



ROCKWOOD IDENTITY ATLAS



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INTRODUCTION 1

Introduction

The Rockwood Identity Atlas is a data collection initiative that aims provide the Rockwood Community Development Corporation (CDC) with information about the community it serves.

Through maps, data, and stories that highlight the identity, geography, and living conditions of the Rockwood community, this atlas aims to support Rockwood CDC and partner organizations better understand the challenges and opportunities facing the neighborhood.

Although the atlas is an attempt to synthesize a more unified narrative about the identity of Rockwood, the report can be viewed in three distinct sections. We explored the three sections in three phases during March-May 2021:

- * Phase I: Existing Conditions Analysis
- * Phase II: Community Engagement & Asset Mapping
- * Phase II: Rockwood Community Actionable Strategies

The first section is an exploration of social, economic, and health data. The second section details the outcomes of public outreach, focus group interviews, and community asset mapping with Rockwood residents. The third section presents a review of relevant policies and makes recommendations that relate to the findings in the first two sections. Together, the three sections aim to tell a story of where Rockwood is in relation to Multnomah County

and Oregon statewide, what Rockwood residents think of their community, and how Rockwood CDC and partner organizations might approach the opportunities and challenges facing the neighborhood.

The intention of our report is to celebrate the strengths, identify the challenges, and illuminate the opportunities that Rockwood has. Still, our methodology has its limitations. Due to delays in the census, we are only able to analyze data as recent as 2019. Furthermore, no matter how much government data we collect and analyze, the conclusions we draw are only part of Rockwood's

The Rockwood Identity Atlas is a compilation of maps, data, and stories that strive to make the identity, geography, and living conditions of the Rockwood community more visible to public agencies and nonprofits that would serve them.



Image: Sunrise Center in Rockwood. Source: Upstream Cartography Collective+

story. The most important—and accurate—depictions of Rockwood come from the people who live and work in Rockwood everyday, which is why our analysis includes resident voices through our community engagement activities.

Additionally, the methodology of this project relies heavily on quantitative and qualitative data collection. As university students, we recognize that academia has a long history of extractive and exploitative data practices that have harmed vulnerable communities. Information is power, and while we hope the information provided in this report is illuminative and empowering for Rockwood, we know that information can be used to exacerbate inequality and perpetuate injustice if gathered and used improperly. To that end, our team tried to align our work as closely as possible with the Framework for Research and Data Justice developed by the Coalition for Communities of Color (CCC).¹ For more information on data justice, please visit:

<https://www.coalitioncommunitiescolor.org/ccc-researchdatajustice>

Equity Statement

UCC is committed to prioritizing populations and the perspectives of those who experience historical and systemic oppression and discrimination, including Native and Indigenous people, People Living in Poverty, People of Color, People with Disabilities, LGBT2SQIA+ people, Immigrants & Refugees, People speaking English as a Second Language (ESL), Religious Minorities, Older Adults, Women, Youth, Houseless populations, all other groups who continue to experience marginalization in the United States.

1. Structural Equity: *What historic advantages or disadvantages have affected residents in the given community?*

Our efforts on addressing structural equity are done through recalling and recognizing neighborhood history and analyzing how policies have determined the current conditions experienced by neighborhood residents.

2. Procedural Equity: *How are residents who have been historically excluded from planning processes being authentically included in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the proposed policy or project?*

Procedural equity is an integral piece of our scope of work and motivation for this project. At UCC we see our work as a means to move addressing community concerns “upstream”, towards policy-level initiatives. We use mapping and collaborative processes to define community and identity.

This intention is present in our operationalization of the CCC’s framework for Research and Data Justice, the forefront of equity in our community engagement process, and the collective strategies used to envision a thriving future for Rockwood.

3. Distributional Equity: *Does the distribution of civic resources and investment explicitly account for potential racially disparate outcomes?*

To address distributional equity, we aim to understand existing conditions, patterns of investment, resources, policies, and the community definition of resources and assets. Our focus here intends to shed light on issues impacting distributional equity in Rockwood.

4. Transgenerational Equity: *Does the policy or project result in unfair burdens on future generations?*

We recognize the temporality that an identity project can create. We acknowledge the fact that the identity of today’s Rockwood might not be the same in the future. In this sense, we intend to include the perspectives of youth as well as the elderly in specific activities in our engagement process, and as key actors of this collective process.

What is Rockwood?

Defining community is complex. Are our communities defined by the spaces that we share or the relationships between us?

For the Rockwood neighborhood, there is a degree of ambiguity as to what community and location mean. While Rockwood is located in the city of Gresham, some Gresham residents see Rockwood as part of East Portland. In contrast, people in Portland view Rockwood as a neighborhood in Gresham. Rockwood also sits inside of The Numbers, an area loosely defined as being east of 82nd Ave, or sometimes east of the I-205, characterized by a young, racially/ethnically diverse populations, many of whom have been displaced from gentrifying inner-Portland neighborhoods.² In Rockwood, some residents have Portland mailing addresses despite having city of Gresham road crews tend to their streets. Some residents in Rockwood look internally to build social support and community within the neighborhood, and others look for support and a sense of community that reaches beyond Rockwood's geographic boundaries.

Compared to both Eastern and Western Multnomah County, the population of Rockwood is younger and more racially and ethnically diverse. Despite the strengths and skills held by the residents of Rockwood, most efforts to define the neighborhood use a harmful rhetoric focused on needs and challenges, characterizing Rockwood by crime and poverty rates. While Rockwood residents experience greater financial hardship, housing insecurity, and burden of disease than both Eastern and Western

Multnomah County, these conditions are not inherent to place but a product of racial and socioeconomic marginalization.

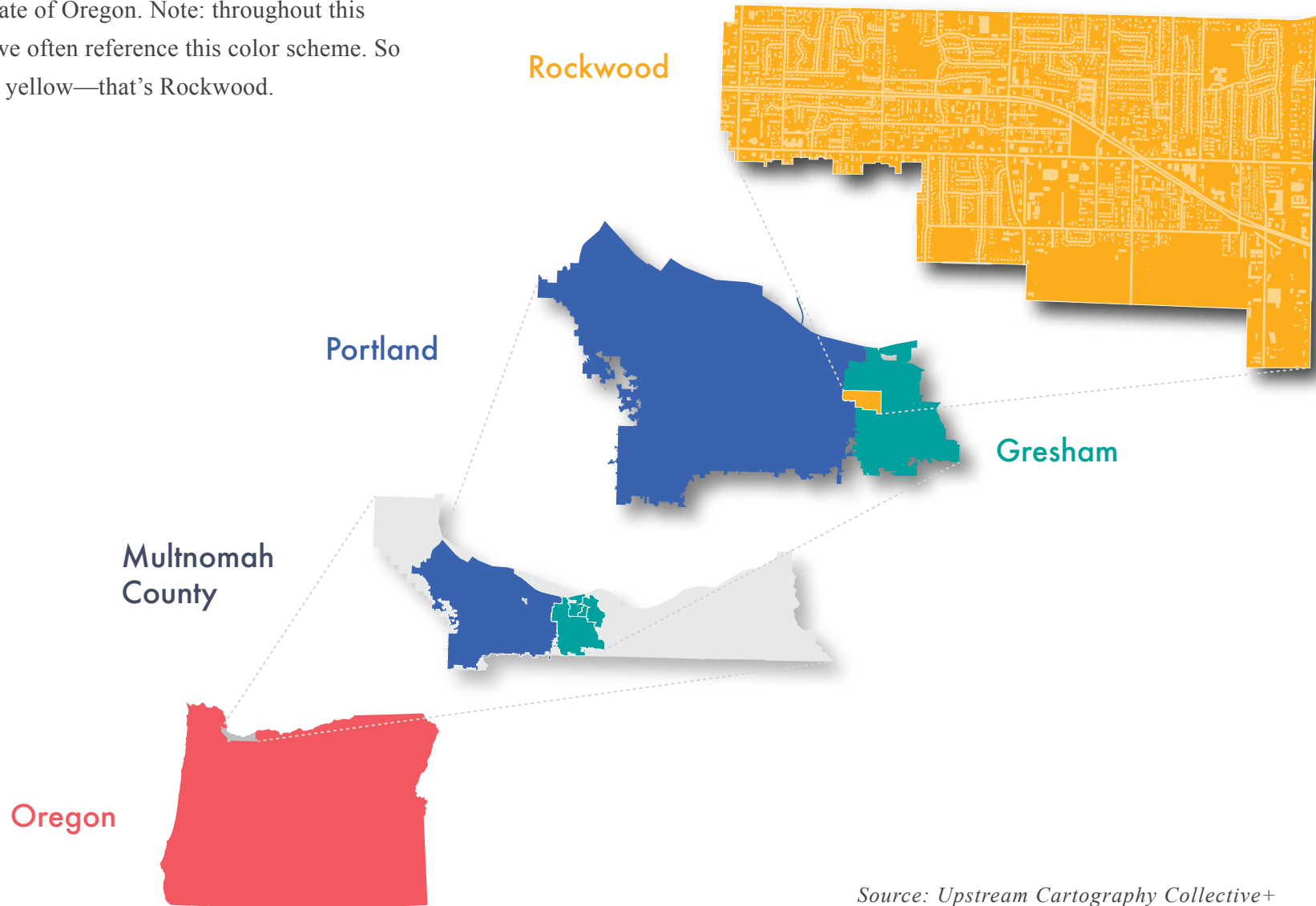
This spatial dissonance enshrouding the Rockwood neighborhood often leaves its residents feeling overlooked, their strengths unacknowledged, and their needs unaddressed. The Rockwood Identity Atlas therefore intends to serve as a collection of community stories, reinforced by existing information, to build a narrative surrounding what Rockwood is from the perspective of those living there, explore the strengths and knowledge held by residents, and the factors that have determined its contemporary state.

Welcome to Rockwood!

Officially, Rockwood is a neighborhood in Gresham, Oregon. Rockwood is also a name that refers to the region that spans parts of east Portland and west Gresham.

Where Rockwood is Located

This illustration shows how Rockwood is situated in the state of Oregon. Note: throughout this report, we often reference this color scheme. So look for yellow—that's Rockwood.



Source: Upstream Cartography Collective+



HISTORY 2

COPYRIGHT: WINDMILL HILL PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN STAUB

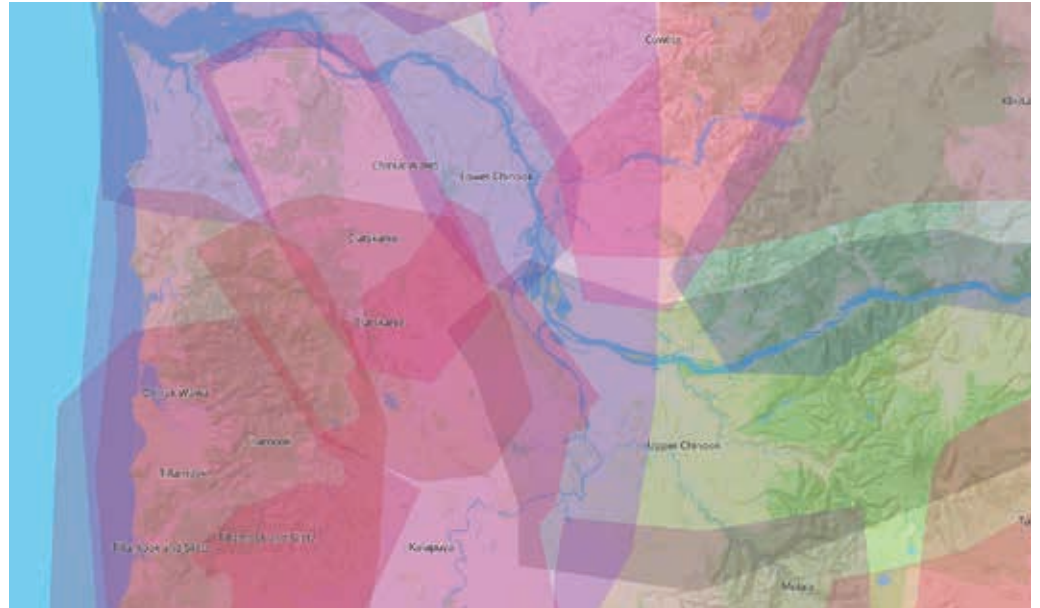
East Portland History

East Portland was originally inhabited by Upper Chinookan speakers, including the Clackamas and Multnomah peoples. The Chinookan peoples were skilled craftspeople with extensive trade networks, architectural practices, and economic systems.

Between the late 1700s and 1850s, the Indigenous populations living in East Portland were decimated by disease and conflict brought by American and European populations during imperialist westward expansion. Surviving populations were forced to relocate to reservations when displaced through the appropriation of their lands and resources by White settlers. Many of those who were forcefully removed from their homes were relocated to the Grand Ronde Reservation in 1857, far from the land and resources that had constructed their way of life.³

Following the forced relocation of the Indigenous populations in the area, White settlers began forming farmsteads on the free land granted to them by the Oregon Provisional Government and the Donation Land Claim Act of 1850. Settlers to the area cleared land for subsistence farming and agricultural trade, lumber, and regional transportation networks.

Facing page source: Gresham Historical Society. ©Windmill Photography Johns Staub



The map above shows the approximate spatial distribution of Indigenous languages in Northwest Oregon. The range of Upper Chinook covers where Multnomah County and Rockwood are located today. Source: Native Land Digital (2019). See the full interactive map at www.native-land.ca.



Old John and his small plank house, near the Columbia Slough, ca. 1880s. This is the only known photograph of a Chinookan plank house.

In the 1840's the area was named Rockwood by the Scottish owner of the land who thought that it looked like his native land. In 1854, Baseline Road (now Stark) was laid out. Its purpose was to connect Portland to the Barlow Trail, and later to the Columbia Gorge Highway. A stone marker was placed every mile east of the courthouse in Portland, and Rockwood is at the 10-mile marker. In the late 1800's the Ten Mile Roadhouse served food and drinks. Rockwood became a town center when a new road – now 182nd – was plotted from north to south. The Methodists built a church here and it remains today. The Grange was built in 1903 and also still stands. 1920's Rockwood became known as a seedy side of town,

with roadhouses, brothels and gambling places that were safely outside the jurisdiction of Portland police.

The Japanese population of Rockwood and East Multnomah County were forcibly relocated to camps during WWII. At the end of the war, many returned to their properties to find that they had been illegally foreclosed and sold. Attempts to defend their property rights were met by organized resistance, led by the mayor of Gresham, and culminating in a rally at Gresham High School that was so virulently racist that the New York Times covered it as akin to the resurgence of the KKK. In the 1950's through the 1970's, the



Rockwood businesses on Baseline Road (now Stark) circa 1910. Photo courtesy Gresham Historical Society.



The Ten Mile-Mile Road House in Rockwood circa 1917 (SE 182nd and Stark Street). Photo courtesy Gresham Historical Society.

suburbs of Portland merged with Gresham. Rockwood residences quintupled during this stretch of time.

Most of the Portland Area remained rural until the second World War where the increased demand for workers in Portland's shipyards drew migrants to the city. With a growing population, demand for housing fueled by the GI Bill, and an increased focus on transportation infrastructure, residential developers looked to increase housing stock through auto-oriented suburban development



Located at what is now 183rd and Stark, the dedication of the first Rockwood School Building in 1901; became the Rockwood Grange (at right). Photo courtesy Gresham Historical Society.

east of the city. As a result, farmlands gave way to subdivided neighborhoods and interstate highways, connecting new residents to the central city.³

From the 1970s to today, the population of East Portland continues to grow. Part of this growth can be attributed to a rising number of foreign-born residents and residents displaced from gentrifying inner Portland neighborhoods. These trends, however, have created a higher concentration of low-income households in East Portland in comparison to the rest of the Portland area, most of which is experienced by the area's communities of color.



Rockwood Grange Hall circa 1915. Photo courtesy Gresham Historical Society Research Library image #1424,



Potato farmers from Rockwood came to Gresham to load their goods on the newly completed rail line from Portland to Gresham circa 1906. Photo courtesy Gresham Historical Society.

Despite its location in Gresham, the history of East Portland holds true in Rockwood, further illuminating the difficulties in contextualizing its identity as a place. There are commonalities between east Portland and Gresham, but Rockwood is unique.

The cities of Portland and Gresham didn't always border one another. The suburbanization of East Multnomah County post World War II led to the development of low-density residential areas east of 82nd Avenue, which prior to the 1970s was unincorporated Multnomah County.

Most of the early residents in the newly developed East County were White. Their suburban migration away from the central city coincided with the increase in Black residents in the Albina District in North Portland (the suburbanization of White residents from central cities occurred throughout the country during this period, often referred to as 'White Flight'). It should be noted that Black residents were forced to locate in Albina through a multitude of racially motivated, discriminatory housing policies and practices—this is discussed more later in the report.

Aided by the expansion of highways, Goodline et. al write: "The most affluent of these emigres moved to the west and south of Portland, while more than twice as many—mainly those of more modest means—migrated eastward. Low- and mid-priced,



Baseline Road (now Stark Street) at the intersection with Rockwood Road, circa 1920. Photo courtesy Gresham Historical Society.



An airport opened in Rockwood in the 1930's and operated until the 1950's. Troh's Airport at 174th and Division in 1935. Motto was "Times Flies – Why Don't You?" Photo courtesy Gresham Historical Society.

1986	New MAX stop connected Rockwood to the Portland metro area.
1990's	Old apartments were converted to public housing, and new affordable housing was built.
2003	Fred Meyer closed, reportedly due to theft and violence, although the truth was that they needed to build a much larger store 3 miles away.
2003	Gresham Redevelopment Commission (GRDC) was formed with a 20-year charter to renew Rockwood.
2005	GRDC purchased the Fred Meyer site and tore it down, but did no new construction on it until 2014, thus contributing to the area's blight.
2010	The Rockwood Building opened. Created by Human Solutions, it was the first major new building in 40 years. Multnomah County opened a new Justice Center shortly thereafter.
2016	The first new market-rate apartments were built in 35 years.
2018	Sunrise Development tore down a strip club, an hourly rate motel and other blighted businesses. Rockwood CDC and the GRDC saved a closed restaurant from reopening as a strip club. This is now the Sunrise Center.
2019	Rockwood was declared an Opportunity Zone. More than one hundreds million dollars of new investment in housing are deployed. Rockwood Center opens.
2021	GRDC's Downtown Rockwood opens.



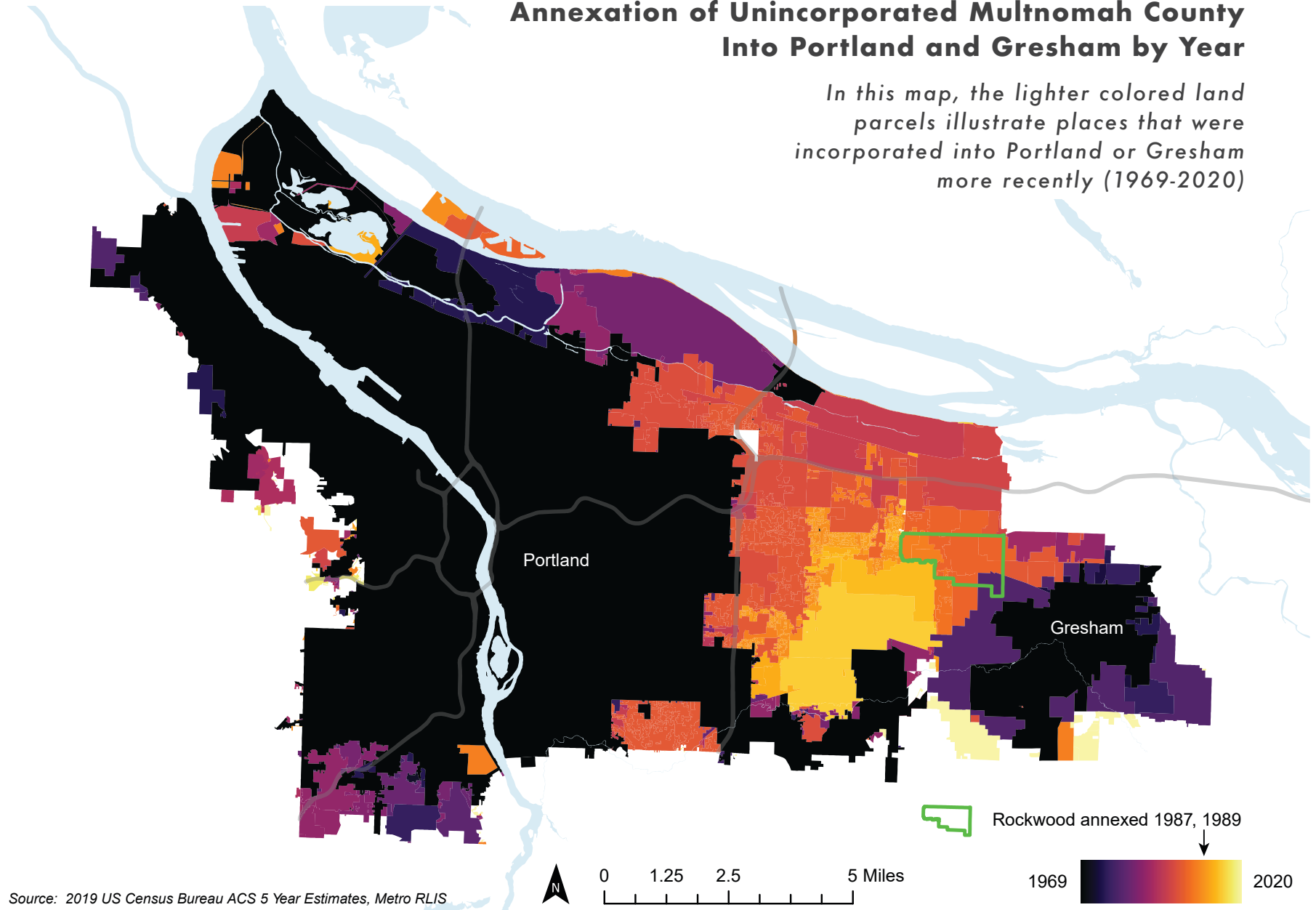
Celebration of the first day of MAX in 1986

ranch-style tract housing continued to fill in pockets in both inner and outer eastside from 1945 to 1960; neighborhoods from 60th Street eastward to 148th Street gained 30,000 residents alone.”⁴ At this time, around 65% still commuted into the central city for work.⁵ The new developments in East Multnomah County were often classified as ‘Special Service Districts’ in unincorporated Multnomah County rather than extensions of Portland or Gresham. Researchers note that the special service districts “were controlled by a close knit group suburban business men, and were attractive for new households eager to hold down property taxes.”⁴ The flight of White families out of Portland began to drain the city of property tax revenue.⁵

In the decades following this eastward expansion, small-scale suburban subdivisions that were developed east of 82nd in the “began to overwhelm infrastructural capacity.”⁴ Beginning in

Annexation of Unincorporated Multnomah County Into Portland and Gresham by Year

*In this map, the lighter colored land
parcels illustrate places that were
incorporated into Portland or Gresham
more recently (1969-2020)*



Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates, Metro RLIS

Beginning in the 1970s, Portland and Gresham began annexing parts of east Multnomah County. Today, these areas lack the same level of infrastructure and services as the urban cores.

the 1970s, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality became concerned about septic tanks in unincorporated East Multnomah County. Due to this issue, combined with the City of Portland’s desire for more leverage with the State Government, and a declining tax base, officials began calling for annexation of unincorporated parts of Multnomah County between Portland and Gresham.⁵

The newly annexed areas often lacked the same infrastructural standards that were present in the cities of Portland and Gresham. These disparities are still present today.

Today, the annexed areas between Portland and Gresham often lack the same level of infrastructure that is found west of 82nd Avenue; however, that does not mean they pay less in taxes. In fact, residents east of 82nd Avenue often have higher tax burdens due to Measures 5, 47, and 50 that were passed in the 1990s.

