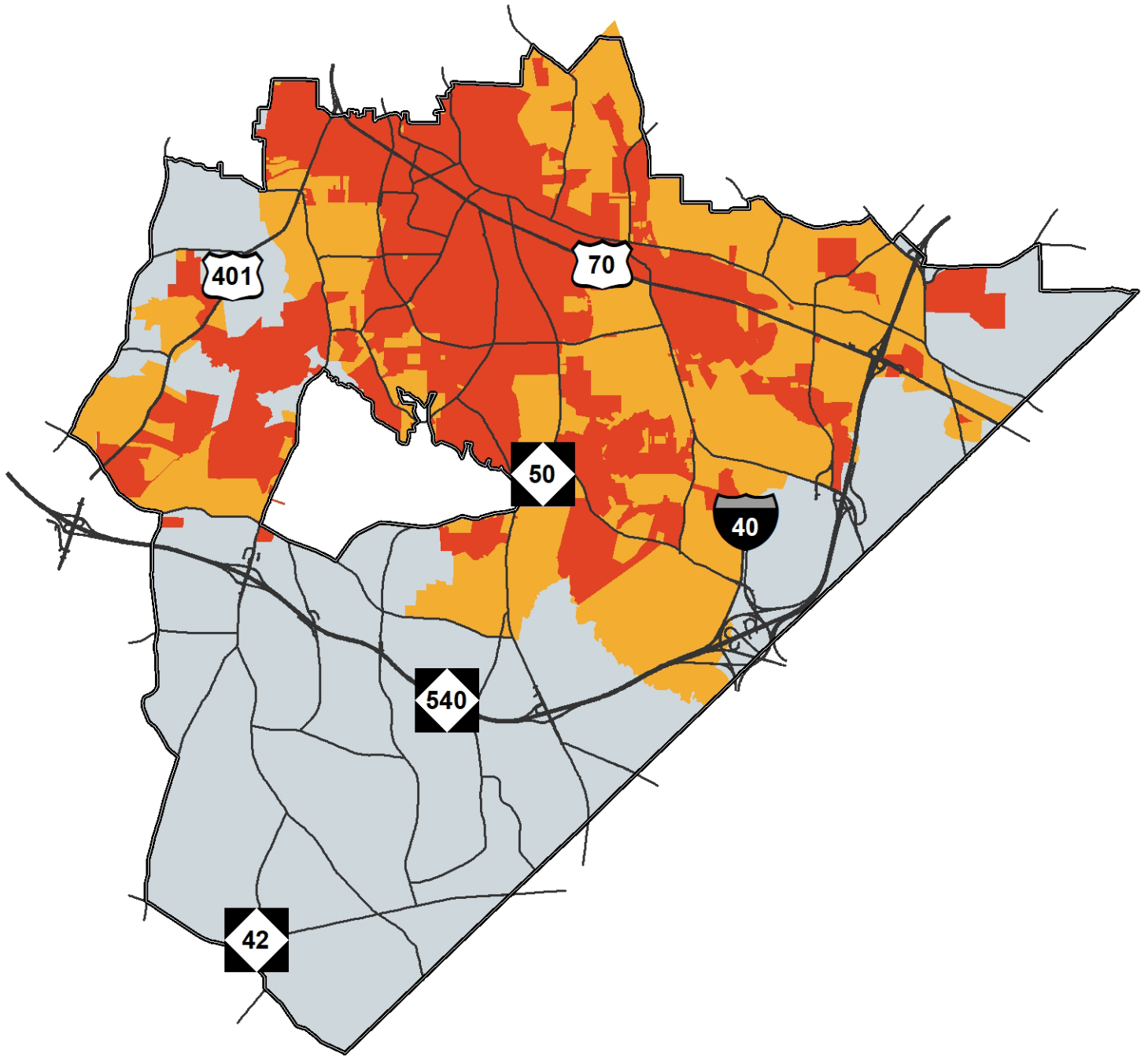
Given Garner's irregular town limits, its three-mile ETJ is not easily described by metes and bounds. Though it is depicted graphically in maps presented in this document, users wishing to determine specific applicability are urged to contact the town's planning department for the most current map or online map service.

### Garner Urban Services Area

An urban services area (USA) for Garner extends beyond the town's ETJ boundary (the area shaded in gray on the map). It identifies an area that Wake County officials believe could be served by town infrastructure in the future. Within the full USA, a smaller area is identified that could be served by town resources within the next five years (the "short-term USA"). The remaining area of the USA would be served by town resources sometime in the future, but likely beyond the five-year horizon (the "long-term USA").

### Garner Full Planning Area

The full planning area for Garner — town limits plus town ETJ plus town urban services area — is considered for the comprehensive plan, including its maps, policies, and recommendations for the future.



- Garner Town Limits (March 22, 2023)
- Extraterritorial Jurisdiction
- Urban Services Area

## Enabling Legislation for Local Comprehensive Plans in North Carolina

Chapter 160D of the North Carolina General Statutes requires local governments “reasonably maintain” a comprehensive plan for the jurisdiction to exercise its authority to adopt and enforce zoning regulations. The comprehensive plan should present goals, policies, and programs intended to guide existing and future physical, social, and economic considerations, which may be influenced, in part, by growth, development, or conservation measures enacted in the jurisdiction (N.C.G.S. 160D-501, Section A1).

The term “reasonably maintained” is not defined in the General Statutes; however, professional practice for comprehensive plans recommends plan updates every five to ten years. The frequency of plan updates may be influenced by the rate of growth or change in a community, or the influence of outside forces in and around the region where the jurisdiction is located. The previous version of the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan was adopted on June 12, 2018.

The General Statute does not require specific elements or chapters in the comprehensive plan. Nonetheless, topic areas to address in the plan are suggested in N.C.G.S. 160D-501(b): preferred growth and development patterns, supporting infrastructure needs, housing choices, recreation and open space opportunities, natural resource protection, historic-scenic-cultural resource preservation, and actions, items, or programs to implement the comprehensive plan.

Comprehensive plans in North Carolina are adopted as a legislative action by the local governing board after a recommendation is made from the local planning commission. Future zoning amendments considered by the local government must include a statement of consistency with the adopted comprehensive plan; however, the statement is advisory in nature and not subject to judicial review.

## What Influences Growth and Development in the Town of Garner?

The Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan is a document that influences how and when development takes place, and what it looks like upon completion. The comprehensive plan provides a primary source of guidance for the Town Council’s decisions in rezoning requests and by Town staff and Planning Commission in making recommendations regarding these decisions. Developers should reference the comprehensive plan for initial guidance when exploring the development potential of a property.

Development found in Garner — both patterns and intensities — are generally driven by five growth factors: (1) market demand; (2) local economies and growth outlooks; (3) property owners’ willingness to participate; (4) government regulations and policies; and (5) the availability and capacity of infrastructure. These factors have some degree of influence over each other and can change over time, which affect the location and type of development that is experienced in the community.

### Market Demand, Available Capital, and Developer Interests

The demand for different development types, patterns, and intensities is established by future buyers or renters attracted to the area — and their purchasing power — that fill new products or pay different price points. Developers and private parties decide where and when to pursue a project based upon several considerations, including their own interests, market demand, available financing, and the probability of success. Private land development is financed by banks and other institutions who establish the minimum lending criteria (and are oftentimes conservative or cautious by nature). These organizations must have reasonable confidence that a project will succeed within the community.

## The Local Economy and Growth Outlook

Future development is directly influenced by the strength and resilience of the local and regional economies where the private sector takes into consideration projected employment rates and population forecasts and the general demographics of an area before investing in new development projects.

## Willing Property Owners

Property owners in Garner decide whether land becomes available to develop or redevelop, or if land becomes available to acquire for permanent open space. New growth in the community is the result of property owners' tolerance for selling property, whether to developers or conservation groups, or even developing the land themselves.

## Government Regulation and Infrastructure

Development can be either promoted or restricted through government policies to keep growth in alignment with the community's overarching vision. This can be achieved through zoning and land development controls, environmental policies, programs and protections, and through the administration of regulations by local land use boards or professional staff. Regulations and zoning restrictions control permitted uses on a parcel, allowances for height and density, and design standards or considerations. While the government has a crucial role in development, it is limited to working within the regulations available and cannot restrict or promote a project beyond the limitations provided through ordinances, regulations, and laws

## Available Infrastructure Capacity

The delivery and location of available infrastructure capacity is an important component for development projects — whereby if the capacity is not yet available, some projects must wait until new capacity is added from either government or third-party service providers. There are opportunities, in some cases, for developers to fund certain on- or off-site infrastructure investments themselves to unlock available capacity and begin their projects on an accelerated timeline. Joint-funding agreements can be

utilized by governments and third-party service providers to reimburse developers for expediting infrastructure projects.

