

Garden City Typifies Suburban Growth

Garden City is an excellent example of the suburban growth which typified America's expansion following World War II. The community's population has increased nearly ten fold. The geographical

shape of the land changed from open spaces to subdivisions of single-family homes interrupted by neighborhood shopping centers.

One of the best reasons for settling in Garden City was pointed out in a survey last year by professional planning consultants who were retained to draft a community renewal program which outlines needed developments.

"Locationally, and from a standpoint of development, Garden City had a potentially large housing market area to satisfy and early development was relatively successful, based on the then contemporary desire to locate in a semi-rural environment," these planners said.

"The character of development included rather large lots ranging up to an acre and a half in size, on which residents supplemented their income by growing food products for the family."

During the 1920's, Garden City was one of the many suburbs which attracted many workers who

traveled back and fourth to the auto plants in Detroit.

Important to the city's development in that period were the completion of major roads, which connected Garden City and Detroit. In that decade following World War I, several stretches of Middlebelt Road were paved along with portions of Ford Road.

Following those road improvements, a bus line was extended out to Garden City and local residents found it relatively easy to commute to downtown Detroit. The provision of a city water system and electrical service also aided the Garden City growth in the '20's.

With this gradual growth, local officials gained public support for incorporation into a village in 1927 and six years later changed its form of government into that of a home-rule city.

Profile of Average City Resident

If you are just over 20 years old, completed 11.4 years of formal schooling, and have a family income of \$7,354 a year, you are considered the typical Garden City resident.

Those are the figures included in a Community Renewal Program completed a year ago by professional planning consultants.

The median age of 20.1 years is well below the Detroit area figure of 29.4 while the median family income is above the metropolitan area - median of \$6,825. Garden City's educational status of 11.4 is slightly above the Detroit area figure of an even 11 years.

During the 1920's and 1930's, the city's population grew to nearly 3,000 residents. Another 1,000 moved in during the next decade.

However, the second World War provided the boom to the city's development, as happened in numerous other suburbs across the country. By 1950, the population doubled to 9,000 residents.

But the biggest population explosion for Garden City during the decade of the '50's. During that period, the population quadrupled from 9,000 to the official 1960 census figure of 38,251.

This growth was caused by the city's participation in the rapidly

developing urban fringe surrounding Detroit.

To service the community, a fine system of public schools and municipal services has been developed over the years. In addition, there are numerous churches, hospitals, retail centers to meet the needs of all Garden City residents.

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Median Value Of City Home Is \$13,400

Garden City's average home had a median value of \$13,400, or just \$100 above the metropolitan Detroit area's figure.

In a professional planning firm's study of the community, it was pointed out that of more than 9,000 homes in the city, only 113 are vacant, giving Garden City a ratio of only 1.8 per cent, nearly the lowest in Wayne County.

Wayne has a vacancy ratio of 1.7 per cent while the metropolitan Detroit area's figure is 4.5 per cent.

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