As explained by the Oregonian, “Oregon homeowners used to pay

taxes based on what their property was worth. That connection ended in 1997 when voters limited how much property values could grow each year for tax purposes.” Indeed, Measure 5 limited property taxes to 1.5 percent of a home’s value. Measures 47 and 50 rolled back property tax assessments to 1995 levels minus an additional 10 percent, and limited annual increases to 3 percent a year.”⁶

These laws benefit gentrifying neighborhoods with fast-rising values by mitigating the corresponding taxes homeowners must pay. Unfortunately it shifts the tax burden to other parts of the Portland Metro.⁵

Rockwood, while being formally recognized as a neighborhood in Gresham, is also understood locally as a region that spans parts of east Portland. This ambiguity makes Rockwood difficult to define as a distinct place with a distinct identity, especially when it comes to making sense of government data.

Therefore, in order to conduct our analysis, our team decided to expand the definition of Rockwood to include the seven census tracts that encompass the neighborhood. The majority of statistics and figures in this report refer to this Rockwood—the greater region of Rockwood—rather than the more narrowly defined neighborhood boundary. For the remainder of the report, all mentions of ‘Rockwood’ refer to this larger area unless specified.

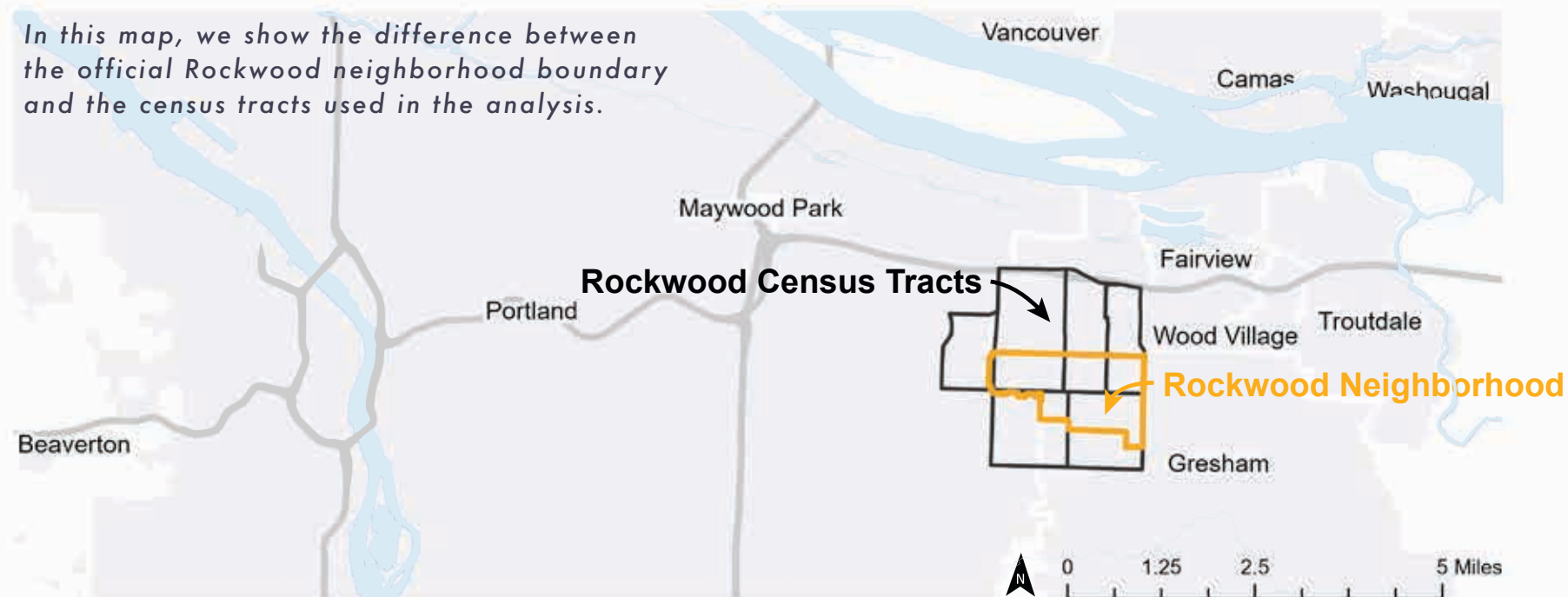
Multnomah County is a county with stark spatial patterns. Our team defined two other geographies in order to demonstrate how Multnomah County changes from east to west, the axis on which many of the spatial patterns manifest themselves. In this report, ‘West County’ refers to all the census tracts west of 82nd Avenue, an important geographic feature which carries with it unwritten yet significant racial, economic, and political implications.

‘East County’ refers to all the census tracts east of 82nd Avenue

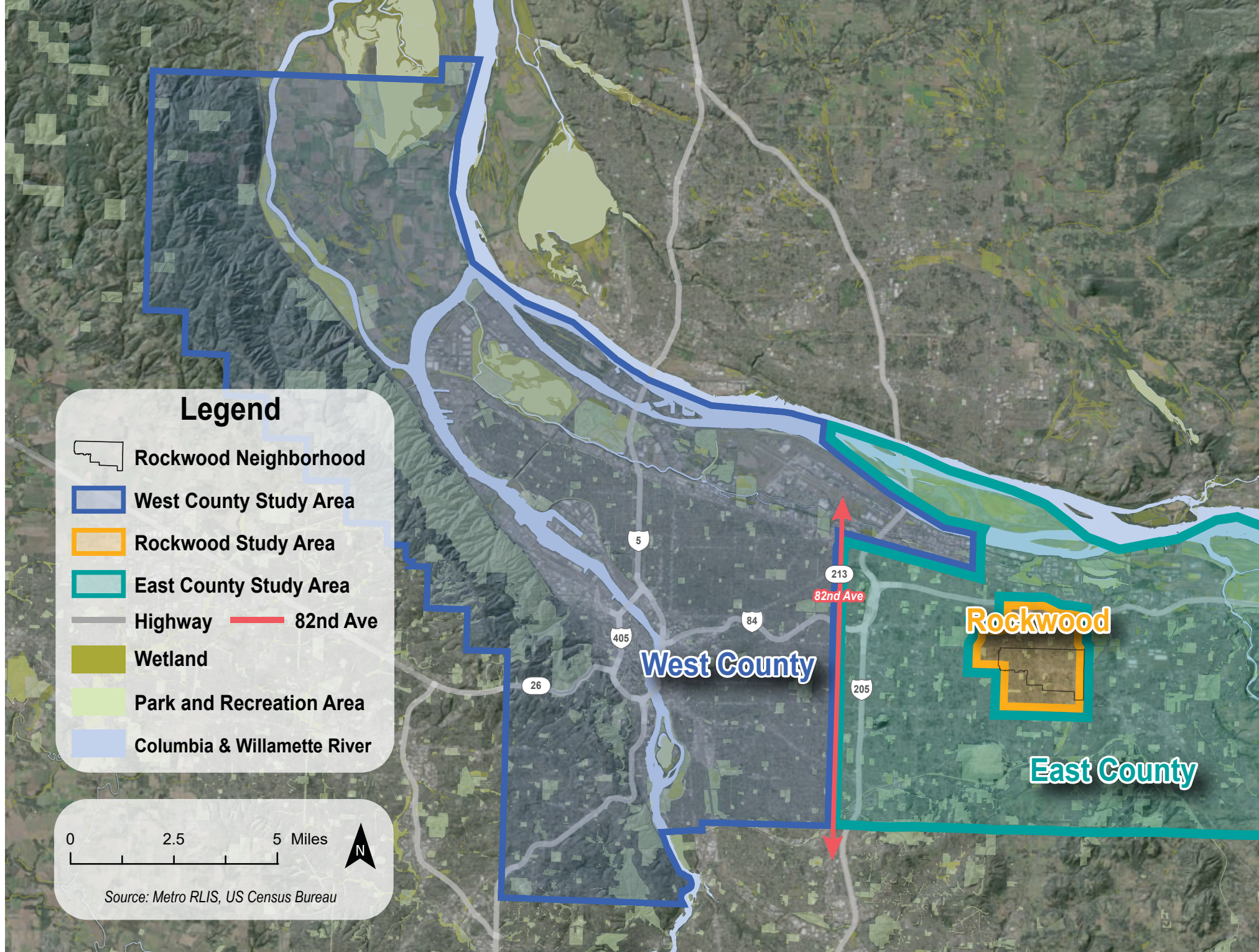
except the census tracts that contain Rockwood. It should be noted that East County includes the City of Gresham and other jurisdictions, while West County only contains part of the City of Portland. Lastly, we include statistics and figures for Oregon statewide, as nearly all of the data we analyzed are aggregated at the state level as well.

Rockwood Neighborhood vs. Rockwood Census Tracts










In this map, we show the difference between the official Rockwood neighborhood boundary and the census tracts used in the analysis.



Source: Upstream Cartography Collective+



Legend

-  Rockwood Neighborhood
-  West County Study Area
-  Rockwood Study Area
-  East County Study Area
-  Highway
-  82nd Ave
-  Wetland
-  Park and Recreation Area
-  Columbia & Willamette River

0 2.5 5 Miles



Source: Metro RLIS, US Census Bureau



In this report, we compare Rockwood to the East and West areas of Multnomah County, and Oregon statewide.

By comparing and contrasting Rockwood to Oregon statewide, West County, and the rest of East Multnomah County, we show how Rockwood should be thought of as a distinct and unique place, complete with its own strengths, challenges, and opportunities.



7-ELEVEN
NOTICE
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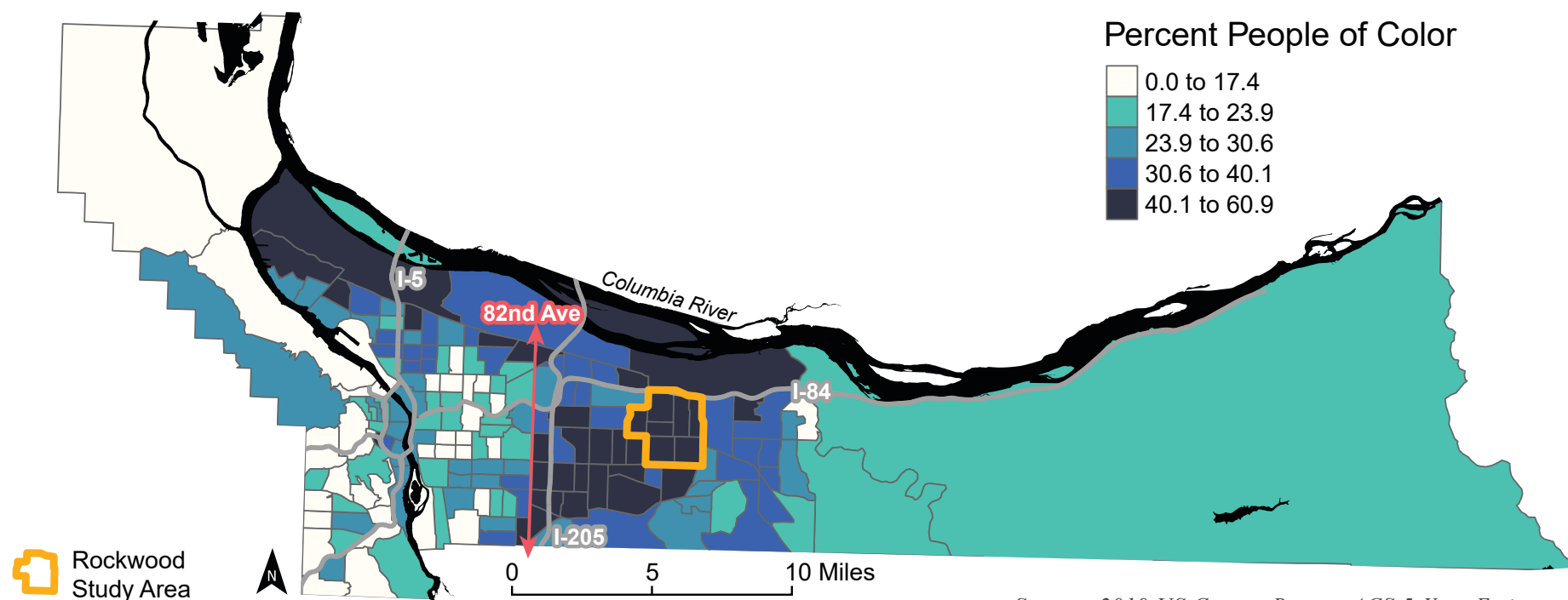
AYO
YOUTH ADVISORY
COUNCIL
GRESHAM.

DEMOGRAPHICS 3

The demographic diversity of Multnomah County is not evenly distributed. Communities of color are more concentrated in places like Rockwood.

In this map, the darker census tracts illustrate places where a higher percentage of People of Color live according to 2019 US Census estimates.

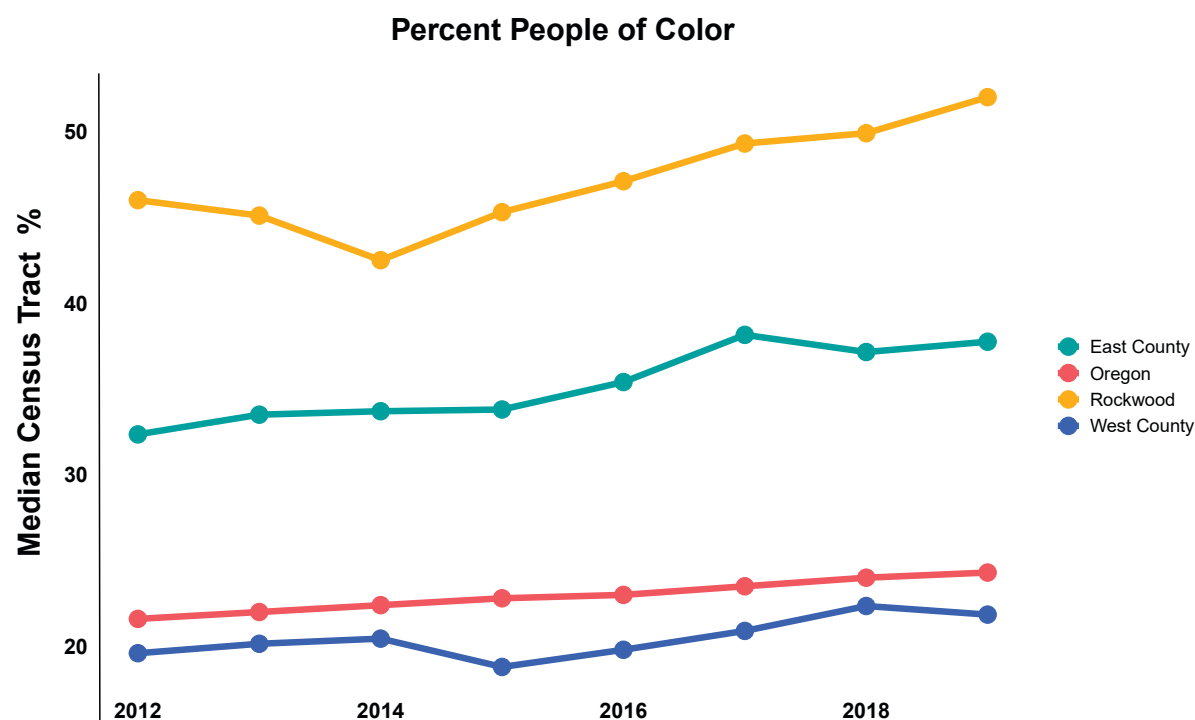
Multnomah County is the most diverse county in Oregon by total population, with 31% identifying as People of Color. The map below illustrates how Rockwood and its nearby census tracts are home to much of the county's diversity. In the median census tract in Rockwood, 52% of the population identifies as a Person of Color. As of 2019, 9.8% of the people in Rockwood identify as Black or African American, 1% identify as American Indian or Alaska Native, 10.6% identify as Asian, 1% identify as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 25.4% identify as Hispanic or Latino, and 4.2% identify as Other or Two or More Races.



In the last decade, communities of color have been growing faster in Rockwood compared to other areas in Multnomah County.

Since 2012, the proportion of People of Color in Rockwood has grown by 6 percent, more than double the amount experienced by West Multnomah County. Roughly 1 in 2 Rockwood residents identify themselves as a person of color, which is more than twice the rate of West County residents and Oregon statewide.

One of the likely many reasons why the population share of People of Color in Rockwood is growing is the dramatic increase in housing costs and other gentrification pressures that incentivize people to look for the lower costs of living found in places like Rockwood



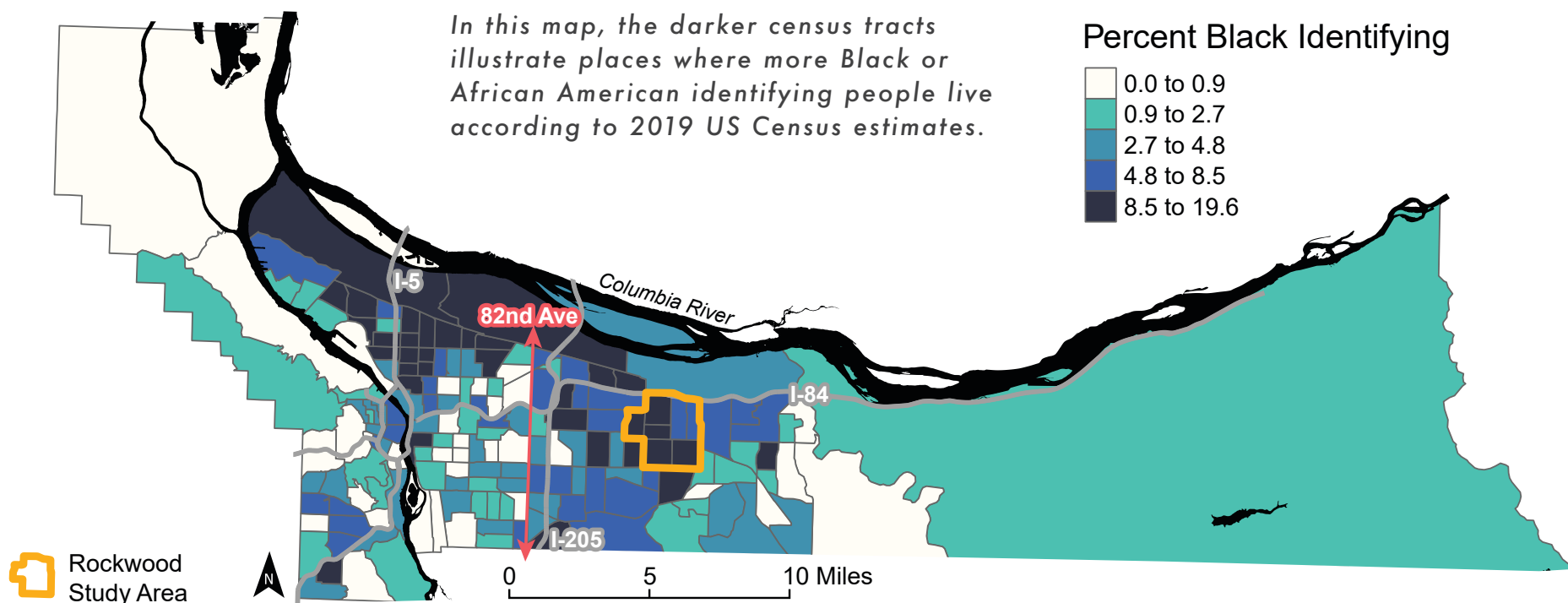
Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

Note: This axis does not begin at 0

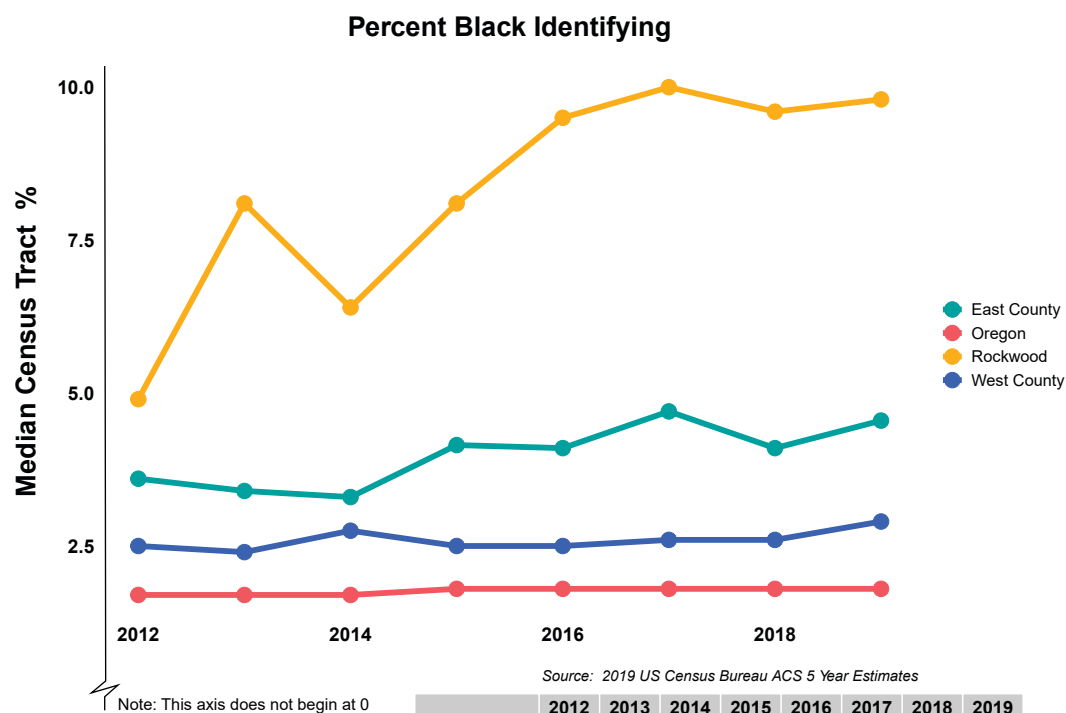
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
East County	32.35	33.50	33.70	33.8	35.4	38.15	37.15	37.75
Oregon	21.60	22.00	22.40	22.8	23.0	23.50	24.00	24.30
Rockwood	46.00	45.10	42.50	45.3	47.1	49.30	49.90	52.00
West County	19.60	20.15	20.45	18.8	19.8	20.90	22.35	21.85

The Black community in Multnomah County is not evenly distributed. Historically, Black residents lived in the Albina District in North Portland due to the racist housing policy known as redlining, predatory banking practices, and systematic devaluation of Black-owned real estate. During and after World War II, many census tracts in the Albina District were majority Black. When the suburbs expanded into East Multnomah County, they attracted White flight to those areas.

Between 1950 and the 1990's, the overall population in Albina decreased by 27,000. "The value of homes dropped to 58 percent of the city's median. In fact, the decline was so sharp that nine neighborhoods received a special reassessment of property; some homes sold for half their assessed value." This led to conditions ripe for gentrification, the subsequent influx of a young, White, professional class, and the correlated capital investment that displaced Black residents to places in East Multnomah County, like Rockwood.



Gentrification and other displacement pressures have forced many Black residents to move eastward, into places like Rockwood.