Some infrastructure in the town's planning area is provided by outside agencies or organizations (e.g., Raleigh Water, Wake County Schools, or the NCDOT). The service providers, to varying degrees, may be more or less reactive (versus proactive) in providing new or expanded infrastructure to meet the needs of town residents. The town is limited in its abilities to prioritize or fund infrastructure improvements that are the responsibility of other service providers, which has caused frustration in the past for some town residents.

## Library of Town Plans and Ordinances

Broad policies and recommendations in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan are implemented in more-detailed plans, studies, ordinances, or budgets that follow Plan adoption. Each document refines the big ideas and concepts presented in the comprehensive plan using specific rules, requirements, or initiatives needed to create greater predictability and intended outcomes in the community.

A description of plans and studies with a relationship to the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan is provided below. It is assumed the rules, requirements, and standards presented in these documents implement the maps and broad policies and recommendations presented in the comprehensive plan. All of the documents described below are assumed to holistically guide future growth, conservation, character, or development decisions in the town's planning area.

The *Town of Garner Strategic Plan* was adopted in October 2016, and serves as a concise summary of the town's priorities for resource allocation, policy direction, and the general work of town staff and elected officials. It includes a vision statement, four goal statements, and numerous objectives and initiatives for each goal statement. The plan is reviewed and updated, when needed, to align with new town expectations or initiatives.



The Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan implements ideas for all four goal statements in the Strategic Plan. Amendments considered for the comprehensive plan in the future should be evaluated against the Strategic Plan, and inconsistencies explored and/or described for reference in a decision-making process.

The ***Town of Garner Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Comprehensive Master Plan*** was adopted in January 2020, and provides a framework for future park and recreation planning to meet the needs of a growing community. It includes service delivery standards, a potential park acquisition plan, greenway concept plan, facilities needs inventory, and specific recommendations to improve and expand services for town residents.

An update to the master plan should consider the role of parks, recreation, and greenways for reinforcing the preferred community character and future land uses summarized in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan, and the level of information needed in a document to help secure new parks, plazas, recreation facilities, and greenways as part of the development review and entitlement process.

The ***2018 Garner Forward Transportation Plan*** and ***2010 Garner Transportation Plan*** include maps and recommendations for building a sustainable, multi-modal transportation system that serves future growth while preserving the environmental, cultural, and social character of the community. An update to the transportation plans should consider new transportation facilities, routes, and other recommendations to serve the walkable neighborhoods and development activity centers proposed on the Character Typology Map.

The ***Town of Garner Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan*** will be completed in 2023. It identifies infrastructure improvements, targeted investment areas, education programs, and policies that make the town safe and inviting for pedestrians. Maps in the plan expand on the existing network of sidewalks and greenways in the community with an emphasis on connecting new or existing parks, schools, employment centers, and neighborhoods. Recommendations in the pedestrian plan should

supersede recommendations in the two previous transportation plans, if applicable. Updates to the town's transportation plans should incorporate recommendations from the new pedestrian plan to streamline implementation.

The Town of Garner prepares, adopts, and administers an ***annual budget*** in accordance with the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act in North Carolina. The budget book includes an annual operating budget and a five-year capital improvements plan.

Updates to the annual operating budget for the town should consider priorities expressed in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan, and target areas for infrastructure improvements that may prime future development and redevelopment.

The ***Town of Garner Unified Development Ordinance*** (UDO) combines traditional zoning and subdivisions rules and requirements, design guidelines, sign regulations, and floodplain protection measures into a single document. It generally implements broad policies and recommendations in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan in great detail, and transitions from "suggestions" in the comprehensive plan to "laws" in the UDO.

Updates to the UDO should consider the preferred community character and future land uses summarized in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan, which may include new zoning districts or design requirements to implement intended outcomes expressed in the comprehensive plan.

The Town of Garner ***Engineering Design Manual and Standard Details*** supplement the UDO and provide specific information to ensure new development is designed and constructed in accordance with minimum town standards.

An update to the manual and its standard details should consider the preferred community character and future land uses summarized in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan, and the level of information needed in the document to help ensure streets are classified and designed to reinforce an intended character, sense of place, or preferred mode of travel.



**Small area plans** may be prepared by town staff, or their hired consultants, in the future, which will provide more detailed information for a specific geography within the town’s planning area. Upon adoption of a small area plan, the Character Typology Map in the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan should be amended, as needed, to be consistent, and the small area plan should be included in an appendix for the comprehensive plan to strengthen its findings and recommendations.

## A User’s Guide for the Document

The Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan captures a vision for growth, conservation, and community character in the planning area, which is focused on an end game and implemented over a long period of time. It includes policies, maps, and recommendations for some of the town’s most important decision-making processes, and establishes the vision and starting position for other town policies, ordinances, master plans, and documents to follow.

People are encouraged to read the entire document to fully understand the town’s philosophy and position on future growth, conservation, and community character in the planning area. It includes a call-to-action for stakeholders in the town’s future summarized below as four key considerations — a user’s guide — to remember when reading the document.

### Treat the Plan as a Playbook

The Town of Garner should be able to take advantage of opportunities when they present themselves, so the comprehensive plan uses a playbook approach to guiding future growth and development in the community. Some parts of the document — things like the vision statement, guiding principles, general framework map, and development change and intensity map — should remain constant and keep Garner on a focused path for success. Other parts of the document — things like general policies and recommendations, the character typology map, focus area study recommendations, or other supporting maps — may need to evolve over time as conditions

change that were not contemplated at the time the document was adopted.

All changes considered under the playbook mindset for the document should be evaluated against the vision statement, guiding principles, general growth framework map, and development change and intensity map to determine if they are in the best long-term interests of the town and its residents, businesses, and property owners.

### Be a Champion of the Plan

The comprehensive plan is the culmination of an extensive and transparent community planning process that reflects many differing points of view. Garner residents, business owners, visitors, and supporters participated in the process and contributed to the creation of the comprehensive plan. Engagement opportunities for the plan update included twenty-nine stakeholder interviews, two community workshops, three community-organized meetings about the town’s future, five meetings with a project steering committee, eight total meetings with three different strategic advisory committees, and a project website. While there is something for everyone contained within these pages, not everyone is going to love everything in the plan. Consider the big picture when thinking about the plan, and whether the documents-as-a-whole takes Garner in the right direction. We hope that everyone can find something to get excited about and become a champion for bringing the community’s vision to life!

### Understand the Element of Time

At first glance, the comprehensive plan may seem ambitious or daunting. It is important to understand not everything in the document will happen all at once, and some things may not happen at all. Included are some big ideas that, if implemented, would bring about transformative change to Garner, likely taking years to come to fruition. Other ideas are smaller and can happen right away.

## Help Make It Happen

Although we all wish our tax dollars bought us unlimited town services, the reality is that there is more work to do than staff and resources to do it. All of these great ideas take time, money, and capacity. For the comprehensive plan to become a reality, a large number of people must decide they care enough to stay involved and help implement the plan. Serve on a town board, join a citizen task

force, or turn out to support new projects that help move Garner forward. We will need everyone to actively engage and support the comprehensive plan over the years to come. Communities that work together, and work smartly, often succeed in achieving their goals.





# Brief Town History

Land in and around Garner was first settled in 1751 by cotton and tobacco farmers. It remained a rural, agrarian community for nearly one hundred years after settlers first arrived. Rail service came to the town in 1847 — connecting Goldsboro to Charlotte via the North Carolina Railroad — and forever changed the landscape and the town's trajectory. Notable events following the train's arrival in 1847 included: a wood-and-water stop for the railroad established in the community (1870s), a post office opened (1878), a formal train station built (1878), town incorporation as Garner's Station (1883), and repeal of the town charter for Garner's Station (1891). The community was incorporated again in 1905 as the Town of Garner. It quickly became an important place for mail delivery, passenger service to the capital city of Raleigh, and a shipping point for cotton.

The town also witnessed skirmishes in the closing days of the Civil War (1865). Bullet holes from these events are still preserved at New Bethel Baptist Church and the Samuel Depree house. Today, the Downtown Garner Historic District, Edenwood (Smith-Williams House), and Meadowbrook Country Club are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Garner High School, the Banks House, the Train Depot, and several downtown buildings are recognized as Historic Landmarks by the Wake County Historic Preservation Commission.

The first businesses in Garner were started by Henry Fort and Thomas Bingham circa 1874. Fort was an African American farmer, cabinetmaker, and carpenter. Other African American families joined Fort in the years following. Local historians have commented about how well white and black citizens in Garner worked together, and lived in a community where property ownership and daily interactions between the races were mixed and well-intentioned.

The Central Highway, now known as Garner Road, ran from the mountains to the sea and traversed Downtown Garner. It was the state's first paved road in 1916, and like the railroad, reinforced the town's visibility and position as an important destination in the state. Electricity, extended to Garner in 1921, and the Central Highway created a favorable environment for further development,

including subdivisions. Garner High School was constructed along Garner Road in 1922. Garner Consolidated School was built in 1935 at the present site of East Garner Middle School. Large estate homes along Garner Road built in years past signified a time when the area was highly-desirable by very affluent citizens. They used these lots to build ornate homes with manicured lawns (trophy homes in highly visible locations) so everyone could see their wealth. Older neighborhoods adjacent to, or nearby, Garner Road and the historic downtown reinforced a small-town atmosphere.

Garner Road continues to carry traffic everyday for motorists traveling between Raleigh and Garner. Continued growth in the region and its demands for faster, more-direct vehicle connections between the mountains and the sea led to the construction of a bypass around downtown in the 1950s. This is the present-day US 70 that extends through Garner. The bypass attracted businesses away from downtown with new shopping centers (Forest Hills and Garner Plaza) and suburban neighborhoods. Today, large, suburban-scale businesses have become a dominating feature for long stretches of the highway as it runs through Garner.

Culture, community pride, and volunteerism also run deep in Garner. Deliberate efforts by community members in the past, in close partnership with town leaders, have established places like the Garner Performing Arts Center, Garner Veterans Memorial, Garner Seniors Center, and Nature Center at White Deer Park. These unique destinations and the programming they provide were critical to forming the town's unique character and sense of community. Special interest groups and organizations in the community — civic clubs, churches, school PTAs, and other advocacy groups — also provide energy to these efforts, and a sense-of-belonging to community members that strengthen bonds between the town and its residents. Today, the pride associated with being from Garner is strong and contagious.

The town of Garner was named an All-America City in 2013 by the National Civic League, which recognizes exemplary citizen engagement, cross-sector collaboration, and inclusiveness

in the United States. Award winners showcase grassroots solutions for meeting challenges and critical needs in the community. Garner was the first municipality in the Triangle Region to win the award since Durham in 1983. The last Wake County municipality to win the award was Raleigh in 1975.

In future years, Garner will continue to be a booming community. But, it must remember its hometown charm and atmosphere when making decisions for the well-being of the community. Recommendations throughout the Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan consider its past, including the location, intensity, and compatibility of historic growth and development. The intention of this plan is to not overrun the historic downtown and the neighborhoods around it with incompatible development. More intense development and

taller buildings are targeted at the fringes of the planning area, in part, to preserve the small-town feel of the town's older development core described in this history section of the document.

**Sources:**

*This section of the document was written using information published on the Town of Garner website, Brief Town History page; the Garner Area Historical Society web page, Garner's History page; GarnerBiz.com website, All-America award announcement; and Wikipedia. More specific works cited in these three sources are provided on the individual websites.*





# Brief Town Highlights

yum.

Favorite Local Restaurants

Angie's

Krafty's  
Burgers  
and Brews

Simple Twist

BUFFALO  
BROTHERS

La Roma  
Pizza

sip.

Moon  
Runners

Carolina  
Billiards

Locked n  
Loaded

fun.

Local Things to Know

Lake Benson  
was owned by  
King George  
in 1759...

Country singer  
Scotty McCreery  
was born in  
Garner!

Garner got its  
name from a church  
of England Paris  
around 1756!

Basketball  
player  
Jonathan Wall  
Jr. went to  
Garner Magnet  
Highschool

buy.

THE SHOPS AT  
GARNER PLAZA

Garner  
Towne  
Square

## Favorite Local Bars

Pet friendly:

RALEIGH  
BREWING CO.

Aviator  
Brewing

Mason Jar

## Favorite Local Attractions

see.

Garner  
Performing  
Arts Center

Railroad  
Museum

ICE PLEX

Garner  
Depot

Lake Benson

## Local Shopping & Retail

White Oak  
Shopping  
Center

Forest Hill  
Shopping  
Center

## Things to Know

etc.

Garner is a fast-growing community in Wake County, consistently ranked as one of the best places to live in North Carolina

The Town was named an All-America City in 2013 because of innovative citizen-led projects that improve the quality of life

And you can find this all just a few minutes from Downtown Raleigh!

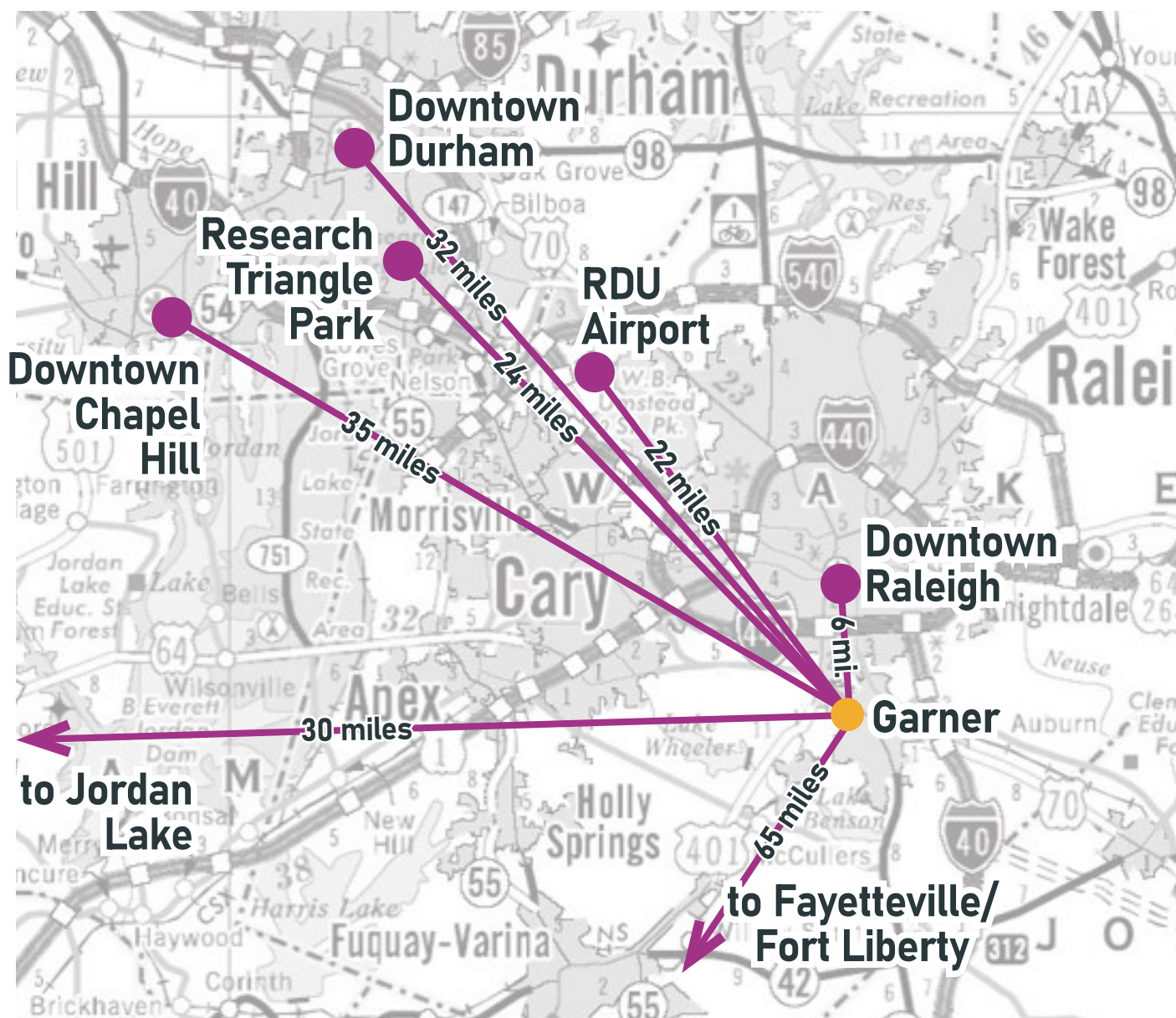


# Regional Context

The Town of Garner is a fast-growing community in desirable Wake County, centrally located in a region with over one million people and hundreds of successful businesses. Research Triangle Park, three top-tier and nationally-ranked universities, and Fort Liberty (fka Fort Bragg), the largest military base in the United States, are close by and connected to Garner via a network of efficient interstates and highways. Jordan Lake, Umstead Park, Eno State Park, and an abundance of open space in communities connected by miles of greenways provide residents numerous opportunities to live life outdoors.