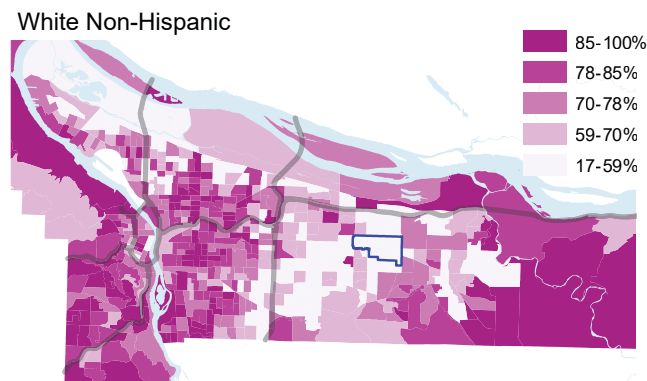
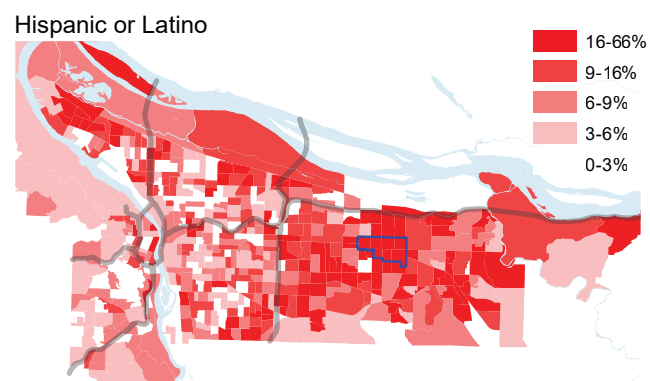
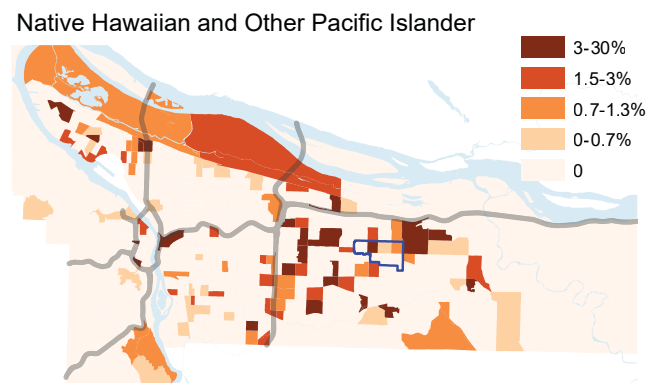
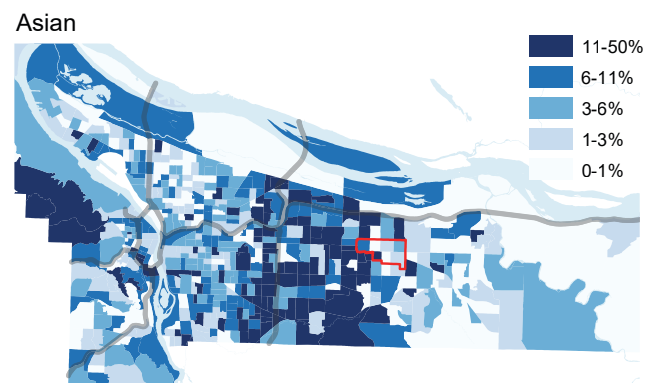
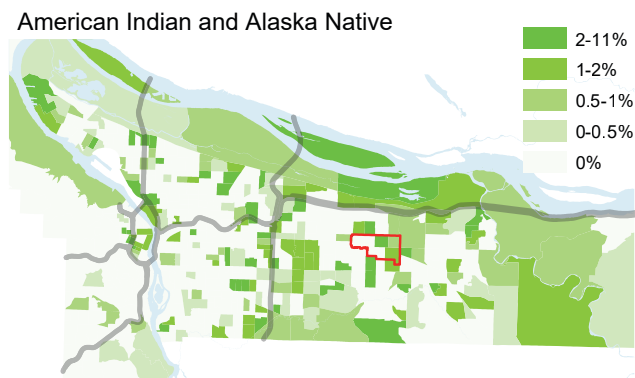
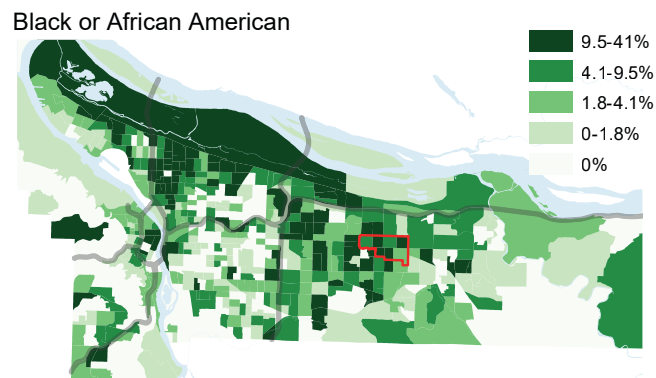
Evidence for this trend is seen in the growth of Black-identifying residents in Rockwood over the past decade. Between 2012-2019, Rockwood's Black community has doubled in size, from 4.9 percent to 9.8 percent. By 2019, the proportion of Black residents in Rockwood was roughly twice that of the rest of East County and more than three times that of West County. No other minority demographic has increased this substantially.

Despite making up the majority of People of Color in Rockwood, the Hispanic and Latino community has decreased its population share by 4.6% over the same time period. (The next largest minority group, Asian-identifying residents, grew 2.7% in their population share.)

Notably however, in contrast to the relative growth among communities of color, Rockwood's overall total population has stagnated. Between 2012 and 2019, the area saw just a 0.7% increase in population, whereas Multnomah County's total population increased ten times that amount in the same period (+8.8%). Thus, while the proportion of Black residents in Rockwood is growing, the trend might also be partially explained by stagnated or negative growth among other demographic groups.

Like in many American cities, patterns in census data reveal demographic segregation across the county.

Although nearly every census tract in Multnomah County is majority White Non-Hispanic, Rockwood is centrally located in the areas where the county has the most diversity, east of 82nd Avenue.



Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates



Rockwood

0 5 10 20 Miles

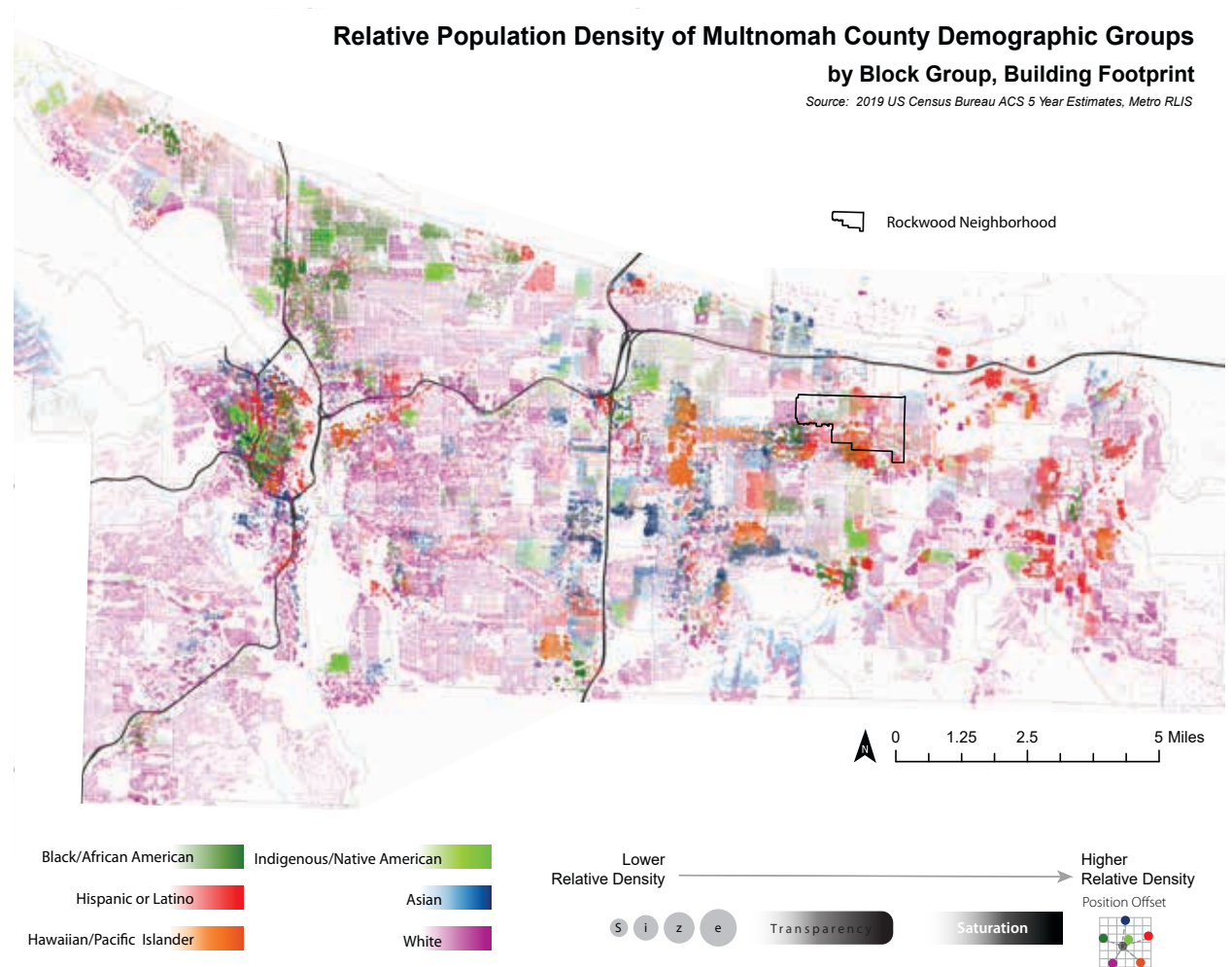


The map to the right aims to convey the relative population density of demographic groups in Multnomah County. It demonstrates that Rockwood is located at the center of the county's most diverse communities east of 82nd Avenue. The map is for illustrative purposes only; it is not meant to imply that people of a particular demographic group only live in certain areas, or that demographic groups are of equal size. The majority demographic group in nearly all census tracts is White non-Hispanic.

Methodology

To create this visualization, census tract data was applied to building footprints containing zoning density information. Six building footprint layers were created, one for each demographic group listed in the census. The size, transparency, and saturation of buildings were then adjusted proportionally to the relative density of each demographic group compared to all other tracts in Multnomah County. Finally, the six layers of building footprints (one for each demographic group) were overlaid and offset to prevent obscuring underlying data. The result is a map that displays where each demographic group has its highest share of population density.

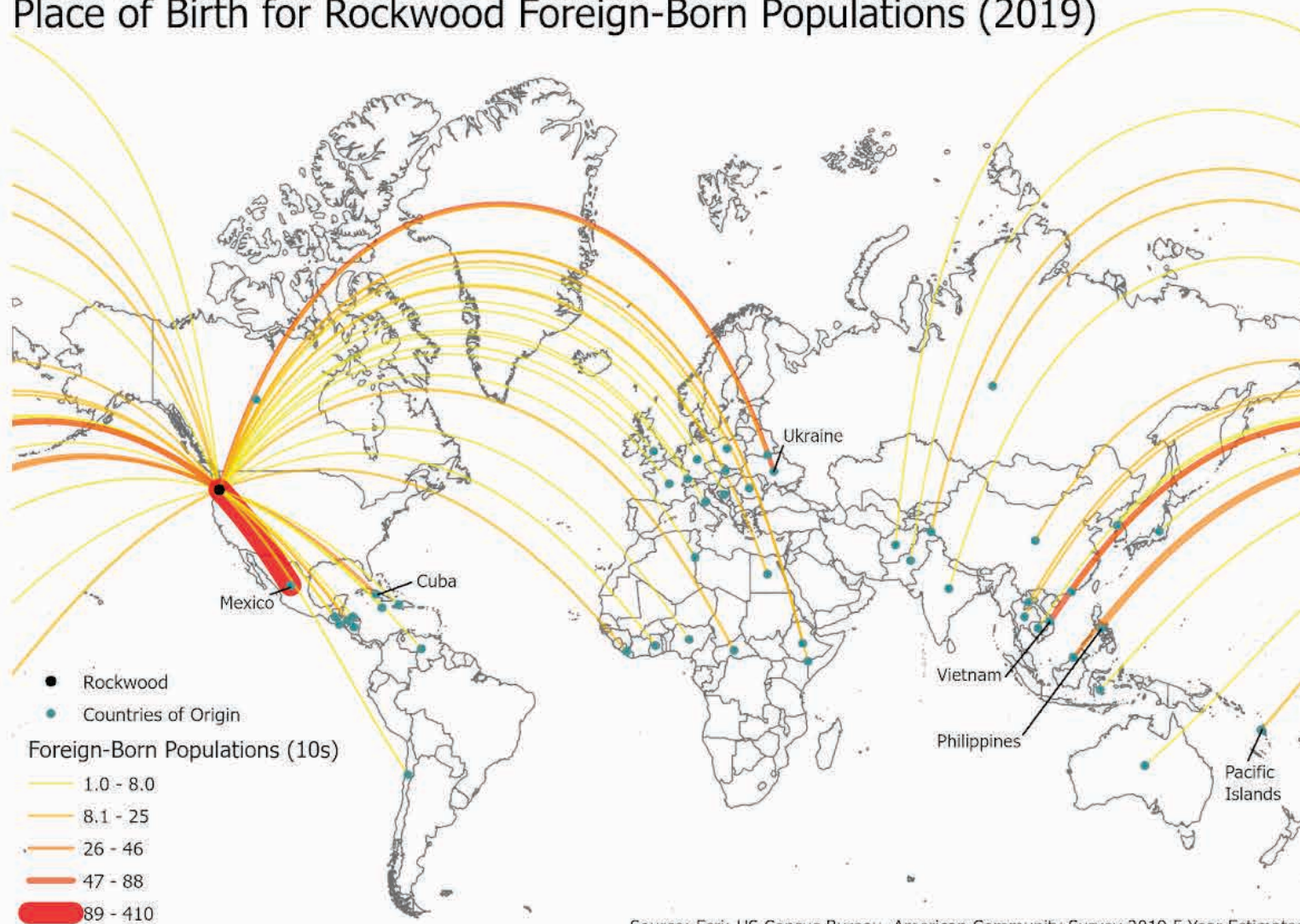
Downtown, North Portland, and neighborhoods east of 82nd Avenue are the most diverse places in Multnomah County.



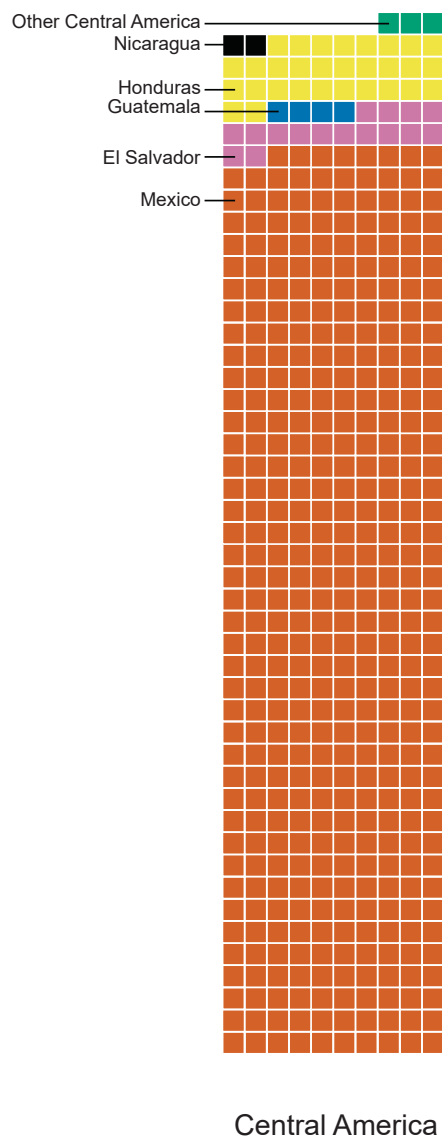
This map shows where every demographic group tends to concentrate. Places with smaller, lighter, and less colorful dots tend to be less diverse.

The largest share of immigrants who move to Rockwood come from Mexico, Ukraine, Vietnam, and the Philippines.

Place of Birth for Rockwood Foreign-Born Populations (2019)



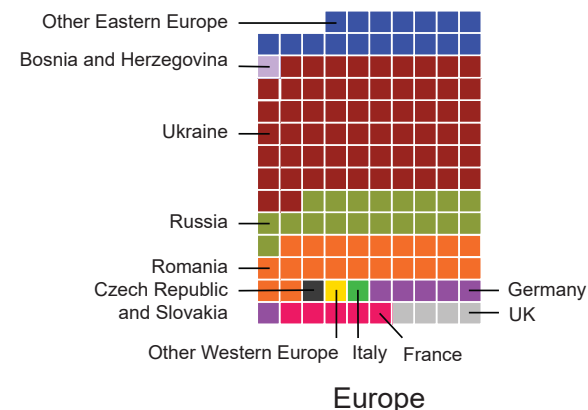
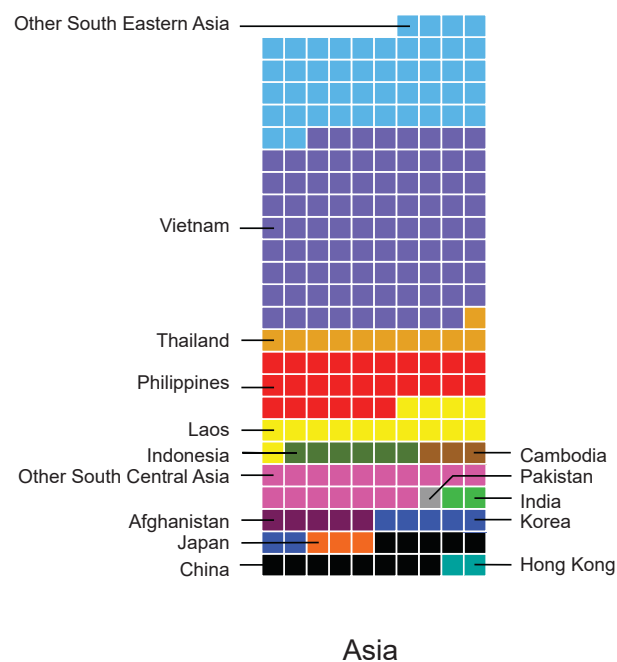
Source: Esri; US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2019 5-Year Estimates



The diversity of Rockwood goes deeper than just the six simplified race and ethnicity categories found in the Census. Rockwood is also home to immigrants from around the world.

The charts below highlight the countries of origin for Rockwood's foreign-born populations within their larger geographic regions. These figures do not capture the extent of diversity within the foreign-born population of Rockwood, but instead paint a broader picture of national representation within the area.

■ = 10 people



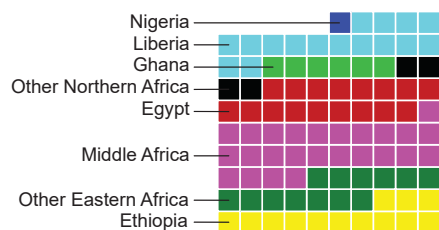
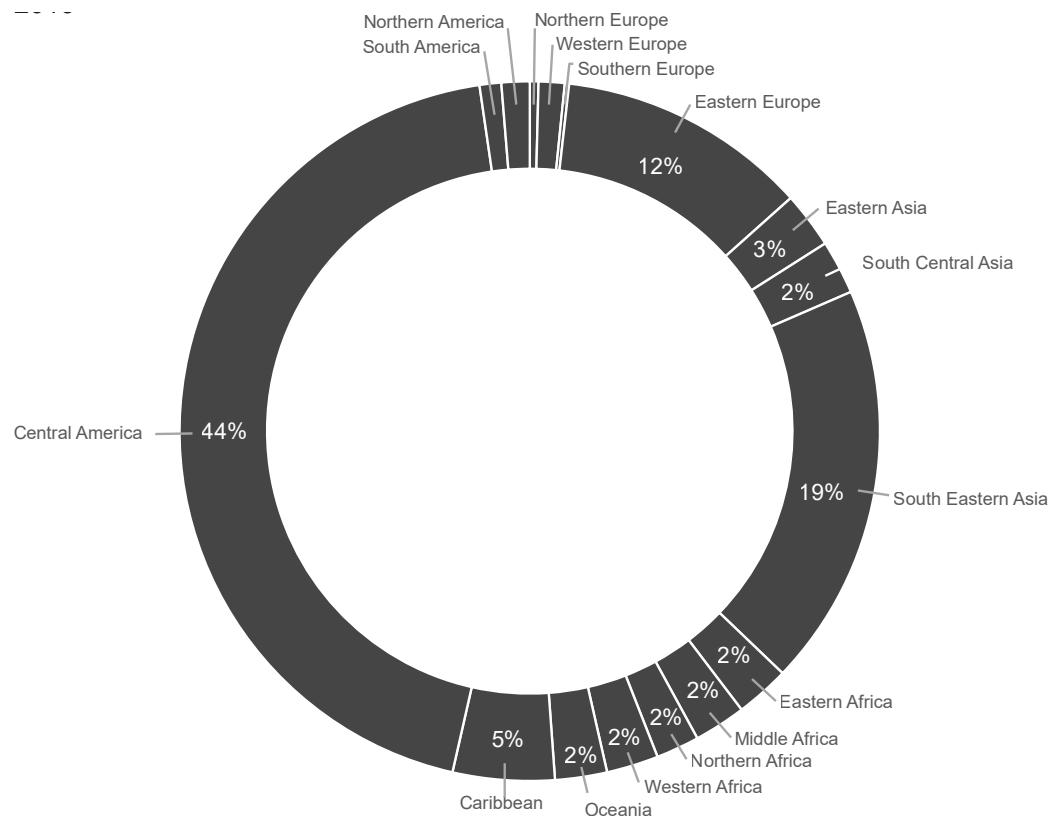
Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates

Share of Place of Birth for Foreign-Born Population Rockwood 2019

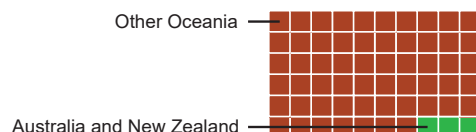
In Rockwood, every continent except Antarctica has some representation in the neighborhood; it is estimated that at least 88 languages are spoken at home. The predominant languages other than English are Spanish, Vietnamese, and Russian.

Indeed, Rockwood has one of the highest proportion of immigrants in the state of Oregon—roughly 26% of its population were born outside the United States, nearly three times the rate found in Oregon statewide. By comparison, Multnomah County has a 14% immigrant share of the population.

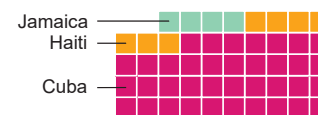
Among those who live in Rockwood and were born outside the United States, nearly half come from Central America. The largest immigrant population comes from Mexico, followed by Vietnam and Ukraine.



Africa



Oceania



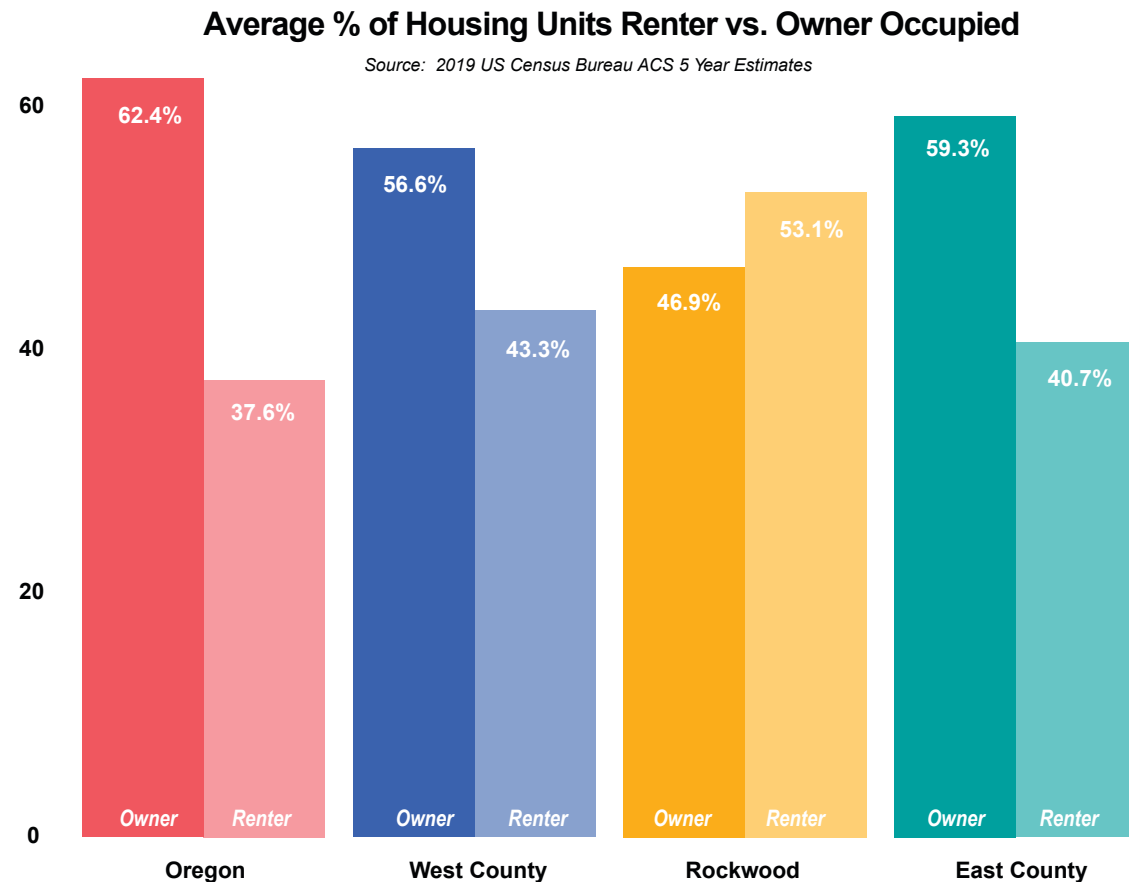
Caribbean

Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates



HOUSING 4

Rockwood has a higher proportion of renters when compared to other areas of Multnomah County and Oregon.