Decades removed from a small settlement along the railroad, Garner is a thriving suburban community that is setting its sights on new opportunities for urban activity centers, premium bus rapid transit, and major employment centers. Its population of 30,617 is anticipated to double in the next twenty or thirty years.

Garner will continue to benefit from the positive energy and ideas flowing from Downtown Raleigh while providing its residents and visitors something a little different: small town charm, a diverse community, arts and culture, and homes and neighborhoods ideal for makers, entrepreneurs, young professionals, families, and retirees.



# Town Demographic Profile

Garner has experienced rapid population growth over the past two decades. The population in the town limits grew by 30.7% from 2000 to 2010 and by another 21.6% from 2010 to 2022. The Urban Services Area experienced similar rates of population growth. Population is projected to continue to grow, though at a more modest rate, approximately 5% from 2022 to 2027.

New residents are attracted to the area because of its small-town charm, affordability, and access to education, technology, and health care. The average household size in Town is smaller compared to Wake County and larger compared to the State of North Carolina (2.51 in the town vs. 2.57 in Wake County and 2.46 in North Carolina). Median household income in the Town of Garner (\$70,007) is significantly lower than Wake County (\$891,299), but higher than North Carolina (\$61,972).

The distribution of residents living in Garner is comprised largely of adults age 20 to 60 (53.6%) and their children age 0 to 19 (23.4%). Seniors over 60 (22.9%) represent the rest of the community. These three age groups will influence how Garner prioritizes its priorities and future investments, especially in terms of parks, transportation, housing, and senior services.

Underrepresented groups in Garner (in terms of age, race, income, household size, marital status, etc.) will be attracted to a variety of housing and neighborhood options, shopping and dining opportunities, entertainment and recreation facilities.

Demographic data collected for the Town of Garner, with selected data for the Urban Services Area, is presented on the following pages. All data is reported for the most current year available.

**\$70,007**

Median Household  
Income in Town of Garner

**\$61,972**

Median Household  
Income in North Carolina

**\$91,299**

Median Household  
Income in Wake County

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year  
Estimates, 2016-2021, Table DP03

## Median Home Value

**\$242,200**

Unit with a  
Mortgage

**\$222,400**

Unit without a  
Mortgage

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year  
Estimates, 2016-2021, Table B25097

**3.07** Average  
Family  
Size

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year  
Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S1101



# Town Demographic Profile

	Garner Town Limits	Urban Services Area	ETJ
2000 Census	20,119	40,735	5,258
2010 Census	25,745	55,362	6,872
2022 Estimate	30,617	67,186	8,355
2027 Projection	32,058	70,733	8,775
2000 to 2010	30.7%	35.9%	28.0%
2010 to 2020	21.6%	21.4%	18.9%
2022 to 2027	5.0%	5.3%	4.7%

Percent Change

Source: Claritas, 2022

Absolute Growth, 2010 to 2020 (Town Limits) **5,626**  
**30.7%** Percent Change

Absolute Growth, 2010 to 2022 (Town Limits) **4,872**  
**21.6%** Percent Change

## Insight:

With a healthy mix of age groups with fairly even splits between population brackets, the community has become a prime location for Generation X and Older Millennials seeking proximity to the region while living in a smaller community.

## Population Growth 2000-2027

**2.51**

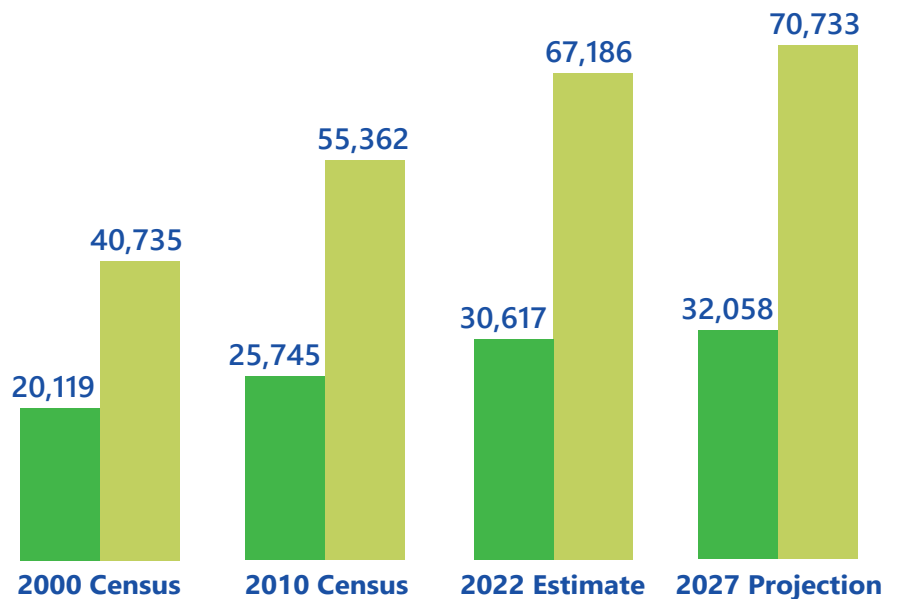
Average Household Size (Garner)

**2.57**

Average Household Size (Wake County)

**2.46**

Average Household Size (North Carolina)