More residents rent in Rockwood than in any other part of Multnomah county. In fact, among the four geographies studied in this report, Rockwood was the only place where the majority of its residents rent the housing units they live in. There are 10% more renters in Rockwood relative to West County, despite having a lower population density.

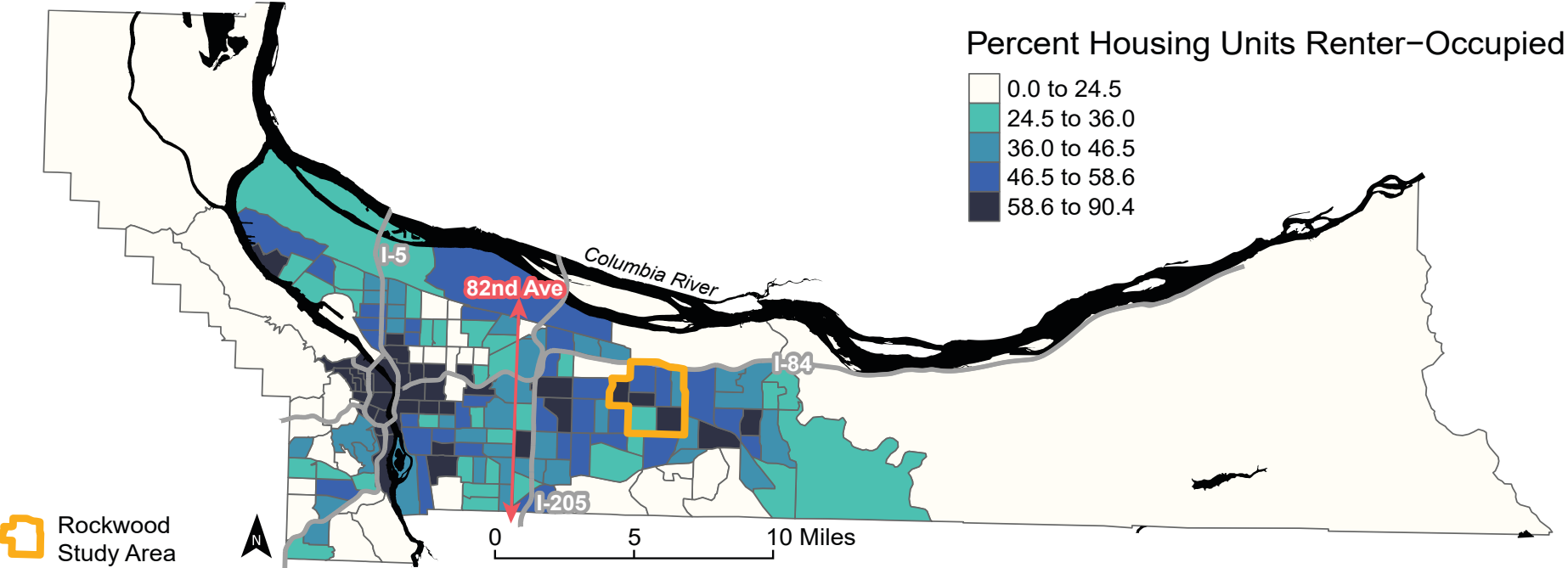
Property ownership is one of the primary wealth building tools for working class families in the United States—or rather for White families. Decades of racist housing policy at the local, regional, and federal level prevented People of Color, especially those in the Black community, from buying property. The legacy of those exclusionary policies is still present, and is evidenced by the proportion of Black renters compared to White renters.

Why does homeownership matter?

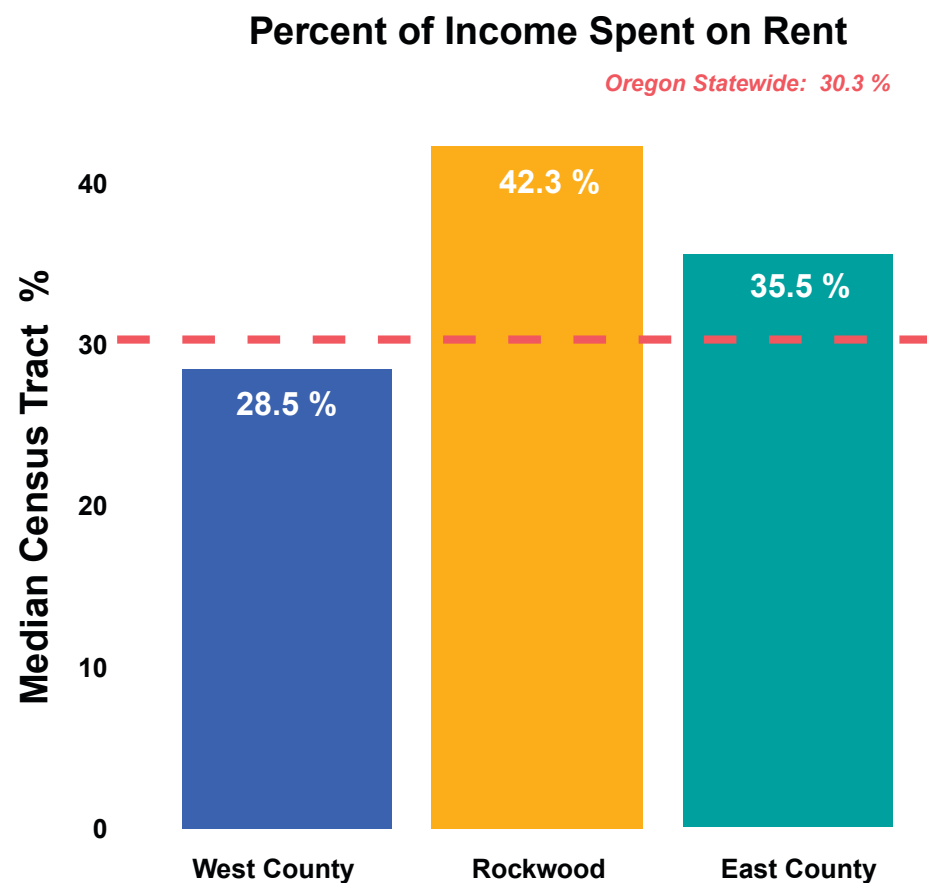
Without robust policy protections, renters tend to be more vulnerable to price fluctuations in real estate markets and are often the first to experience the displacement pressures of gentrification.

The areas of Multnomah County with the highest proportion of renters are downtown Portland, Gateway Center, Rockwood, and downtown Gresham.

In this map, the darker census tracts illustrate places where more renters live according to 2019 US Census estimates.



The median household in Rockwood spends 42.3% of their income on rent.



Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

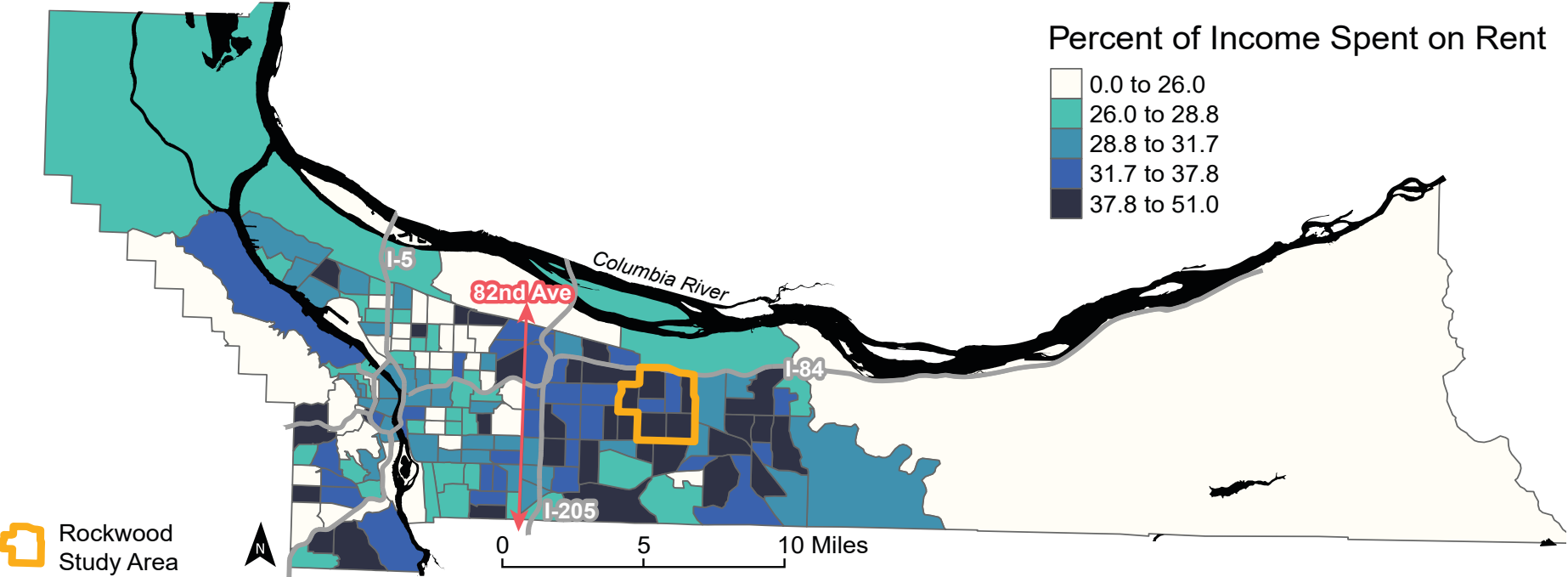
Although housing in Rockwood and East County is known to be less expensive than similarly-sized units in West County, residents in both areas tend to pay a higher proportion of their incomes on rent. The median Rockwood household spends approximately 42 percent of its income on rent. This is almost 14 percent more than the median household spends in West County (see left). This is especially important considering that this leaves families with less money to allocate towards other necessities, such as food, transportation, and utilities.

Households that spend more than 30 percent of their income on rent are recognized as rent-burdened by the U.S. Census. **All census tracts in Rockwood are rent-burdened to varying degrees**, and together comprise some of the most rent-burdened tracts in the county

Housing cost burdens also apply to homeowners with regards to mortgage payments. Other analyses, such as the Social Vulnerability Index created by Portland State University's Population Research Center estimates that 23-54% of Rockwood homeowners are cost burdened, meaning that those homeowners are paying more than 30% of their incomes toward the cost of their mortgage.

Rent-burdened households are not evenly distributed across the county. Most rent-burdened households are located east of 82nd Avenue, in places like Rockwood.

In this map, the darker census tracts illustrate places where renters spend larger shares of their income on rent according to 2019 US Census estimates.

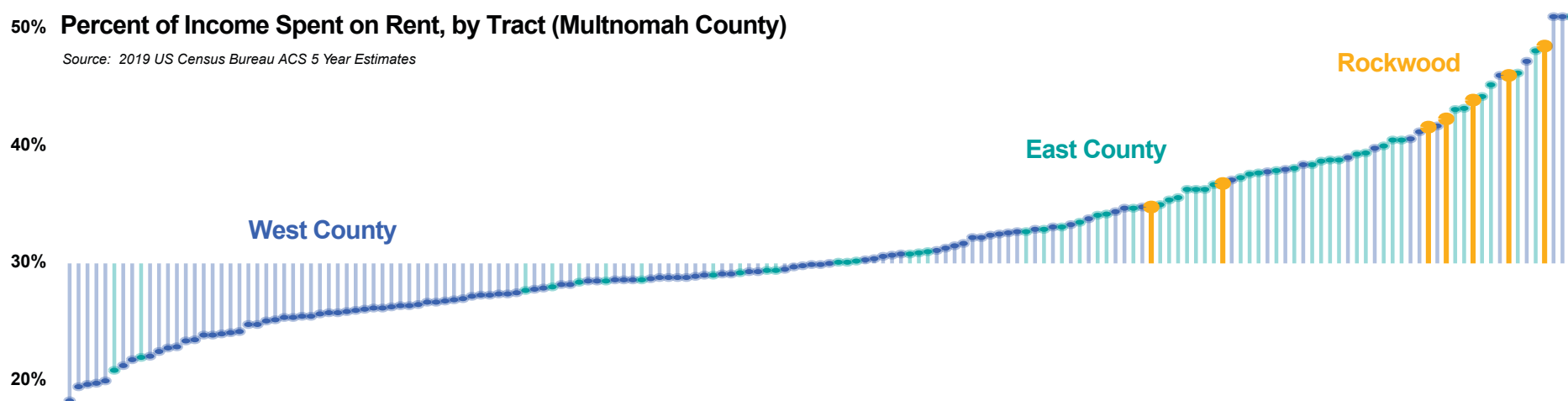


In this chart, every census tract in Multnomah County is represented by a vertical bar with a circle on top. For census tracts whose residents, on average, spend less than 30% of their income on rent, the bar points downward. For census tracts whose residents on average, spend more than 30% of their income on rent and are therefore rent-burdened, the bar points upward. The height of the bar depends on how much more than 30% of their income that households put toward rent. The chart shows how residents in Rockwood's census tracts spend more of their incomes on rent than most other places in Multnomah County. Additionally, it reveals how West County residents, despite having higher housing prices,

All census tracts that make up Rockwood are rent-burdened to varying degrees, and together comprise some of the most rent-burdened tracts in the county.

50% Percent of Income Spent on Rent, by Tract (Multnomah County)

Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

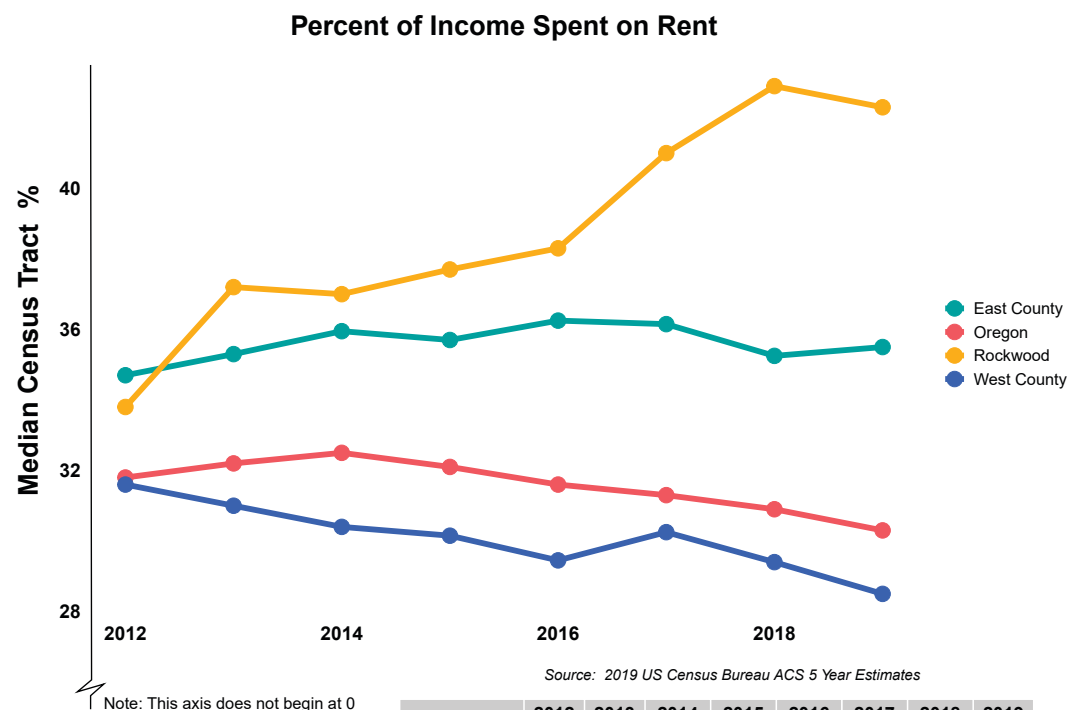


The burden of rent has been growing over the last decade in Rockwood, but has been declining in other parts of the county.

tend to dedicate a smaller percentage of their incomes toward rent.

Rockwood didn't always have the highest percentage of rent-burdened households. In 2012, other areas of East County did. However, since 2012, Rockwood has seen an 8.5 percent increase in rent-burdened households. In contrast, the proportion of rent-burdened households in West County and Oregon statewide have decreased over the same period. West County has seen approximately a 3 percent decrease in rent-burdened households since 2012.

These trends further indicate that rising housing costs in West County have been displacing residents eastward—primarily to places like Rockwood.



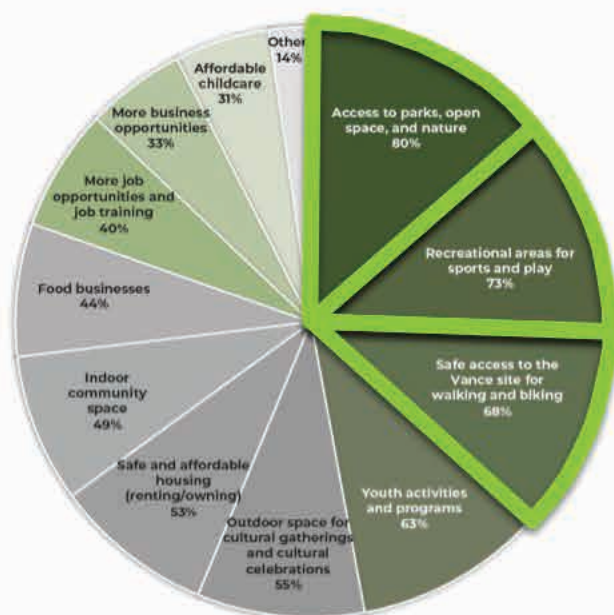
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
East County	34.7	35.3	35.95	35.70	36.25	36.15	35.25	35.5
Oregon	31.8	32.2	32.50	32.10	31.60	31.30	30.90	30.3
Rockwood	33.8	37.2	37.00	37.70	38.30	41.00	42.90	42.3
West County	31.6	31.0	30.40	30.15	29.45	30.25	29.40	28.5

TOP COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

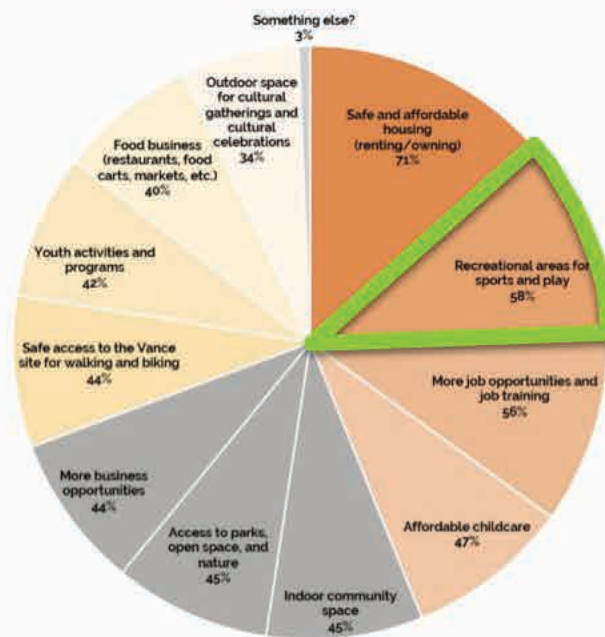
Highest priorities among most surveys:

- Recreational areas for sports and play
- Access to parks, open space, and nature
- Safe access to the Vance site for walking and biking

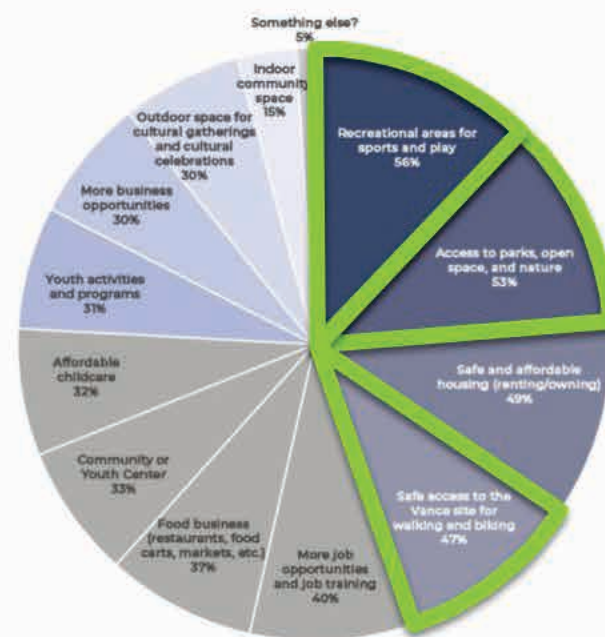
VOH Community Survey
80 responses



Community Leader Survey
151 responses



Youth Survey
661 responses



In the middle pie chart, 71 percent of community leaders are concerned about safe and affordable housing.



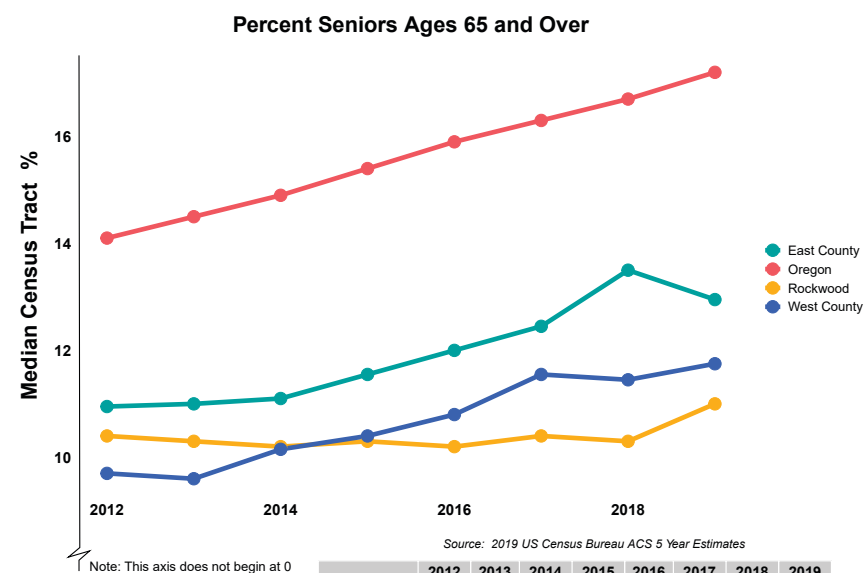
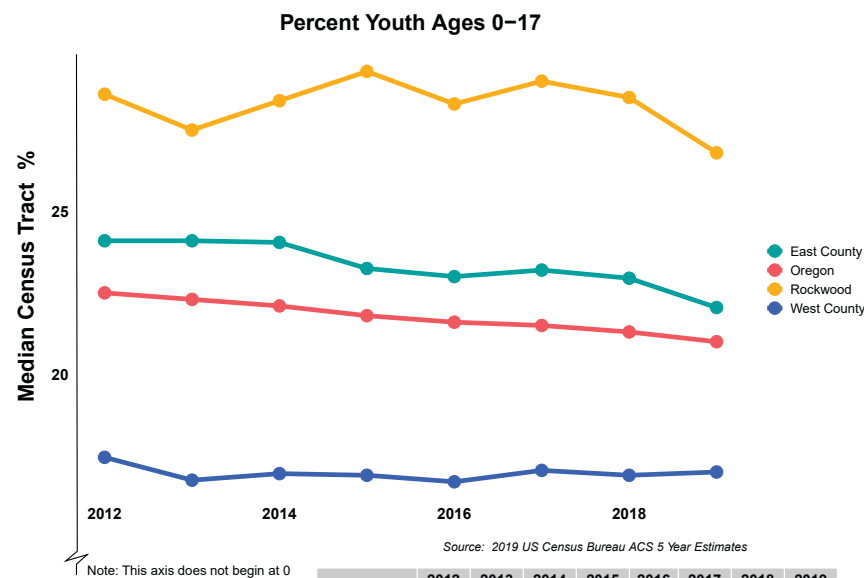
FAMILIES 5

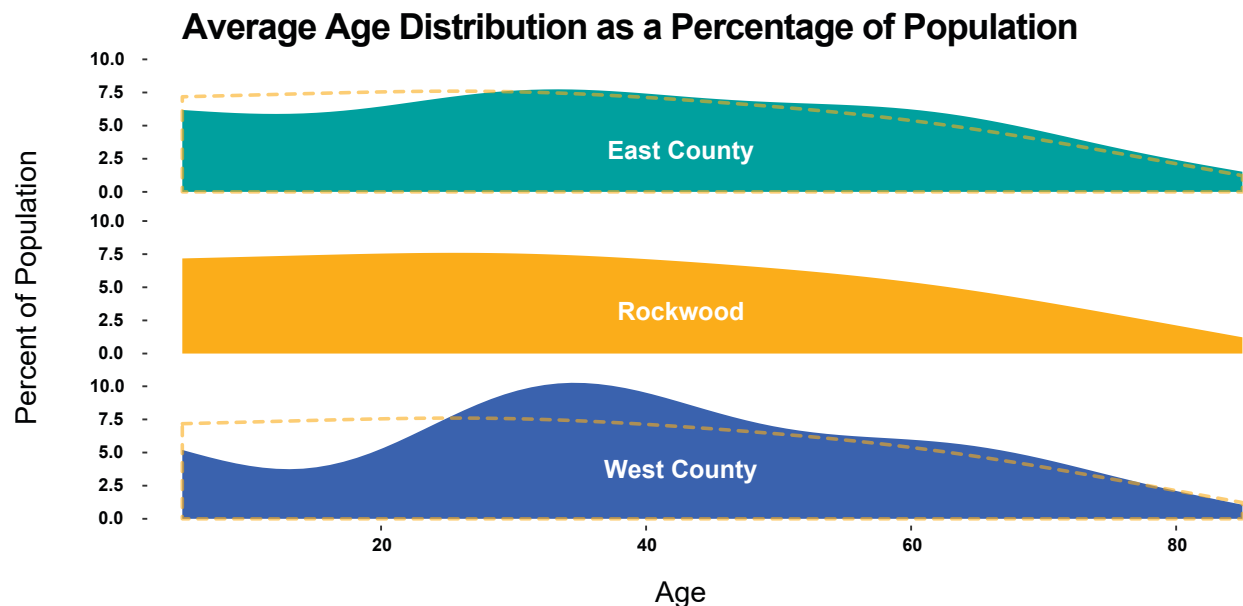
Rockwood has a higher proportion of youth than other areas of Multnomah County and Oregon statewide.

Compared to other parts of the county and the state as a whole, Rockwood's population is much younger. More than 1 in 4 Rockwood residents are younger than the age of 17, whereas for Oregon statewide those younger than 17 make up about 1 in 5.

The proportion of seniors living in Rockwood has increased a little more than half a percent since 2012. By contrast, East County, West County, and Oregon statewide increased their share of seniors by 2 percent, 2.05 percent, and 3.1 percent respectively over the same period.

Rockwood's age distribution is more evenly distributed than it is in West County. In Rockwood, no age group comprises more than 8% of the population, whereas in West County, people ages 25-45 make up the largest proportion of the population.

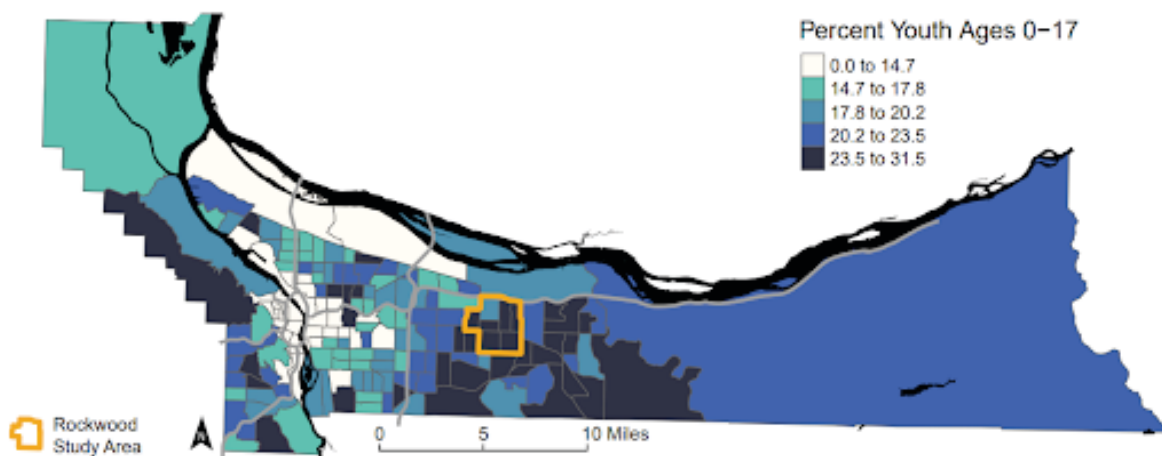




Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates

**Approximately
1 in 4 Rockwood
residents are below
the age of 17.**

Expensive housing markets tend to price out families with children, as experienced in cities like San Francisco, which has the lowest share of children out of any major US city.⁹ In Multnomah County, communities with large families tend to live in East County and Rockwood.

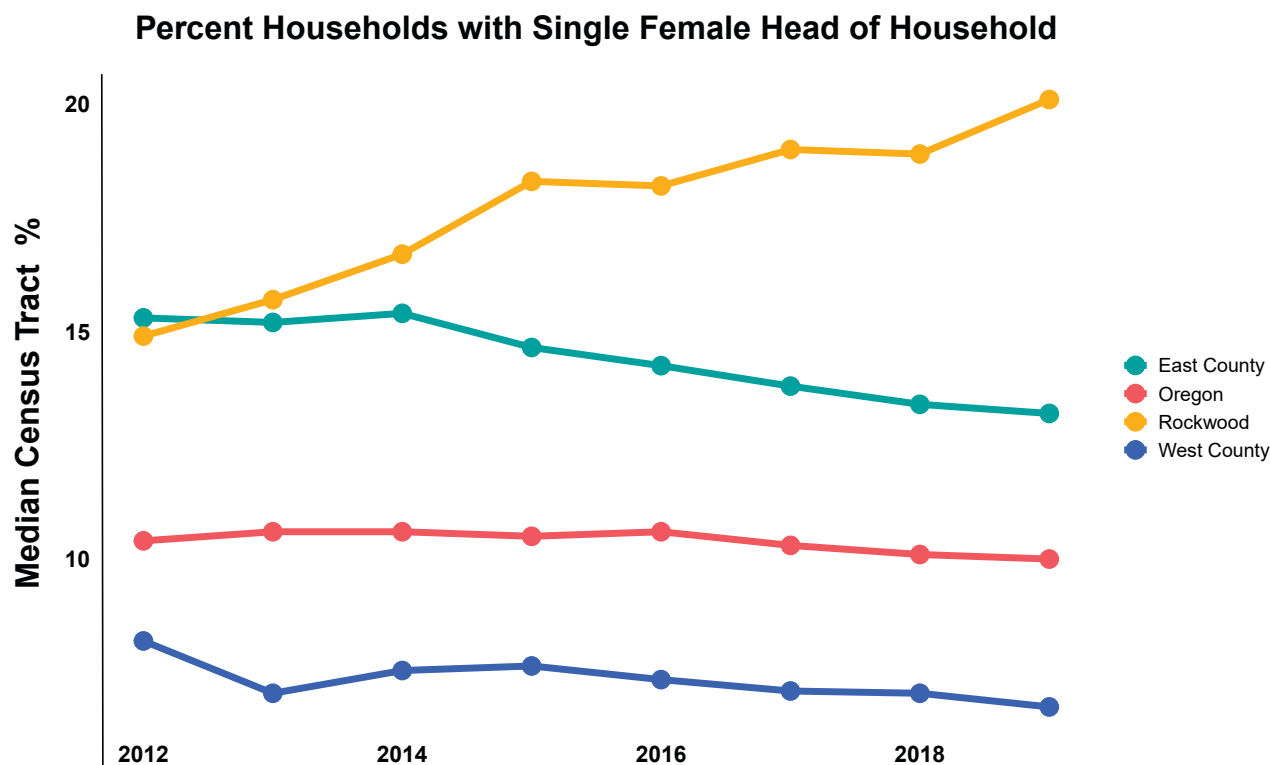


Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates

In this map, the darker census tracts illustrate places where there is a greater proportion of young people in the community, according to 2019 US Census estimates.

One type of family that the US Census counts in its surveys are households with a single female head of household; these families often experience more barriers and access to resources than others, and thus are considered especially vulnerable.

In Rockwood, the number of single female head of households has increased by approximately 5 percent since 2012, whereas statewide, the number has remained essentially unchanged over the same period.



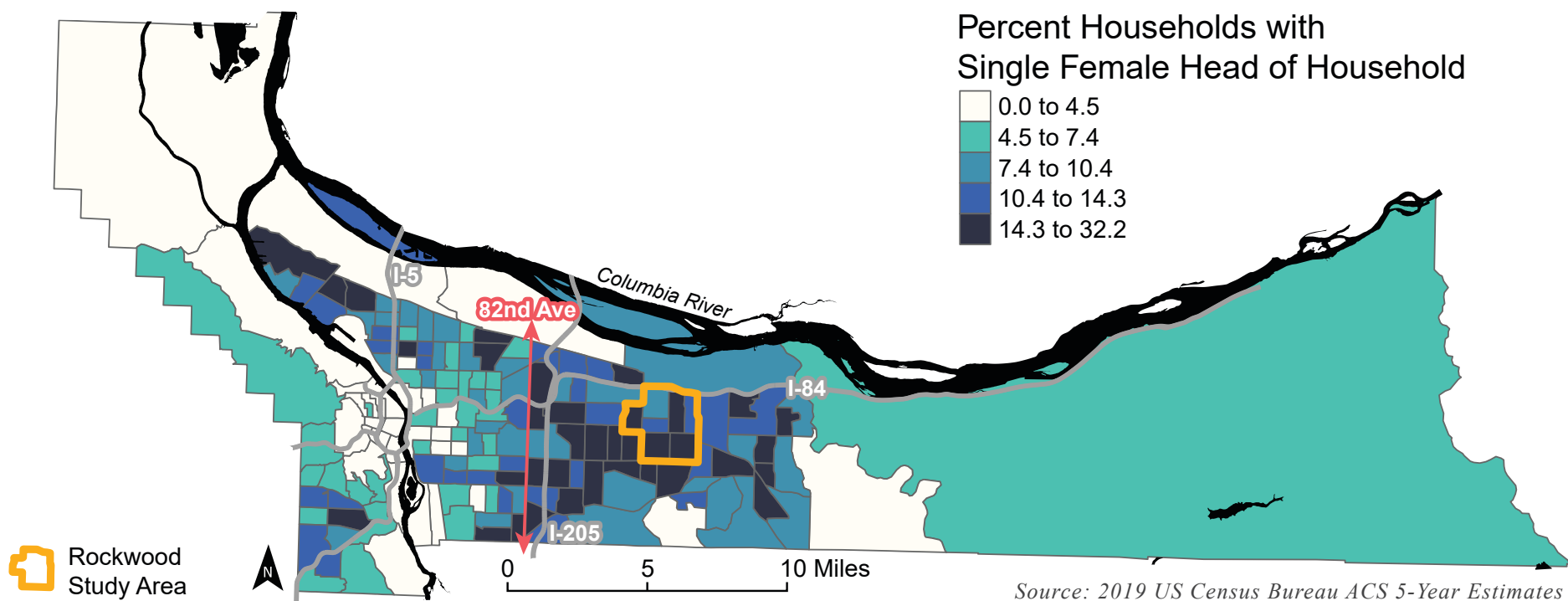
Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

Note: This axis does not begin at 0

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
East County	15.3	15.20	15.40	14.65	14.25	13.8	13.40	13.20
Oregon	10.4	10.60	10.60	10.50	10.60	10.3	10.10	10.00
Rockwood	14.9	15.70	16.70	18.30	18.20	19.0	18.90	20.10
West County	8.2	7.05	7.55	7.65	7.35	7.1	7.05	6.75

The proportion of households who are headed by single mothers in Rockwood is greater than other areas in Multnomah County and Oregon statewide.

In this map, the darker census tracts illustrate places where there is a greater proportion of single mothers in the community, according to 2019 US Census estimates.

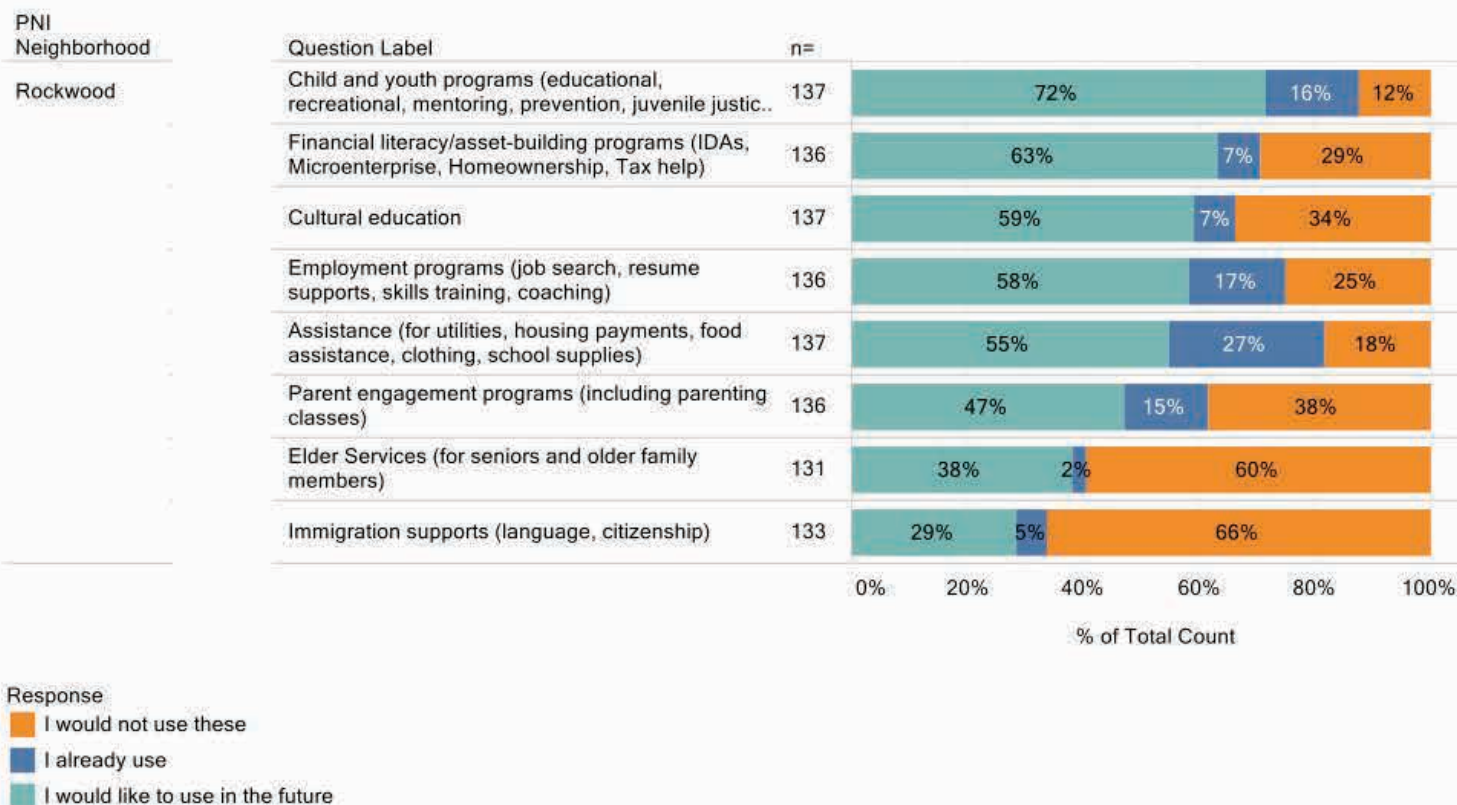


The following graphs were produced for the 2019-2020 neighborhood survey administered by the Albina-Rockwood Promise Neighborhood Initiative. They provide additional context for families in these two neighborhoods.



Exhibit 33. Interest in and utilization of services by Neighborhood

Service and Program Priorities

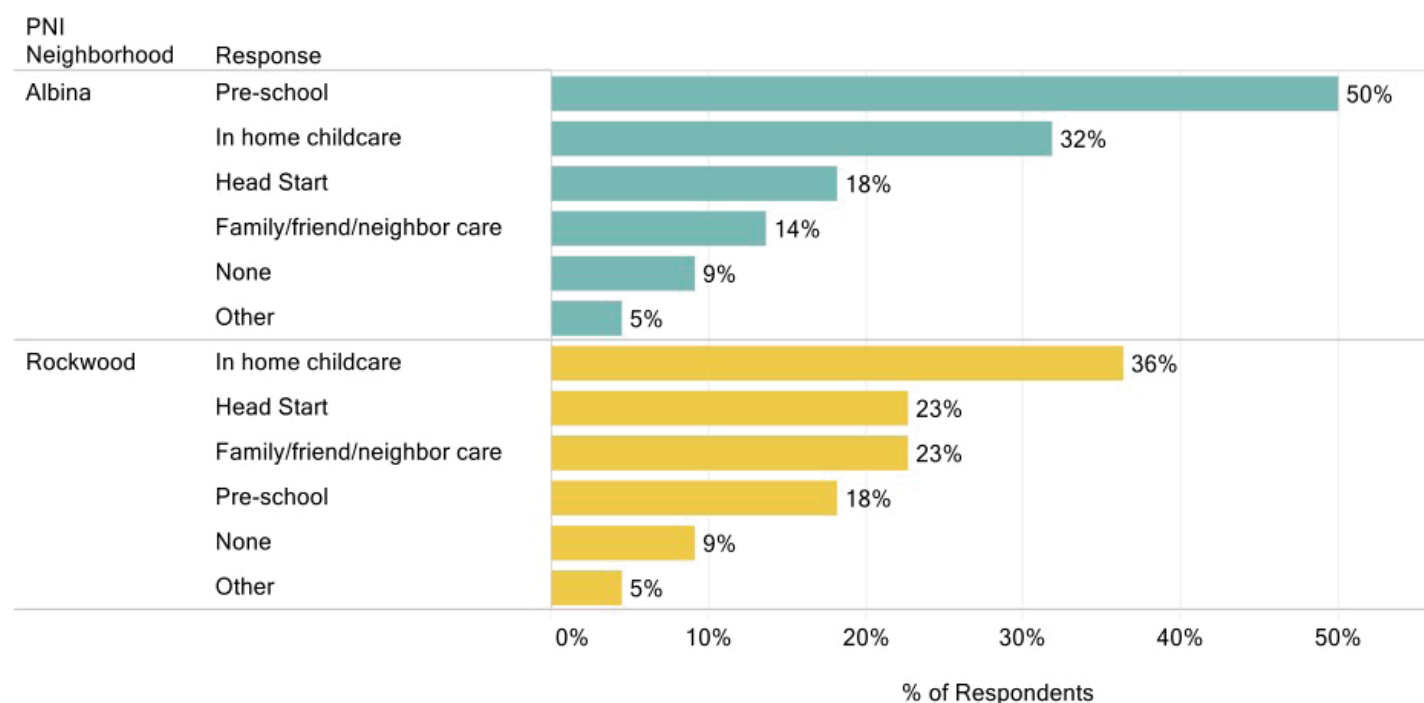


Source: Albina-Rockwood Promise Neighborhood Initiative



Exhibit 25. Types of childcare and early learning programs utilized by participants with children ages 3-5 years old

Types of Childcare and Early Learning Programs Accessed by Families



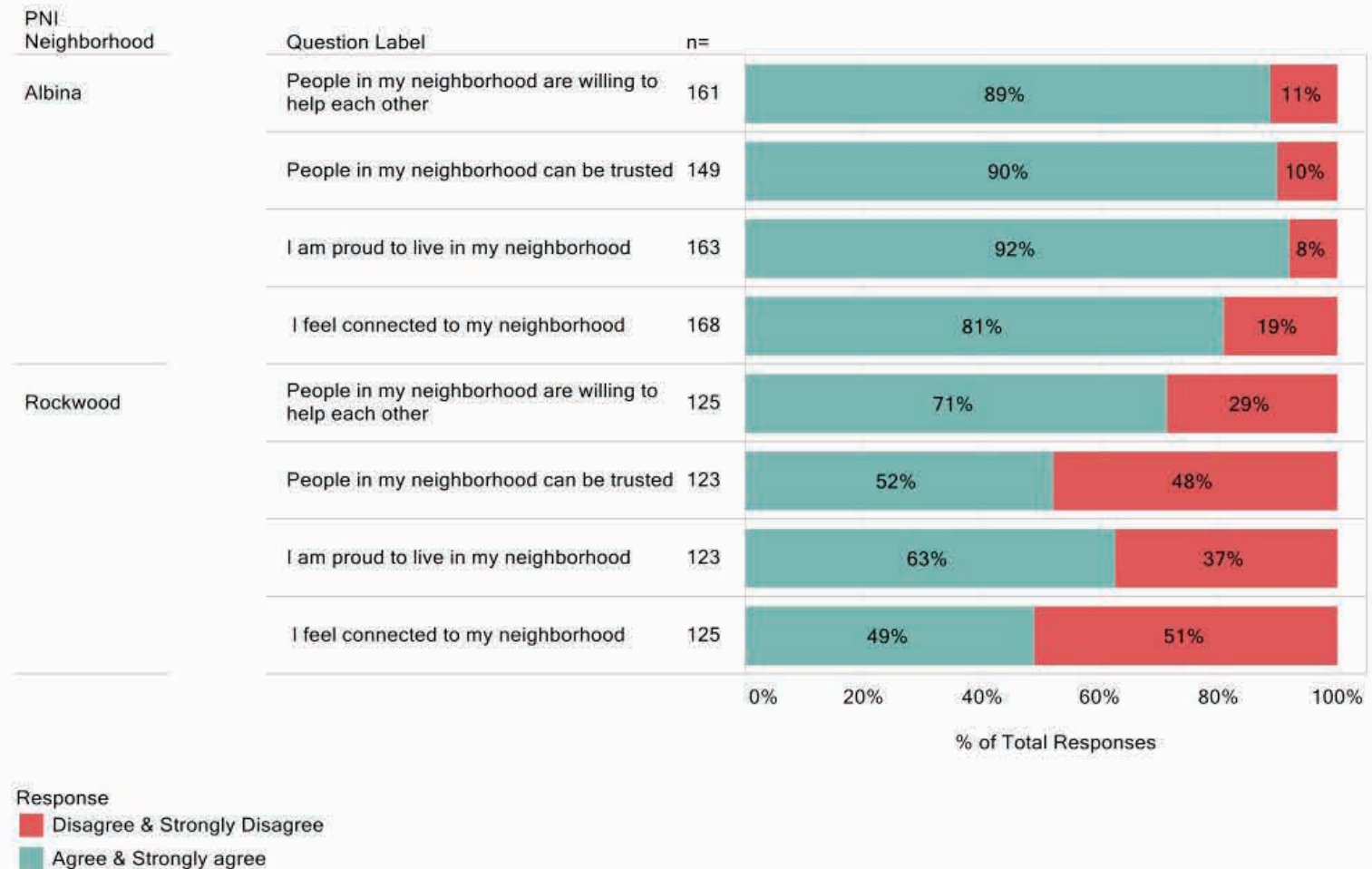
Albina Neighborhood, n=22; Rockwood Neighborhood, n=22

Source: Albina-Rockwood Promise Neighborhood Initiative

Participants with children ages birth to pre-K were also asked to identify their top priority, other than cost or location, when considering preschool or other early learning programs. In both neighborhoods, families identified safety, quality of education, and a welcoming environment as top priorities.