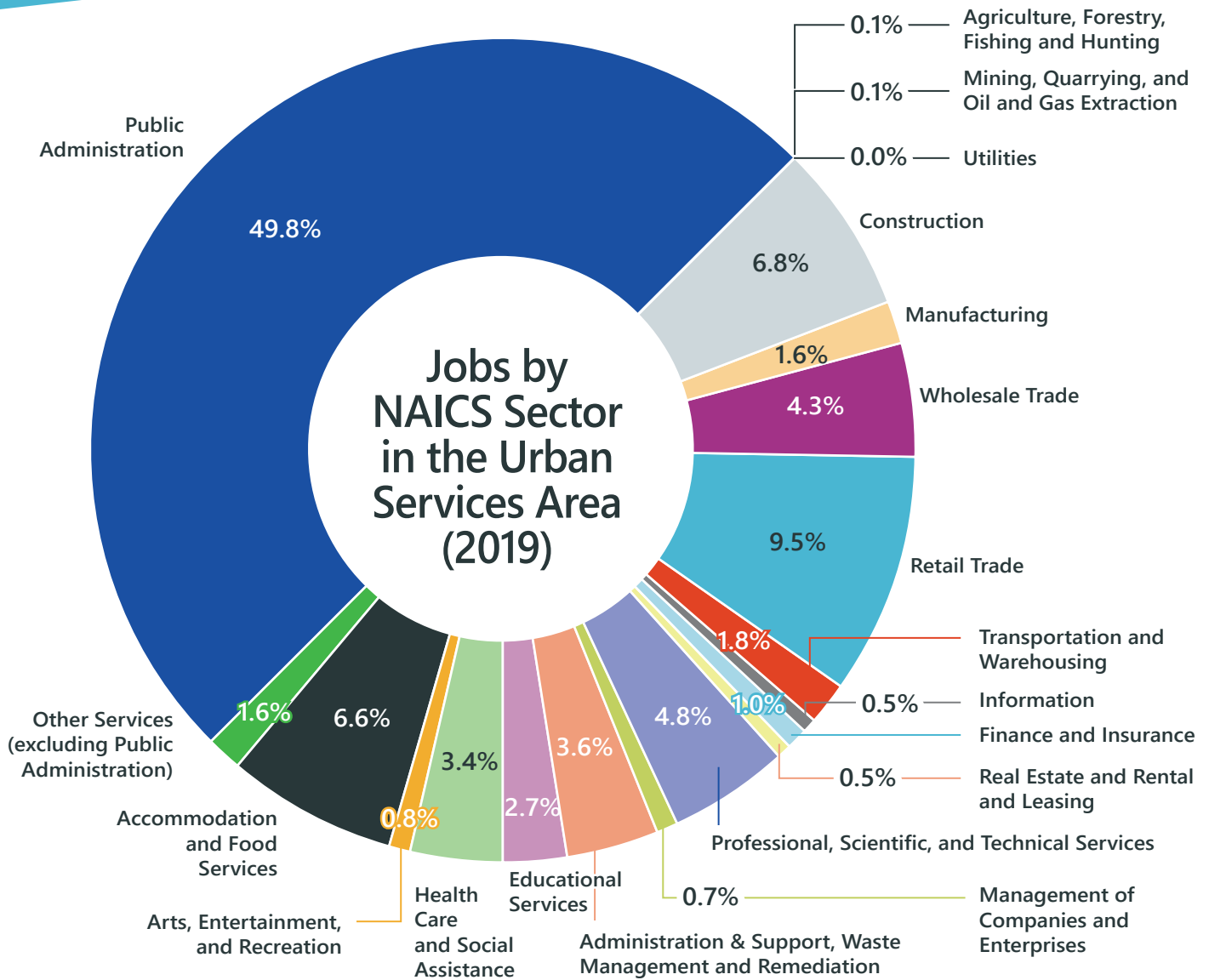


Garner Town Limits  
 Urban Services Area

Source: Claritas, 2022

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S1101

**44,602** Total Jobs

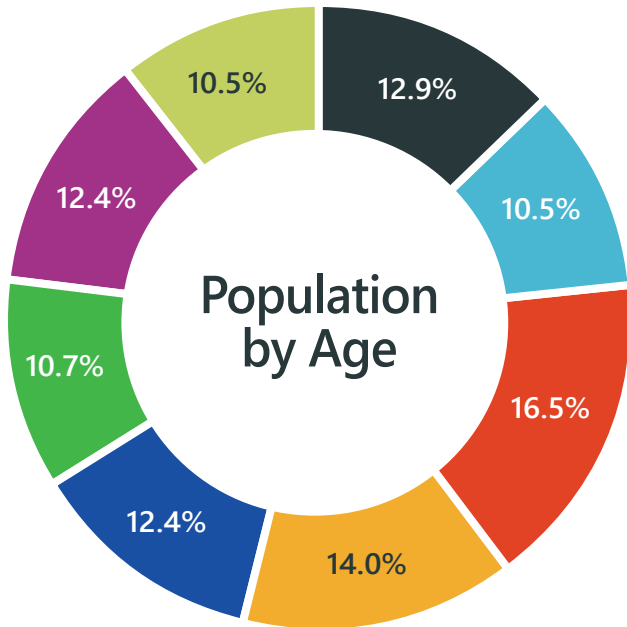


**Insight:**

There are a total of 44,602 jobs in the Garner Urban Services Area. Residents work in a variety of disciplines, but the majority are employed in Public Administration (49.8%), Retail (9.5%), Construction (6.8%), and Accommodation and Food Services (6.6%).



# Town Demographic Profile



- Under 10 years
- 40-49 years
- 10 to 19 years
- 50-59 years
- 20-29 years
- 60-69 years
- 30-39 years
- 70 and older

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S0101

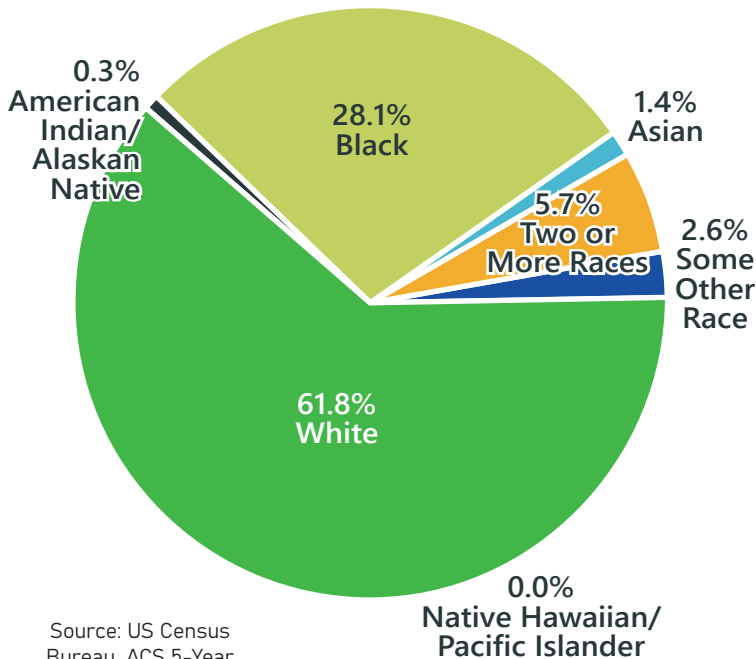
**36.8** Median Age in Garner

**37.4** Median Age in Wake County

**39.4** Median Age in North Carolina

Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S0101

## Population by Race

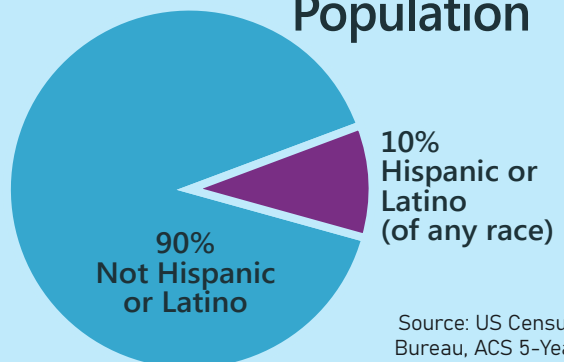


Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table DP05

### Insight:

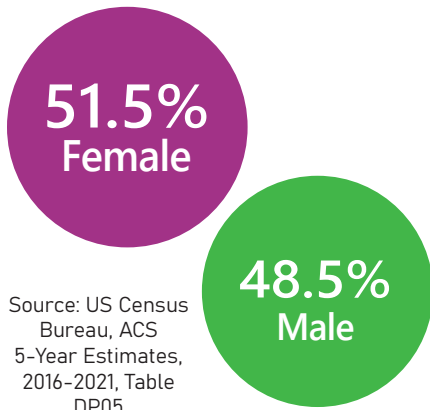
The Town of Garner is generally younger and more diverse than other communities in the Triangle region, and this diversity should be celebrated in the comprehensive plan.

## Hispanic or Latino Population



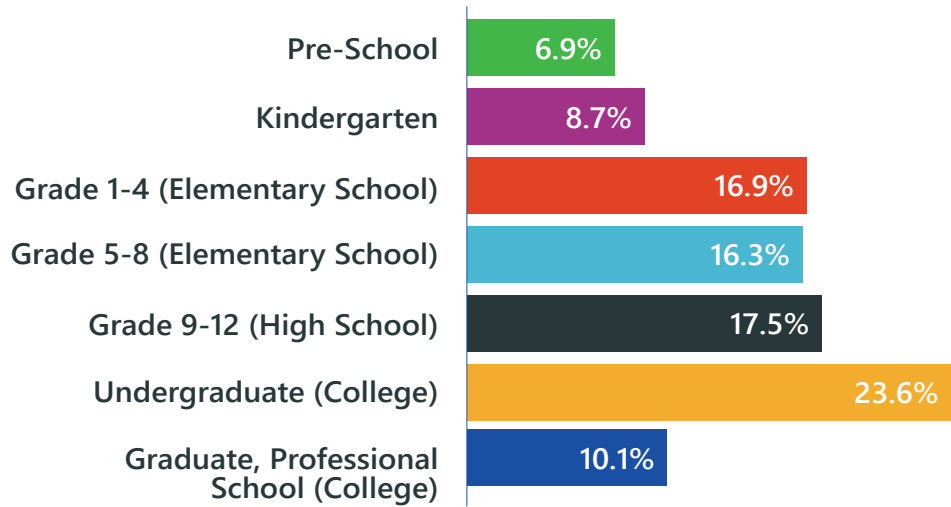
Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table DP05

## Population Gender Breakdown



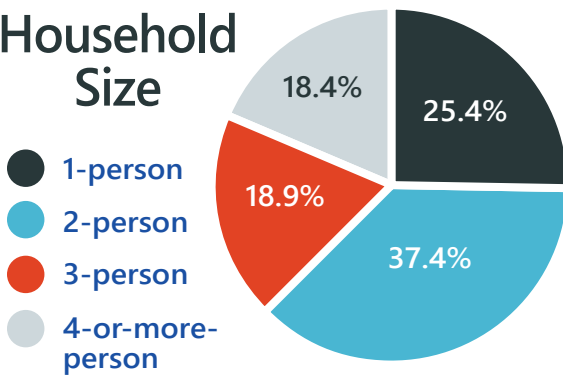
Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table DP05

## School Enrollment



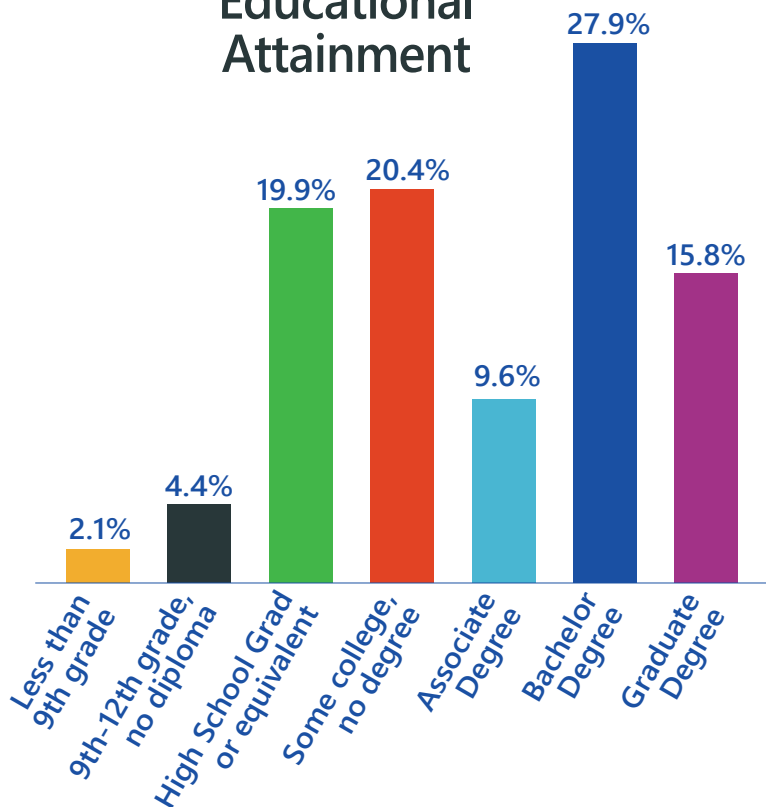
Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S1401

## Household Size



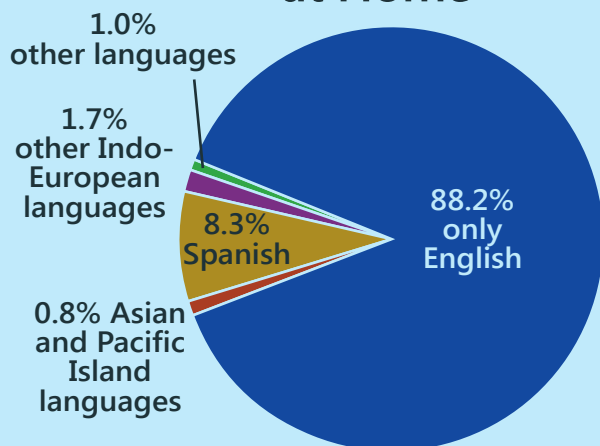
Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S2501

## Educational Attainment



Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S1501

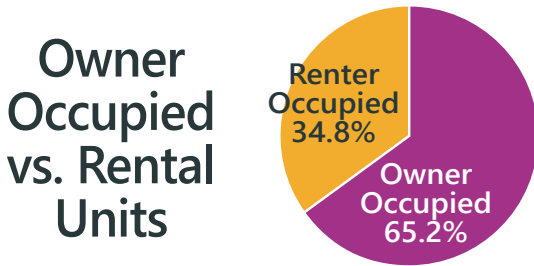
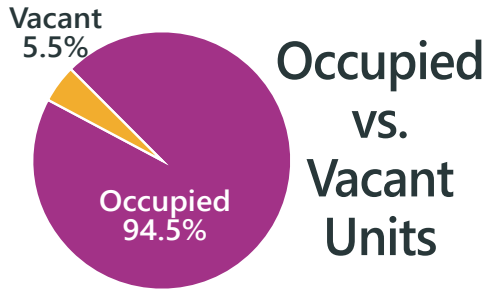
## Language Spoken at Home



Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S1601

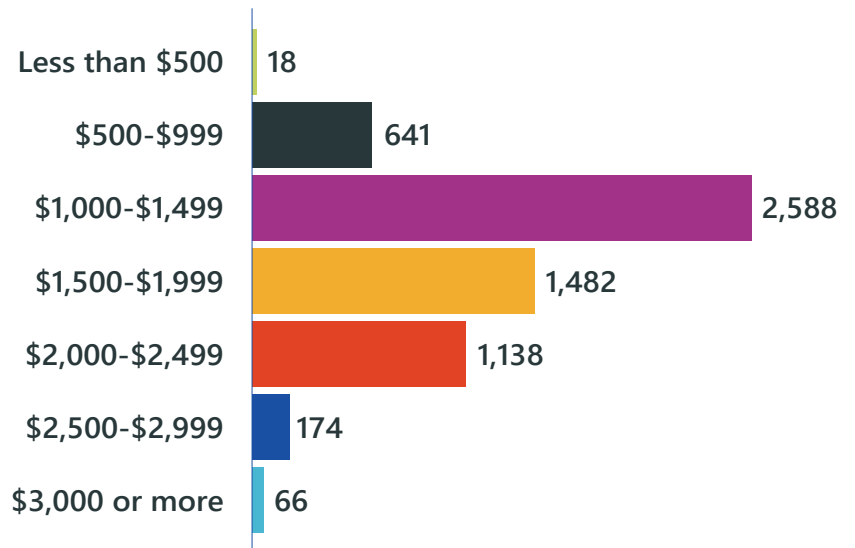


# Town Demographic Profile

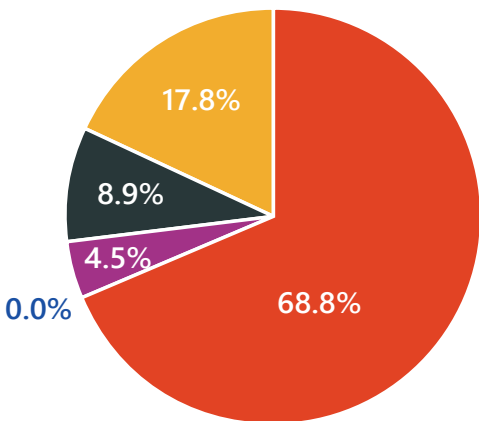


Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table B25002 & DP04

## Typical Monthly Ownership Costs (with Mortgage)



Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table DP04



## Housing Types

- Single-family Detached
- Single-family Attached
- Small Apartment Building (2-9 units)
- Small Apartment Complex (10 or more units)
- Mobile Homes

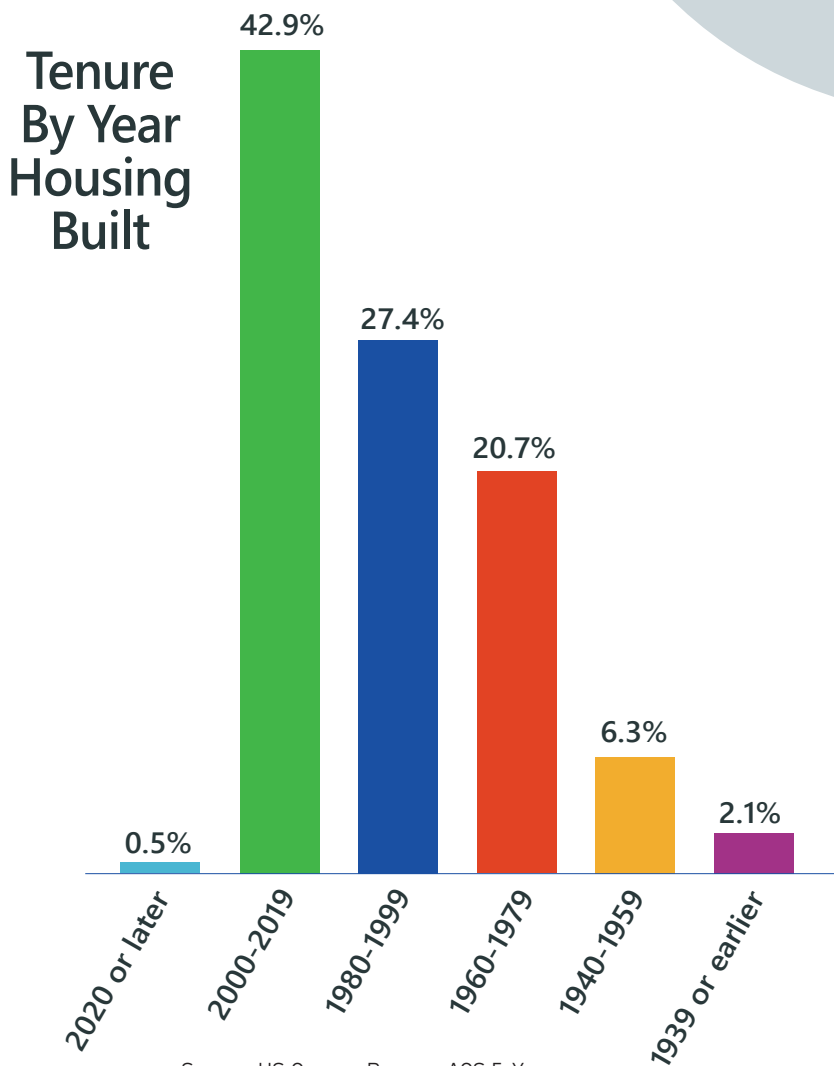
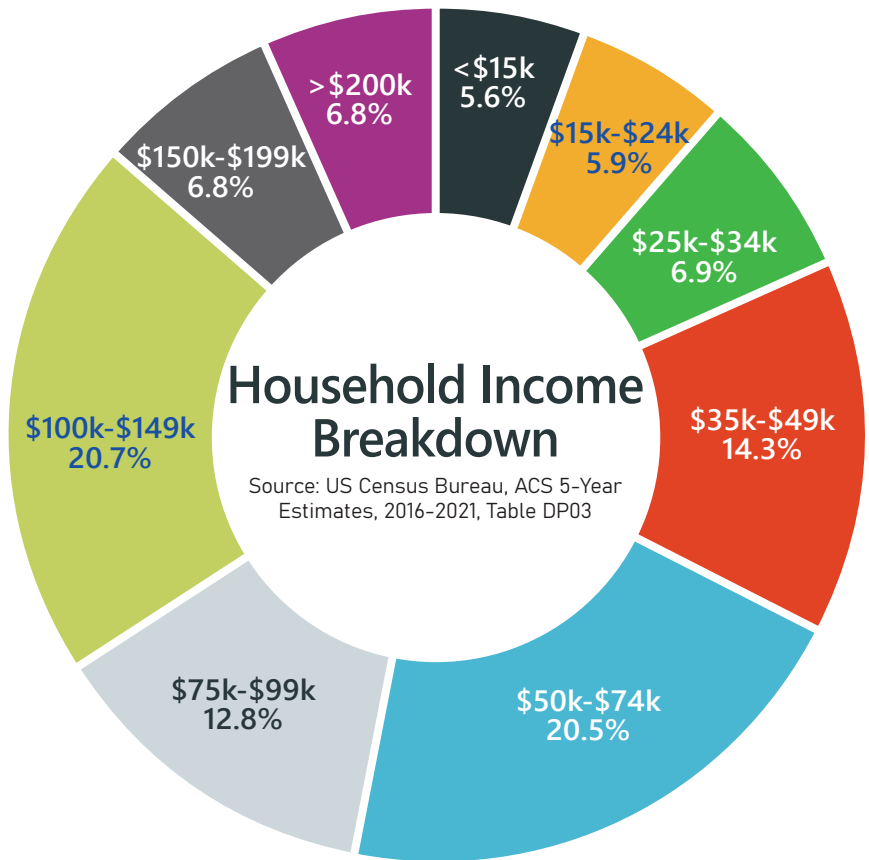
Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S2504



Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table DP04

### Insight:

The overwhelming number of homes (94.5%) in Garner are occupied (not vacant), and the majority of those are owner-occupied (65.2%), which means the homeowners are paying a mortgage with the intent to eventually own the home they are living in. Single family detached homes continue to be the dominant choice in the community (68.8%).



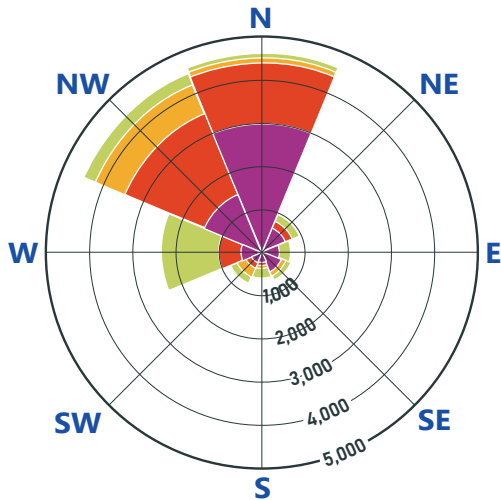
#### Insight:

Almost half of the homes in Garner were built between 1960 and 1999, with another 42.9% built between 2000 and 2019, representing a substantial increase in the number of homes built over the past two decades. A significant number of new homes in Garner are multifamily (apartment or condo), ranking second only to Morrisville in the Triangle Region.

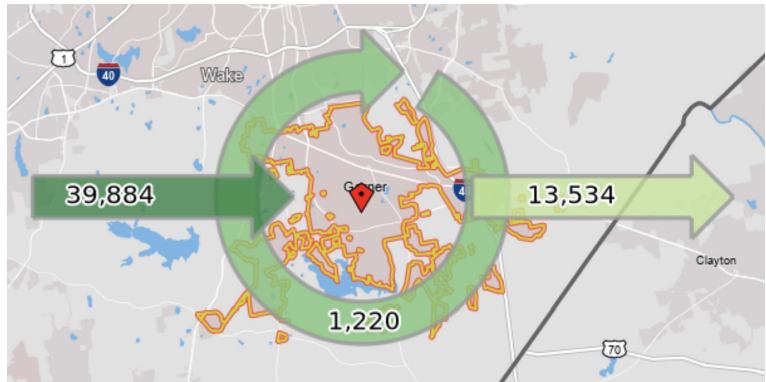
Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S2504

# Town Demographic Profile

## Where Residents of Garner Go To Work



- 36.2% - Less than 10 miles
- 40.6% - 10 to 24 miles
- 8.6% - 25 to 50 miles
- 14.6% - Greater than 50 miles



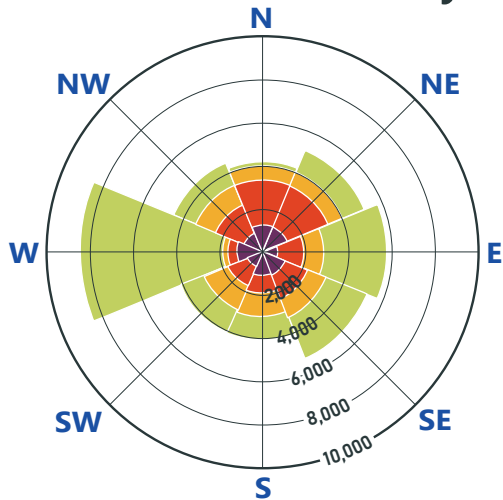
Source: US Census On The Map Product; Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2019, All Workers

### Insight:

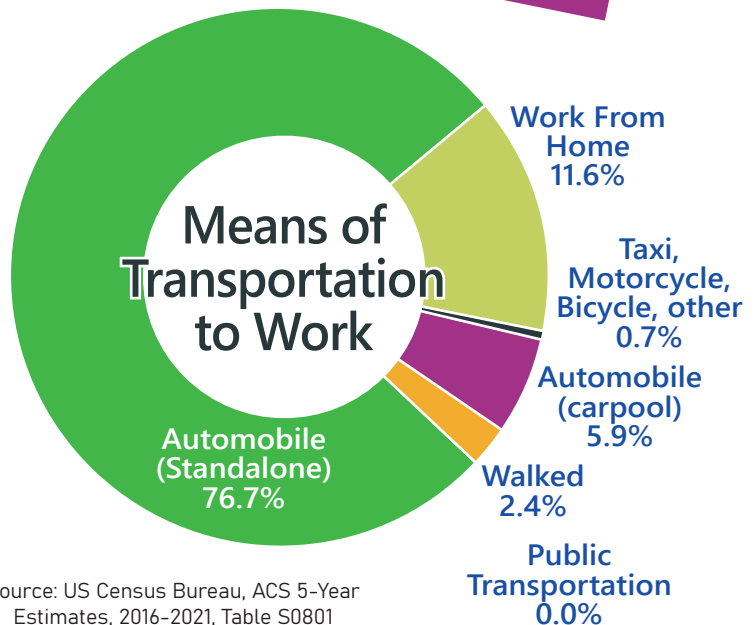
People who live in Garner are predominantly traveling north to Raleigh, Cary, or points beyond for work. Those leaving Garner for work are traveling a significantly shorter distance than people who work in Garner.

People who work in Garner are traveling from the west, and nearly three times as many people are traveling to Garner for work than are leaving Garner for work.