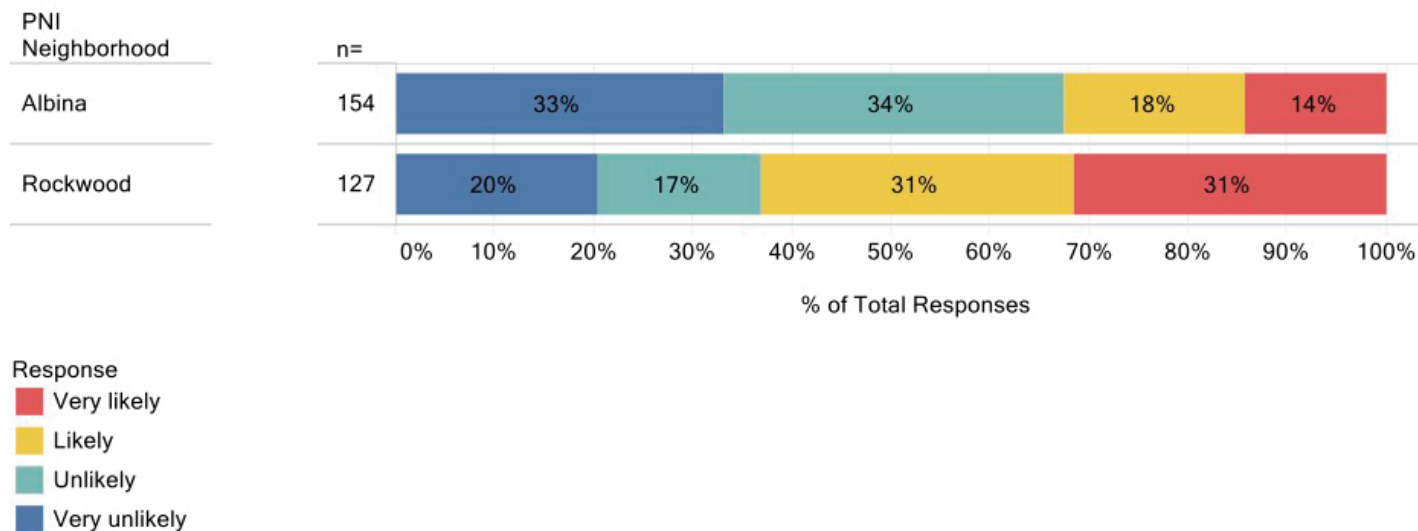
Community Connectedness



Source: Albina-Rockwood Promise Neighborhood Initiative



How likely are you to move out of the neighborhood in the next 5 years?



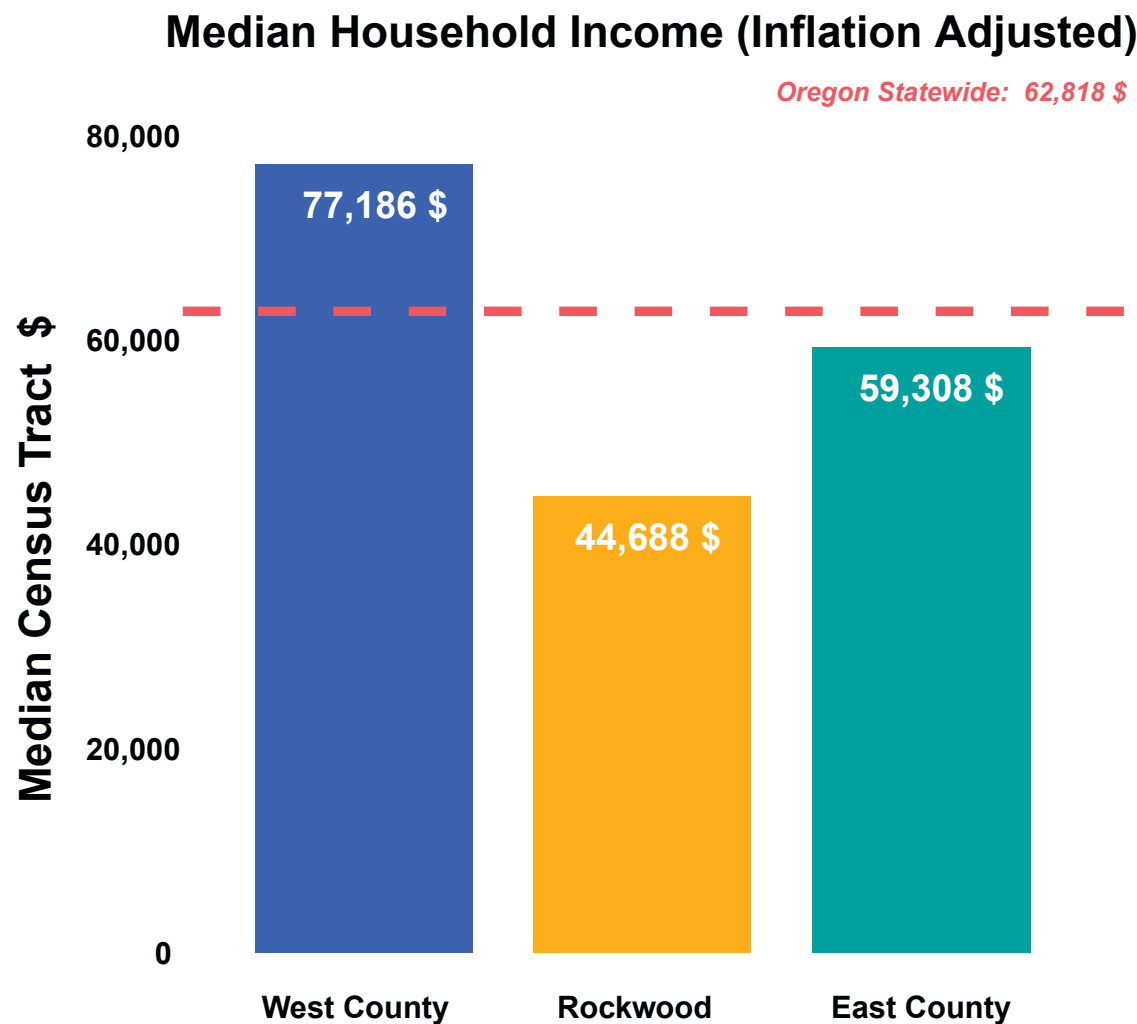
Sense of Safety

Perceived neighborhood safety has been shown to be tied to the health and well-being of adults and children (Smaldone, et al 2007; Sun, et al 2011). Rockwood residents reported concerns for personal safety when moving about their neighborhood, especially at night. Survey responses also suggest differences between neighborhoods when it comes to residents' sense of safety. For example, 5% of participants in the Albina neighborhood reported feeling unsafe walking alone or moving about their neighborhood during the day compared to 17% of Rockwood survey participants.

Source: Albina-Rockwood Promise Neighborhood Initiative



JOBS 6



Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

The median household income in Rockwood is 30% less than the median household income in Oregon statewide.

Median Household Income (MHI) is an indicator often used to approximate how wealthy a particular neighborhood is. Because income is closely related to many other quality of life outcomes, it is often used to gauge social vulnerability.

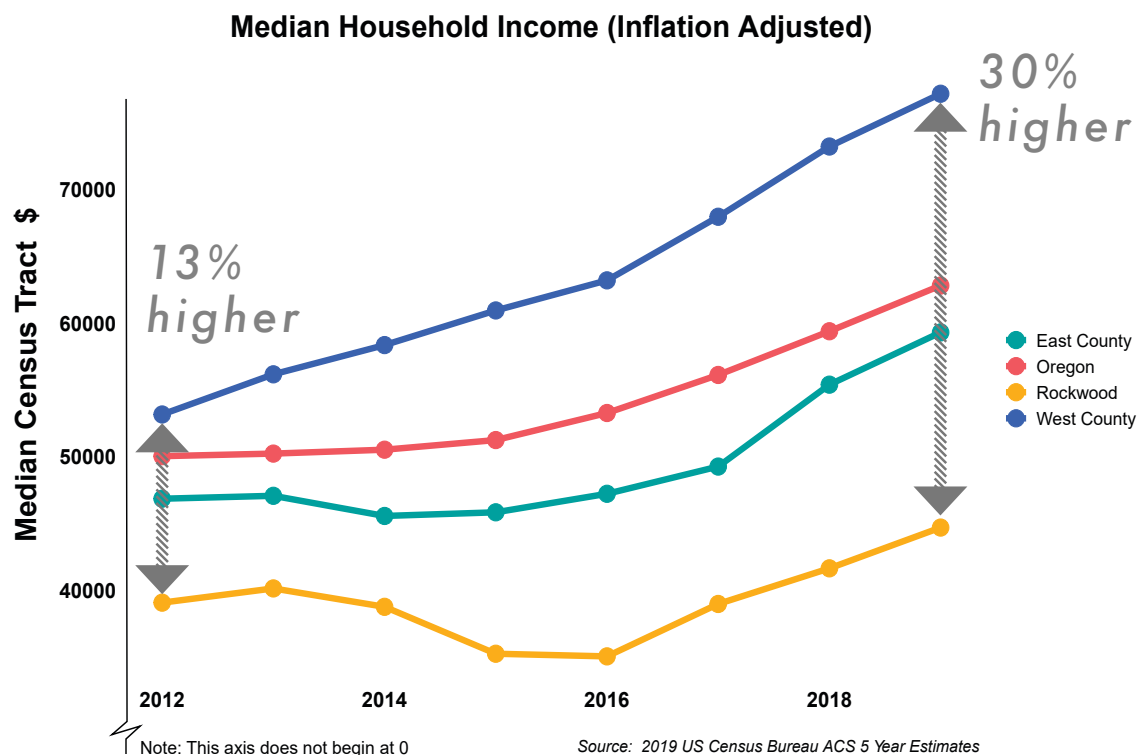
In 2019, the median household income in Rockwood was an estimated at \$44,688.* This figure is roughly 70% of the median household income among all Oregon households.

*It is also important to remember that while useful, the median value of a sample doesn't yield information about the shape of a distribution as a whole. This matters because 50% of Rockwood residents make more than the figures reported here, and 50% of Rockwood residents make less, but the degree to how much more and how much less is not reported here.

Between 2012-2019, the median household income in Rockwood rose 14.4%. However, in just 7 years, the income gap has more than doubled.

Rockwood experienced a decline in median household income between 2012-2016, in contrast to West Portland and the state as a whole. East County's median household incomes stagnated over the same period but didn't decline to the extent that Rockwood's did.

The cause of these trends is outside the scope of this report, but are likely due to a combination of factors including, but not limited to, rising housing costs forcing lower income residents in West County to move into Rockwood, and macroeconomic trends that have resulted in wage increases in industries in which Rockwood residents are less likely to have jobs.

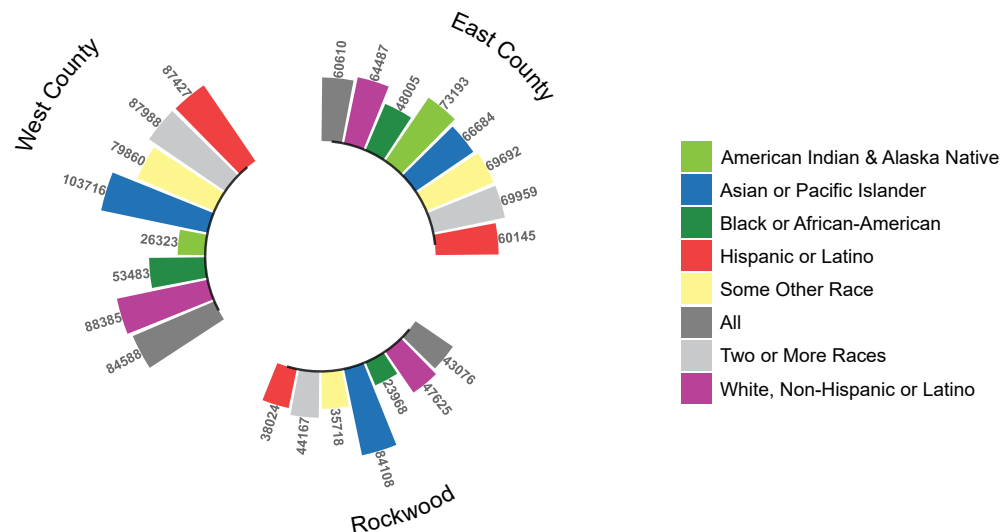


	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
East County	46,849	47,066	45,556	45,830	47,218	49,257	55,393	59,308
Oregon	50,036	50,229	50,521	51,243	53,270	56,119	59,393	62,818
Rockwood	39,063	40,128	38,750	35,236	35,038	38,964	41,633	44,688
West County	53,159	56,167	58,357	60,951	63,205	67,971	73,232	77,186

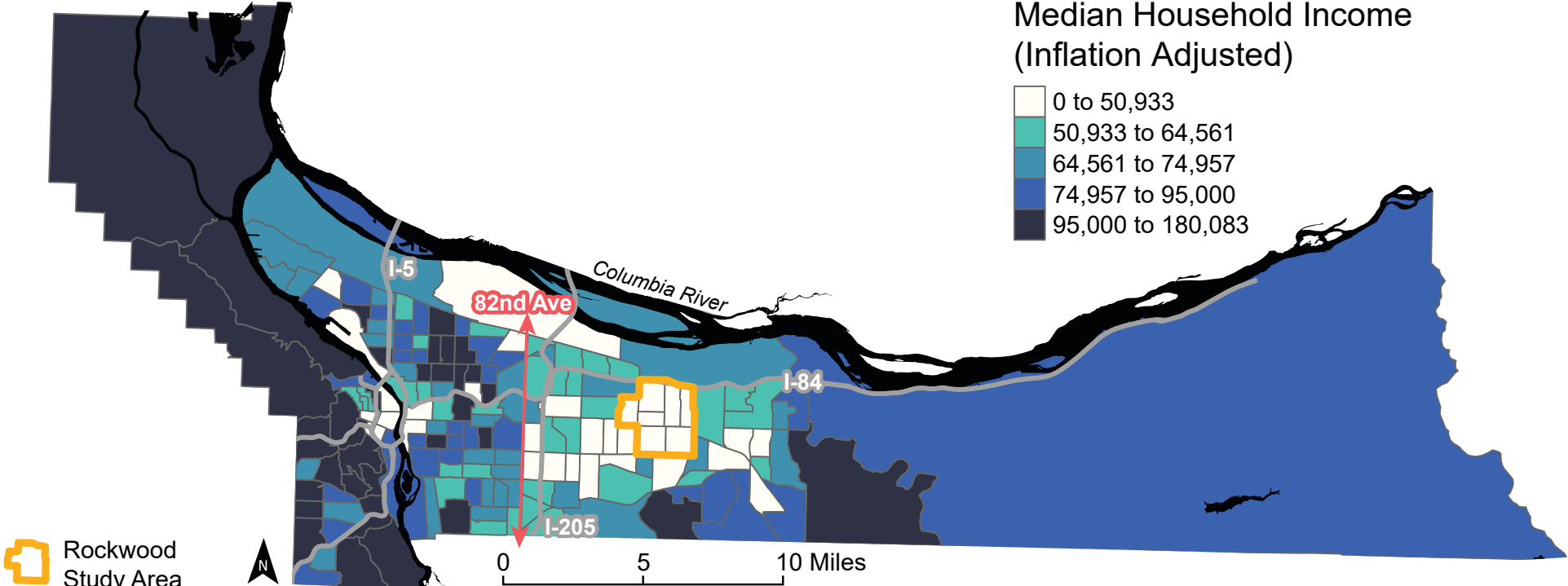
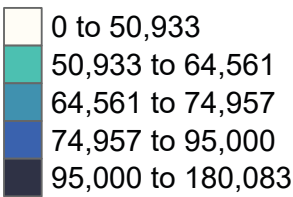
Median household incomes vary spatially across Multnomah County for every demographic group.

In this map, the darker census tracts illustrate places where median household incomes are higher according to 2019 US Census estimates.

Average Median Household Income by Race
2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Median Household Income (Inflation Adjusted)



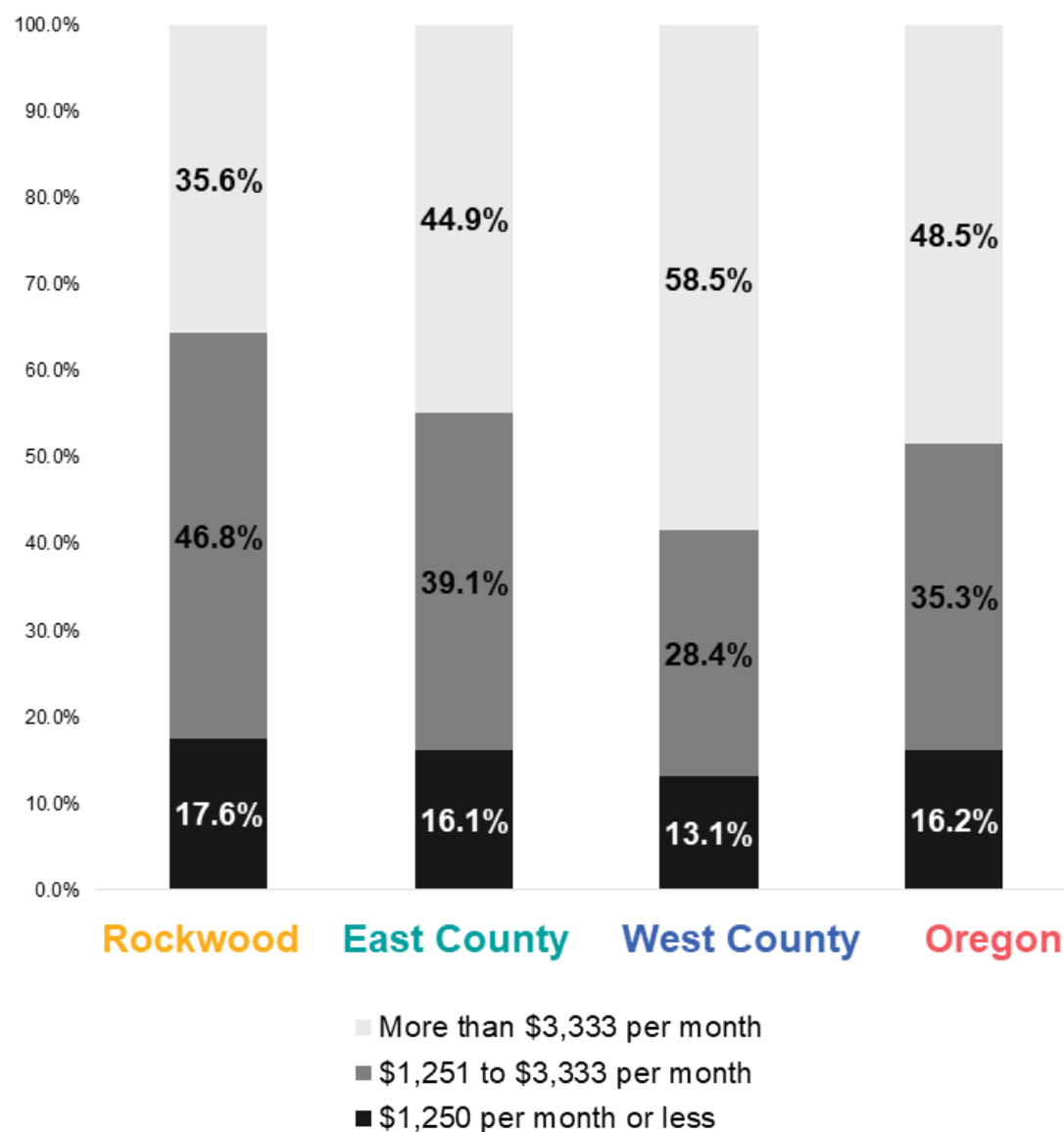
Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates

Median household income (MHI) in Multnomah County is highest in the West Hills, Southwest Portland and Northeast Portland. Low-income tracts tend to be located east of 82nd Avenue.

Across nearly all demographic groups, households earn the highest incomes in West County. Notably, the average household income among Rockwood's Asian and Pacific Islander households is almost double the racially aggregated average household income.

The Census Bureau classifies monthly earnings into three categories: less than \$1,250 per month, between \$1,250 and \$3,333 per month, and more than \$3,333 per month to broadly assess incomes in various communities. Rockwood has the lowest share of workers who earn more than \$3,333 per month compared to East County, West County, and Oregon statewide. Meanwhile, Rockwood has the highest share of workers who earn \$1,250 per month or less compared to East County, West County, and Oregon statewide.

Earnings of Employed Residents



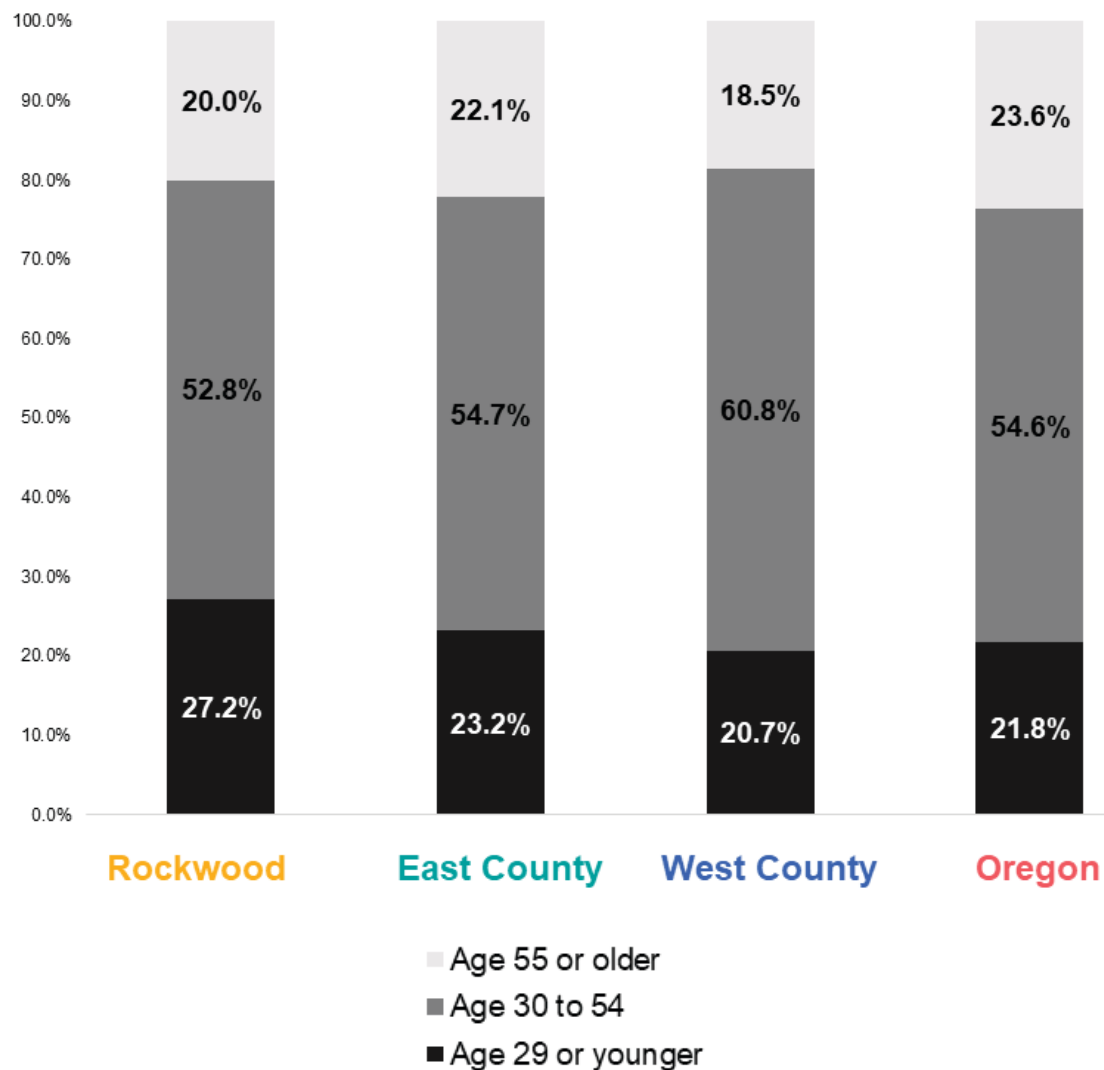
Source: Upstream Cartography Collective+

The labor force in Rockwood is younger than the rest of Multnomah County, and Oregon statewide.

One explanation for the disparities in income experienced by Rockwood residents is age. Rockwood's workforce is much younger than other parts of the county. For example, compared to West County, Rockwood has roughly 7% more workers aged 29 or younger. By contrast, West County has 8% more workers aged 30-54.

Generally speaking, younger workers earn lower salaries than mid-career workers and this is likely partially why Rockwood residents' incomes are lower. It also suggests that Rockwood is an affordable neighborhood for young working class families.

Age of Employed Residents

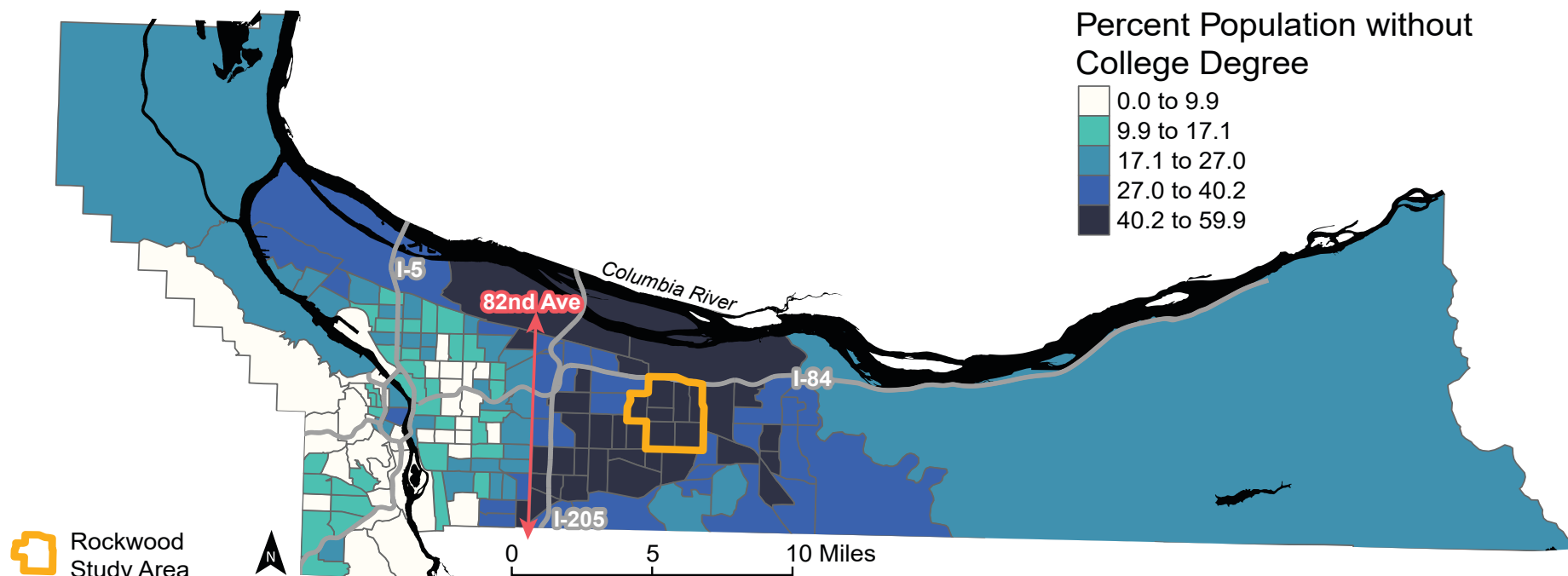


Source: Upstream Cartography Collective+

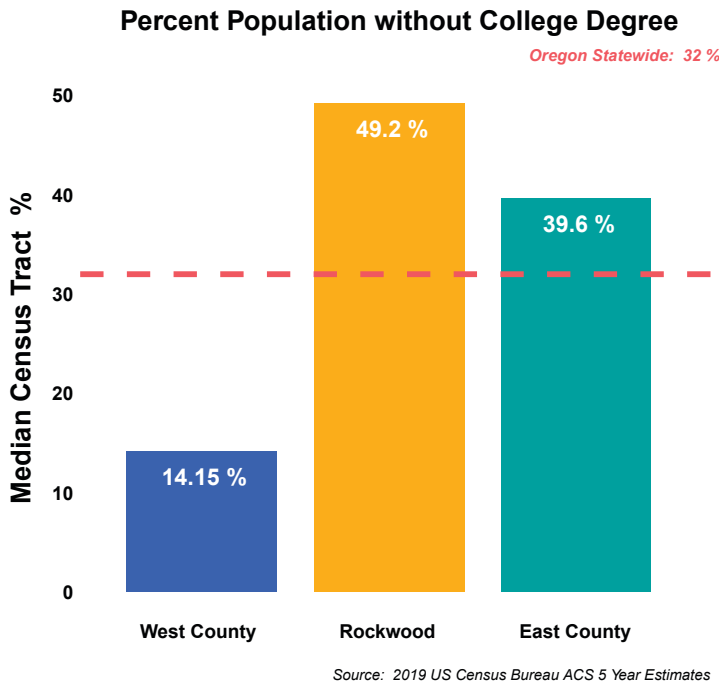
In Multnomah County, the majority of college degree holders (bachelor's and associates) live west of 82nd Avenue.

In this map, the darker census tracts illustrate places where there is a greater proportion of residents without college degrees, according to 2019 US Census estimates.

Another factor closely associated with household incomes is education. The spatial distribution of college degree-holding households in Multnomah County can be understood on a continuum from east to west. Rockwood and East Multnomah County tend to not have as many college-degree holding residents, which partially explains the disparities in household incomes.

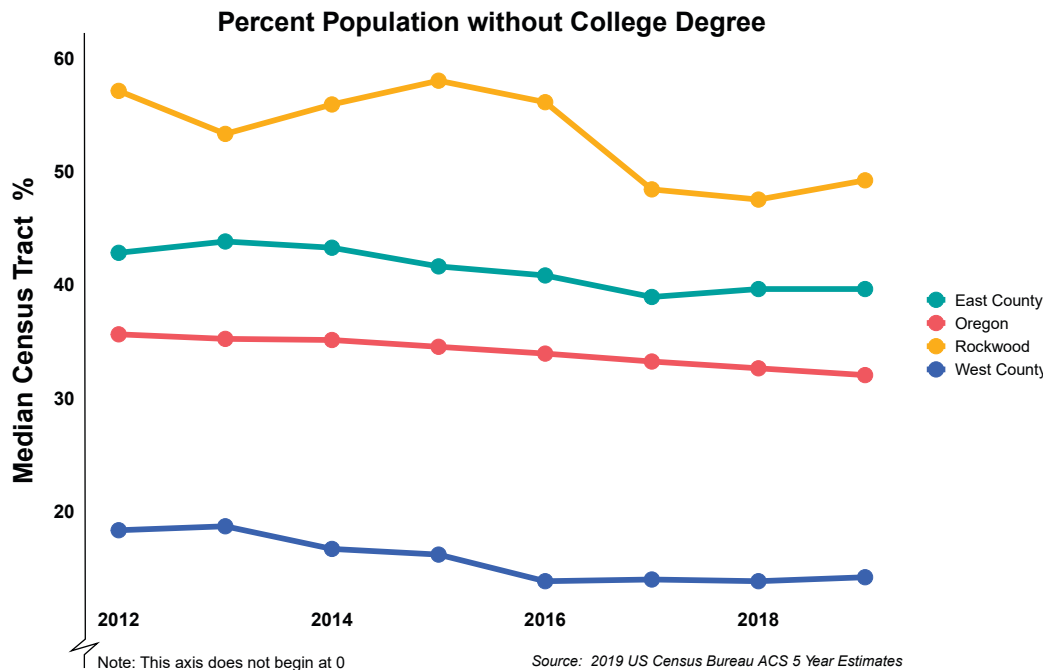


The number of college degree holders in Rockwood has been increasing since 2012.



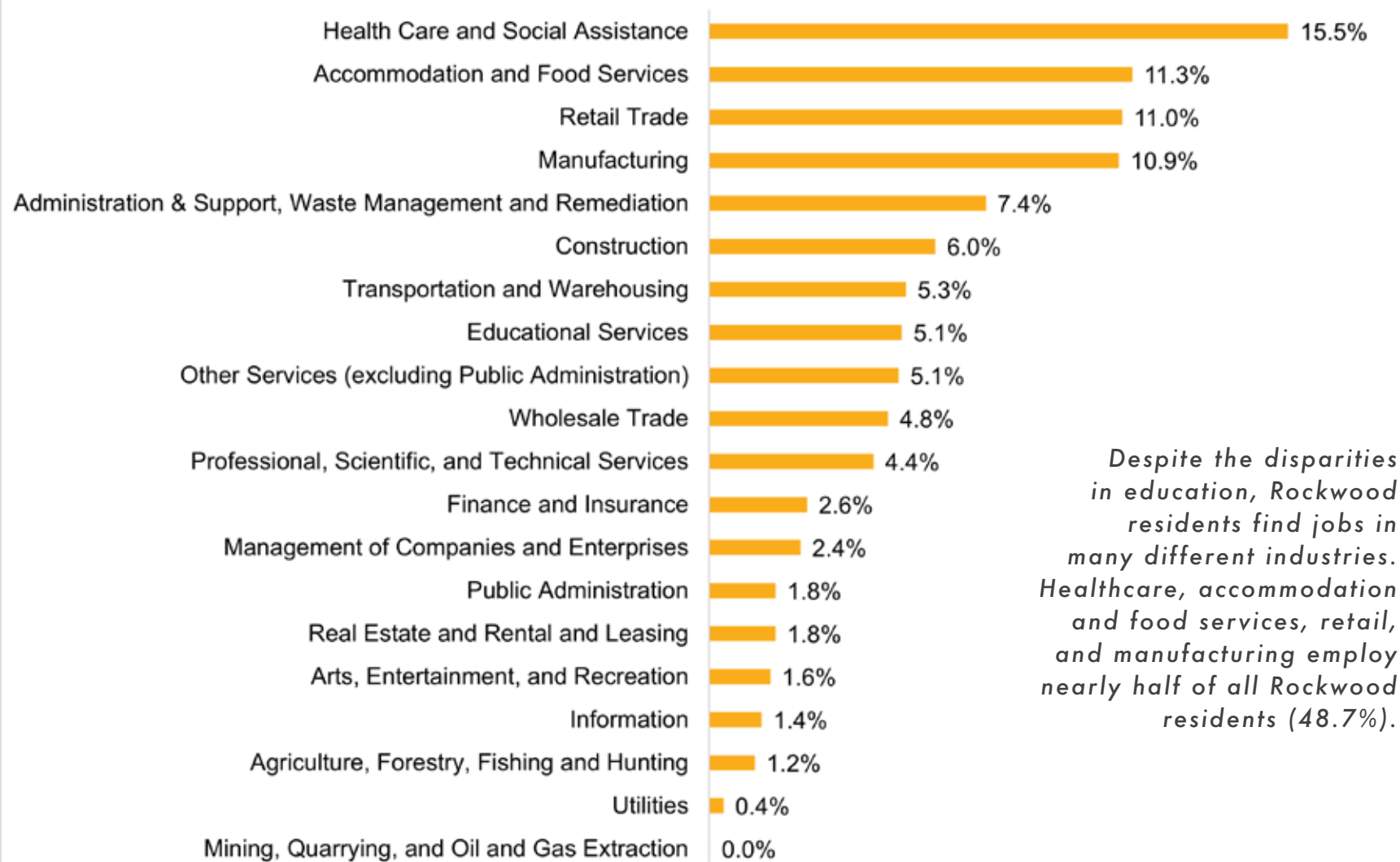
In Rockwood, approximately 50% of community members lack a college degree of some kind. The proportion of non-college-educated residents is about 18% higher than the statewide average. This may create barriers to accessing higher paying jobs.

However, since 2012, the number of Rockwood residents with college degrees has increased 8%.



	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
East County	42.8	43.80	43.25	41.60	40.8	38.90	39.6	39.60
Oregon	35.6	35.20	35.10	34.50	33.9	33.20	32.6	32.00
Rockwood	57.1	53.30	55.90	58.00	56.1	48.40	47.5	49.20
West County	18.3	18.65	16.65	16.15	13.8	13.95	13.8	14.15

Share of Jobs held by Rockwood Residents (2018)



Source: 2018 US Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, LEHD

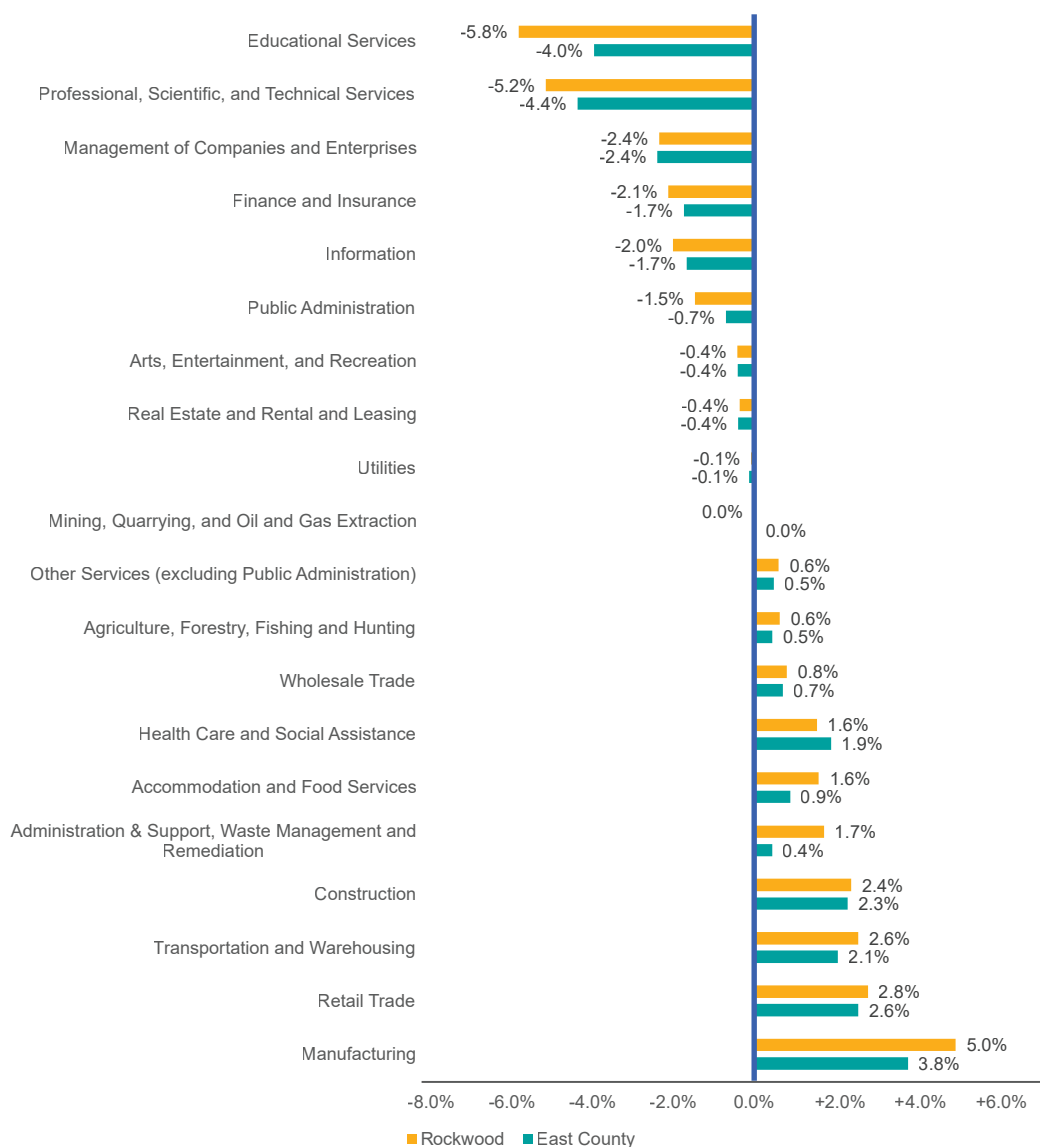
One important way to understand how Rockwood fits into the larger economy of Multnomah County is to compare the industries that employ Rockwood residents to the industries that employ East and West County residents. On the following page, we show the industries that Rockwood residents tend to work more in compared to West County residents, as well as industries that don't employ as many Rockwood residents.

According to the US Census Bureau, the top three largest gaps in employment among Rockwood residents are in educational services, professional, scientific, and technical services, and management of companies and enterprises. Whereas the top three industries that employ Rockwood residents are manufacturing, retail trade, and transportation and warehousing.

Some of the many reasons why these disparities exist include access to and attainment of education, different social capital, language barriers, cultural differences, and the effects of intergenerational poverty. Economic progress for Rockwood residents may mean implementing policies that either improve access to certain industries, promoting the growth of others where Rockwood already has an advantage, or a combination of both.

Collectively, the manufacturing, retail, transportation and warehousing industries employ 10.4% more Rockwood residents than West County residents.

Difference in Employment by Industry: Rockwood and East County Residents Compared to West County Residents



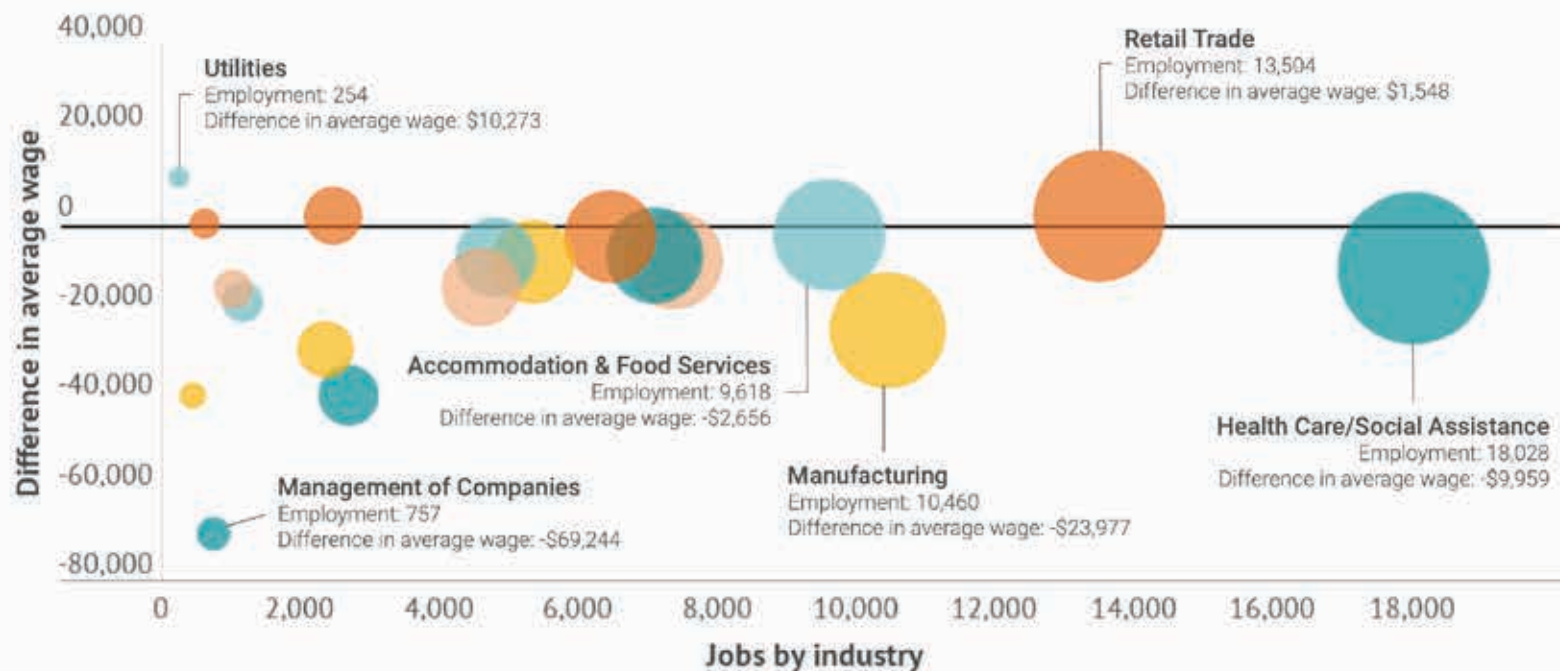
In this chart, the vertical blue bar represents the amount of West County residents who work in an industry. The yellow and green bars represent the difference in the number of Rockwood and East County residents employed in the same industry.