## Where Workers in Garner Come From Daily



- 19.6% - Less than 10 miles
- 24.7% - 10 to 24 miles
- 14.2% - 25 to 50 miles
- 41.5% - Greater than 50 miles



Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S0801

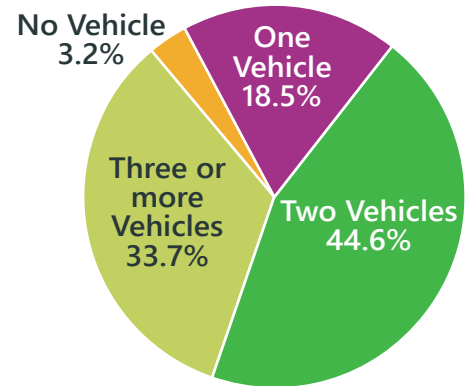
Source: US Census On The Map Product; Job Counts by Distance/Direction in 2019, All Workers



	Where Workers Are Employed		Where Workers Live	
	Count	Share	Count	Share
All Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.)	30,573	100.0%	44,602	100.0%
Raleigh city, NC	11,789	38.6%	5,536	12.4%
Cary town, NC	2,661	8.7%	1,341	3.0%
Garner town, NC	2,369	7.7%	1,219	2.7%
Durham city, NC	1,846	6.0%	932	2.1%
Charlotte city, NC	1,091	3.6%	763	1.7%
Morrisville town, NC	600	2.0%	758	1.7%
Fuquay-Varina town, NC	538	1.8%	740	1.7%
Apex town, NC	478	1.6%	507	1.1%
Clayton town, NC	441	1.4%	488	1.1%
Greensboro city, NC	440	1.4%	410	0.9%
All Other Locations	8,320	27.2%	31,908	71.5%

Source: US Census On The Map Product; Job Counts by Places (Cities, CDPs, etc); Where Workers are Employed - All Jobs, and Where Workers Live - All Jobs

## Vehicles Available

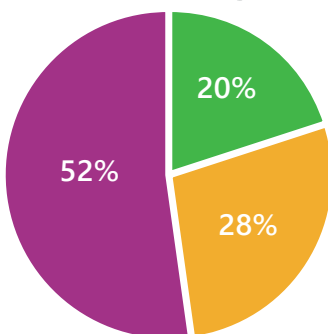


Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2016-2021, Table S0801

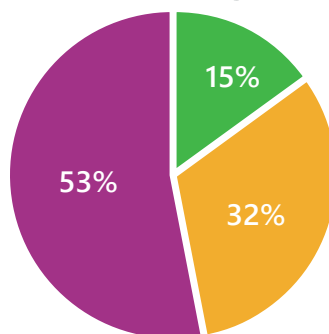
### Insight:

Nearly all households in Garner have access to one or more vehicles for travel (96.8%), which creates significant demand for safeguarding, and likely improving through expansion, streets and highways in the planning area to keep vehicle movements safe and efficient. However, the percentage of people that reported working from home (11.6%) nearly doubled from 6.3% in the 2016 survey, and the percentage of those who walked also nearly doubled from 1.3% in 2016 to 2.4%. This figure, though small, is congruent with a national trend toward multi-modal transportation alternatives and the need to improve bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to provide more automobile alternatives.

### Residents' Earnings



### Workers' Earnings



- \$1,250 per month or less
- \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month
- More than \$3,333 per month

Source: US Census on the Map, 2019

# Twenty Year Market Potential

## Residential Outlook

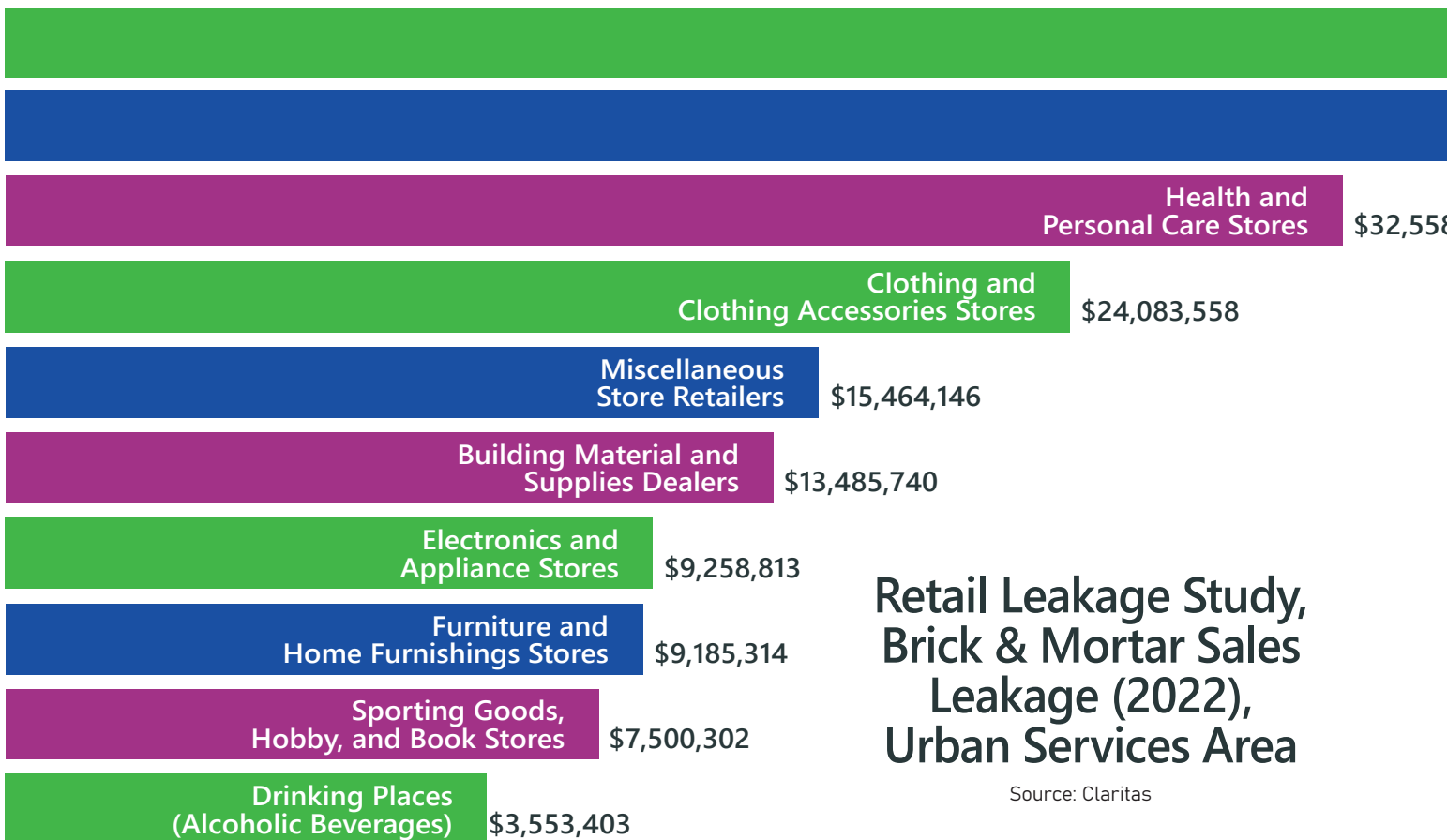
Garner has traditionally been a community centered around single-family neighborhoods with a smaller proportion of multifamily units. Local market forces and developer preferences have changed the complexion of the housing market in the community with 20.7% of the new residential units permitted in the community over the past decade being single family attached housing (townhouses). Forward trends show the shift to multifamily housing being strong with 45% of the pipeline units of housing being in multifamily complexes.

This trend is not unusual for communities across the United States housing trends for both active empty nesters and young professionals seeking a greater variety of housing options. Forecasts show that by 2040 Garner will absorb another estimated 16,000 residential units. Currently, the community has over 12,000 of those units already at some point in the development pipeline.

## Retail Outlook

The influx of new residents to Garner (and their above average household incomes) provides the community with a great opportunity to attract additional retail uses throughout the community including a combination of basic retail like grocers and pharmacies alongside specialty retail like sporting goods, books, gifts, home furnishings, and clothing.

Current retail demand of \$1.09 billion in the Urban Services Area exceeds supply by \$45 million. Sales per capita in the market equals nearly \$16,000 per resident. Population increase in the market will increase demand by another \$693 million by 2040 resulting in the potential retail demand increase of 1.38 million square feet of retail space. It is important to note that this assessment is for bricks and mortar retail and already accounts for online sales.



**Retail Leakage Study,  
Brick & Mortar Sales  
Leakage (2022),  
Urban Services Area**

Source: Claritas

## General Office Outlook

Garner has successfully recruited additional employment uses and continues its trend of having a larger share of in-commuting compared with out-commuting.

Employment forecasts from CAMPO indicate that office demand will continue to increase by 1.9 million square feet of space by 2040 with over 6,800 new office jobs coming to the market.

## General Industrial Outlook

The industrial, warehouse, and service spaces in Garner have experienced continued growth and the pipeline for development is strong with 3.4 million square feet of industrial, flex, and service space already under consideration. Using CAMPO employment numbers, these types of land uses will increase in demand by 10 million square feet of space occupied by over 25,000 new employees in the market.

Food and Beverage Stores	\$56,835,526
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Gasoline Stations	\$43,684,818
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,558,141