Industries that Rockwood residents work in less

Industries that Rockwood residents work in more

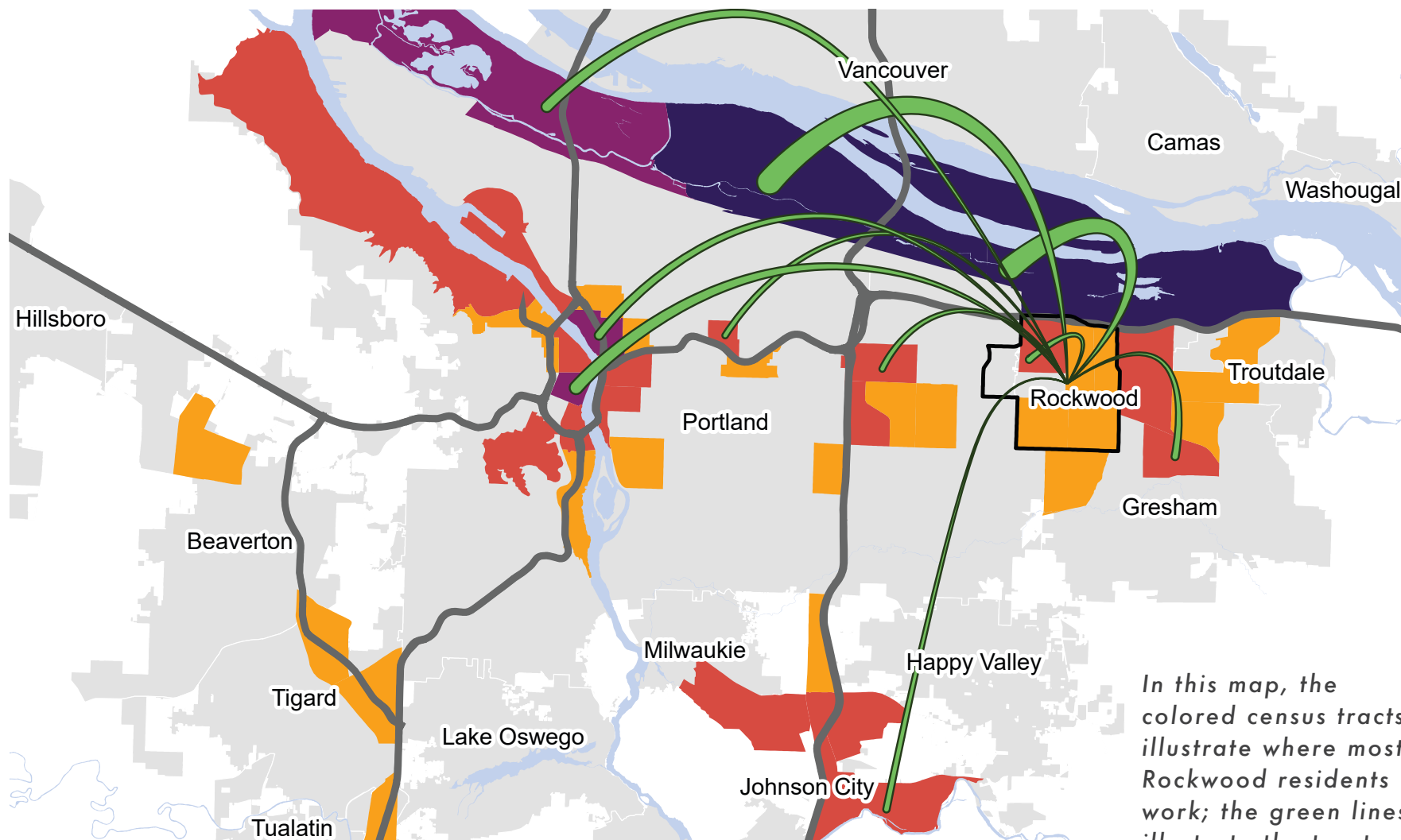
Source: 2018 US Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, LEHD

Figure 31: East Multnomah County industries by total employment and difference in average wage compared to the Portland region (Oregon portion), 2017



Source: ECONorthwest analysis of QCEW 2017 data

Why this matters: it highlights the need for retaining and attracting family-wage jobs, so those who live here have access to the same opportunities as the rest of the region.



TOP CENSUS TRACTS ROCKWOOD RESIDENTS WORK IN

Number of Jobs

Orange	86 - 146
Red	147 - 264
Purple	265 - 516
Dark Blue	517 - 1053

- Top 10 Job Destinations
- Highway
- Rockwood Study Area
- Water
- City Boundary

In this map, the colored census tracts illustrate where most Rockwood residents work; the green lines illustrate the top ten census tracts. The darker colors and wider lines represent more workers.



Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates

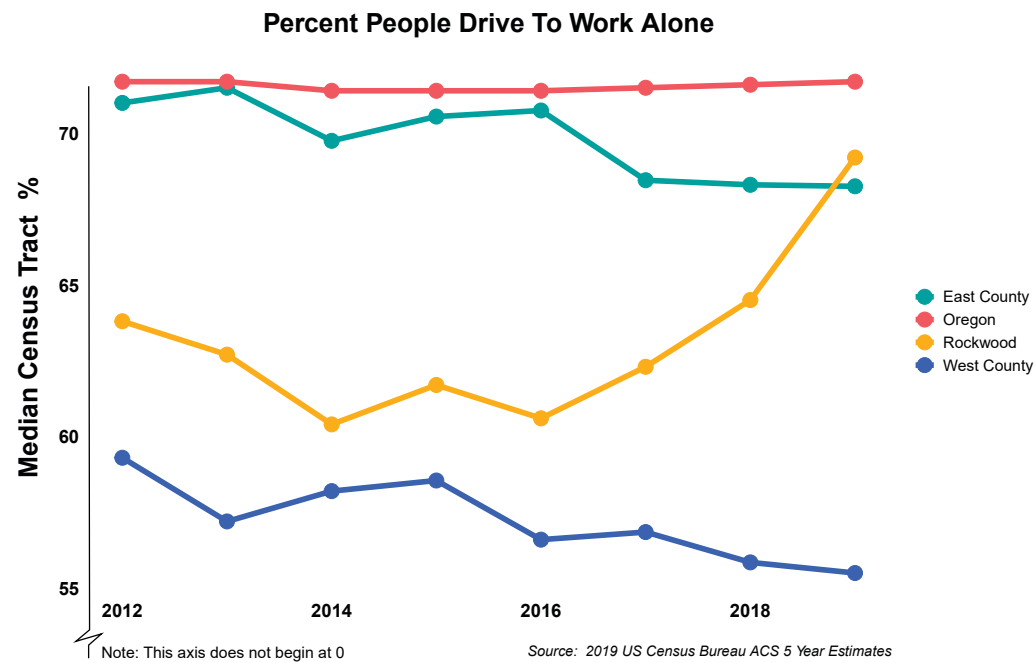
Approximately 17,000 workers live within the Rockwood study area shown in the map. Of that population, 95% work outside of Rockwood, and only 5% both live and work in Rockwood.

One of the main reasons for this is that Rockwood is largely comprised of low-density residential zones, meaning that most people have to commute outside the neighborhood to find work.

Many jobs for Rockwood residents are in downtown Portland, Johnson City, the north Portland industrial areas, Gateway and downtown Gresham.

Healthcare, food services, retail, and manufacturing all employ the largest number of people in Rockwood. Many of the locations where these industries are located take significant time to travel to, which could partially explain why the share of Rockwood residents who commute to work by driving alone has increased 5.4% between 2012-2019.

95% of residents work outside of Rockwood, and only 5% both live and work in Rockwood.



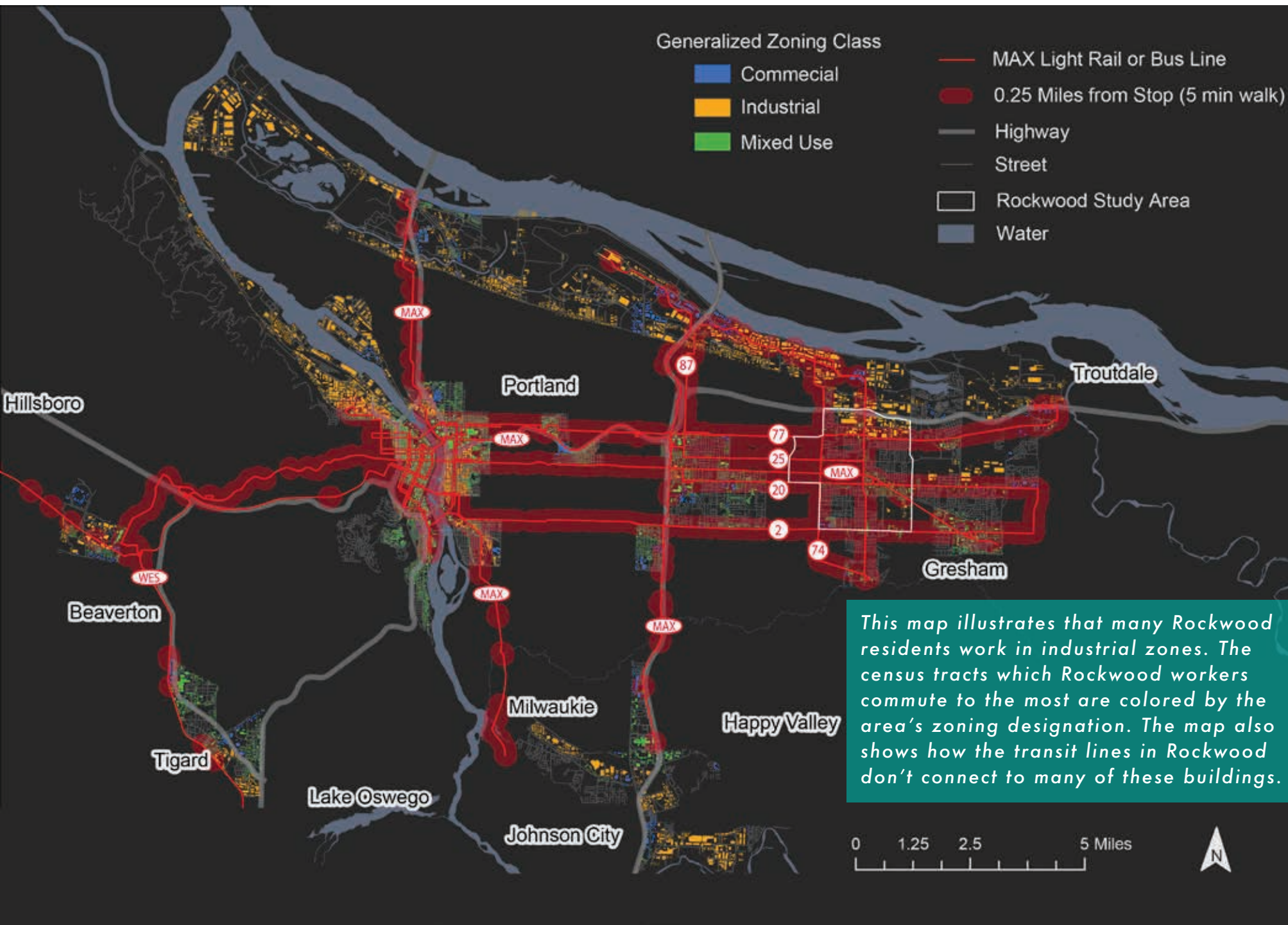
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
East County	71.0	71.5	69.75	70.55	70.75	68.45	68.30	68.25
Oregon	71.7	71.7	71.40	71.40	71.40	71.50	71.60	71.70
Rockwood	63.8	62.7	60.40	61.70	60.60	62.30	64.50	69.20
West County	59.3	57.2	58.20	58.55	56.60	56.85	55.85	55.50

Transportation in Rockwood is primarily accomplished via personal vehicles: a legacy of the low-density residential development that characterizes much of Multnomah County east of 82nd Avenue. The public transit options in Rockwood are underpinned by the MAX Blue Line, which runs from downtown Gresham through downtown Portland to Hillsboro. Key bus lines for Rockwood residents are routes 87, 77, 25, 20, 2, and 74. However, for many workers, taking public transit for their commute isn't always a convenient option.

In the following map, we again show the top ten census tracts (and buildings) where Rockwood residents work, but this time we overlay the transit options to get there (without having to transfer to a different line), including a five-minute walk distance from available stops. The map illustrates how the seven transit lines that begin in Rockwood don't go to all the places where people work.

Additionally, commuting by transit may be harder for Rockwood residents because of the industries they tend to work in. The healthcare, accommodation and food services, retail, and manufacturing industries tend to be in specifically zoned areas in the metro region, have strict clock-in times, require moving equipment, and offer non-standard work hours. Finally, Route 25, which travels between Rockwood and Gateway Transit Center (a top ten employment area), is not offered on weekends. All these factors may contribute to transit being an unreliable transportation option for workers, particularly those with young families.

The seven transit lines in Rockwood don't go to all the places where people work.

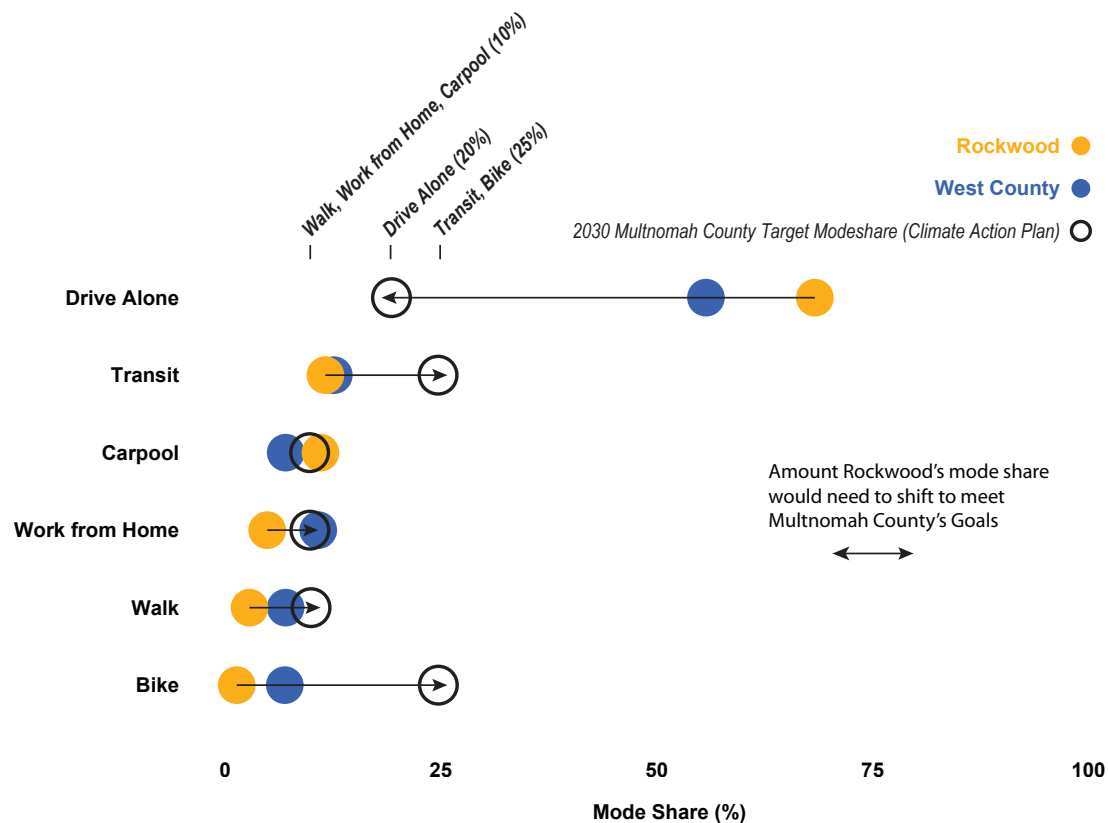


In order to achieve the commute mode share targets, Rockwood would need to decrease its reliance on single occupancy vehicles by 40%.

By contrast, eight of the top ten census tracts where West County residents work are in downtown Portland or the Central East Side, an area for which the majority of transit lines service. The widespread locations of Rockwood jobs may be the largest factor in most residents' choice to commute by vehicle. Indeed, the percentage of people in Rockwood taking public transit to work decreased by 3.4% between 2012-2019 from 14.9% to 11.5%.

To achieve the commute mode share (the percentage of residents who commute to work by different methods) targets from Multnomah County's 2030 Climate Action Plan, Rockwood would need to decrease its reliance on single occupancy vehicles by 40% and increase its reliance on transit by 15%. This may not be possible without expanded transit services that consider the varying transportation needs of Rockwood's residents.

Notably, Rockwood already exceeds the county's carpool goal by 1%, and at 11%, is 4% higher than West County.

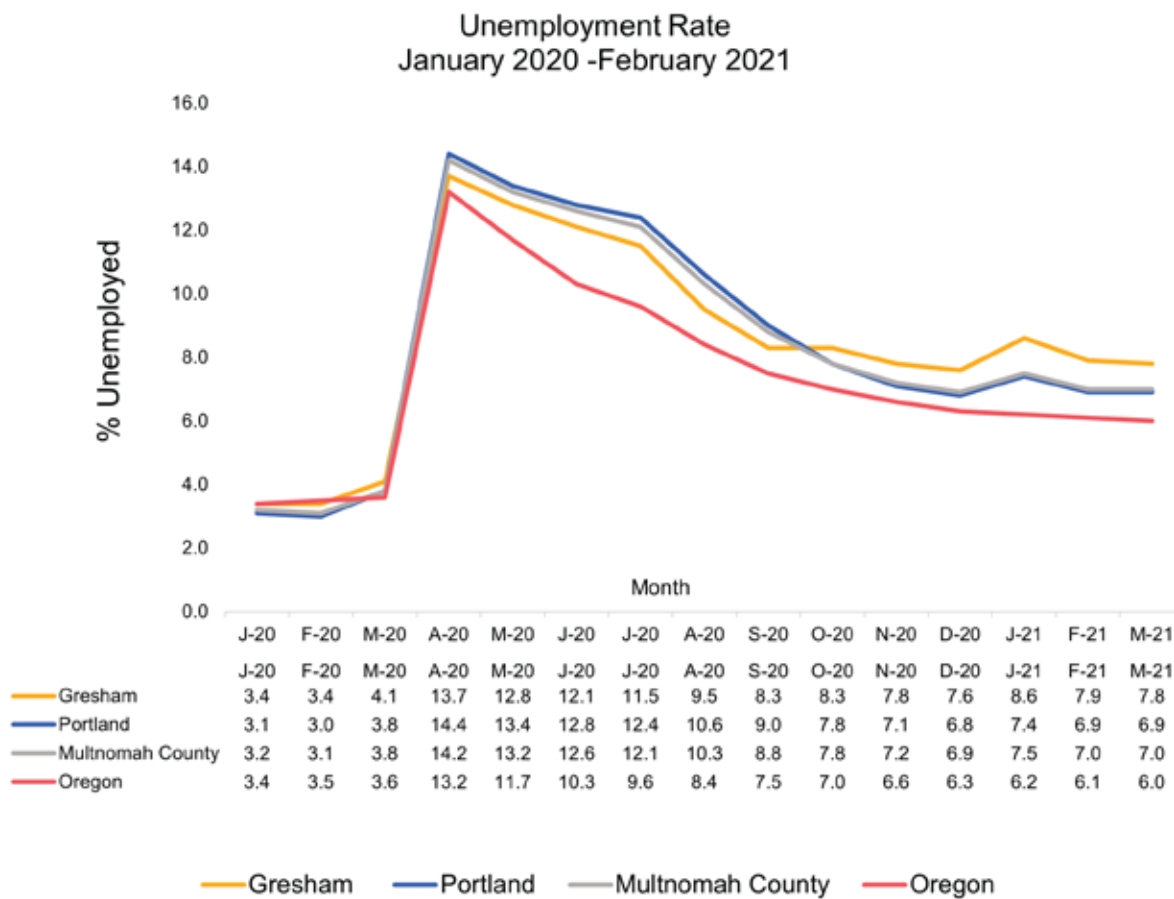


Source: Upstream Cartography Collective+

The chart above shows Rockwood's commute mode share compared to West County. The arrows indicate how Rockwood would need to shift its commute behavior to match the targets set by Multnomah County's 2030 Climate Action Plan.

COVID-19 Impact

Gresham's unemployment rate has remained higher than the rest of the county since September 2020.



Source: Upstream Cartography Collective+

The Covid-19 pandemic impacted the US economy in extraordinary ways. While nearly every industry slowed in the short term, the long-term impacts were extremely varied and not uniformly distributed.

Some industries, due to the nature of their work, were able to continue with minimal disruption. Others were forced to take extreme measures to adapt to the pandemic, and many workplaces laid off employees. Some of the hardest hit industries were the accommodation/ food service and retail industries, which employ more than 1 in 5 people in Rockwood's workforce.

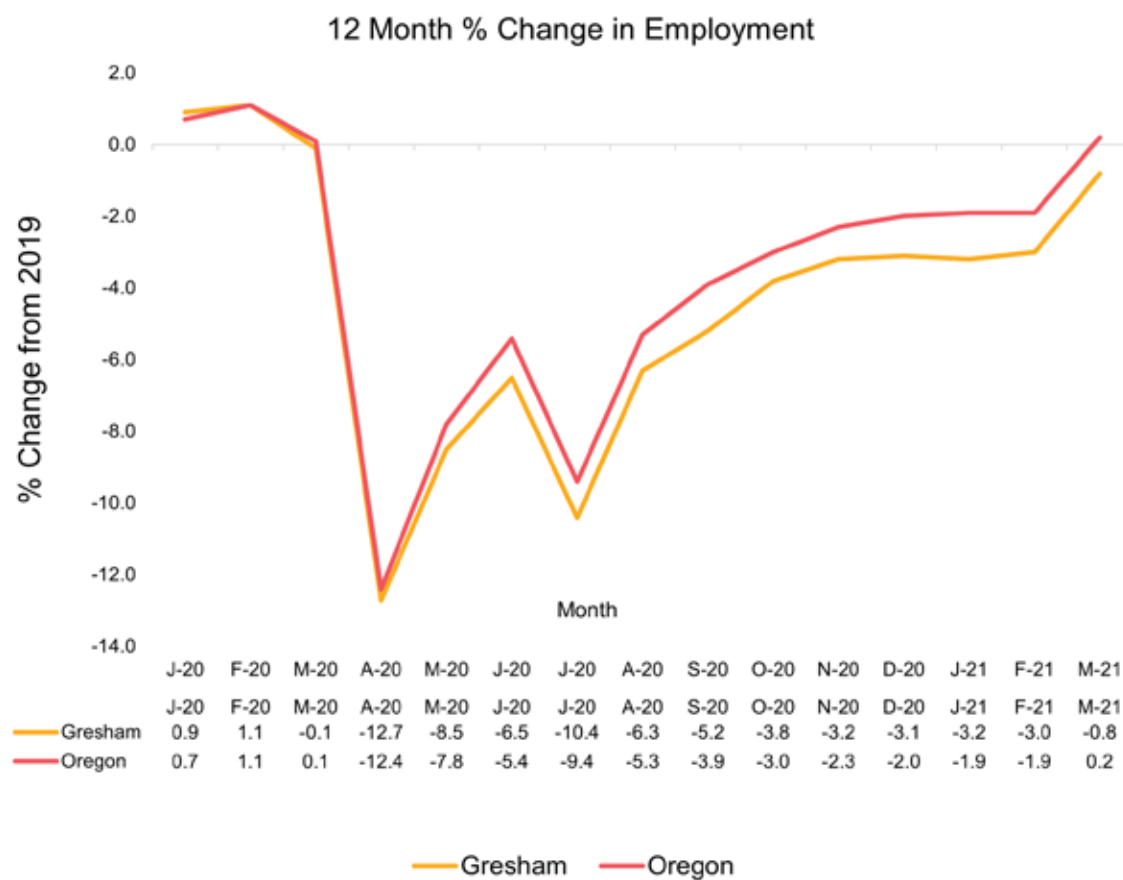
As of March 2021, Gresham (the smallest jurisdiction for which the data was available) had an unemployment rate of 7.8 percent, while Oregon statewide had an unemployment rate of 6 percent. (Rockwood is officially a neighborhood within Gresham).

Compared to Oregon statewide, Gresham residents lost 0.3 percent more jobs when pandemic restrictions were first introduced in April 2020.

The long term damage to Gresham's economy by the pandemic appears to be slightly greater than to Oregon's statewide. By late February 2021, employment in Oregon had recovered to where it was a year before. For Gresham, it will take longer to recover the employment levels it had before the pandemic began.

Therefore, Rockwood would likely benefit from additional state and local aid to ensure an equitable recovery.

By March 2021, Oregon had recovered its employment levels to that of March 2020. Likewise, Gresham had nearly recovered its employment levels, but is still 0.8 percent lower than March 2020.



Source: Upstream Cartography Collective+



HEALTH 7

Introduction

The previous sections of this report identified how many Rockwood residents experience economic instability attributed to displacement, rent burden, and limited job, education and transportation access. Paired with the deterioration of social support through displacement and the difficulty of system navigation for foreign-born populations, Rockwood residents are highly socially vulnerable, according to an index developed by researchers at Portland State University and the Mapping Action Collective.

‘Social vulnerability’ is a measure of the conditions that contribute to a higher risk of physical and mental illness and overall burden that illness brings. Factors from the index used to measure social vulnerability include:

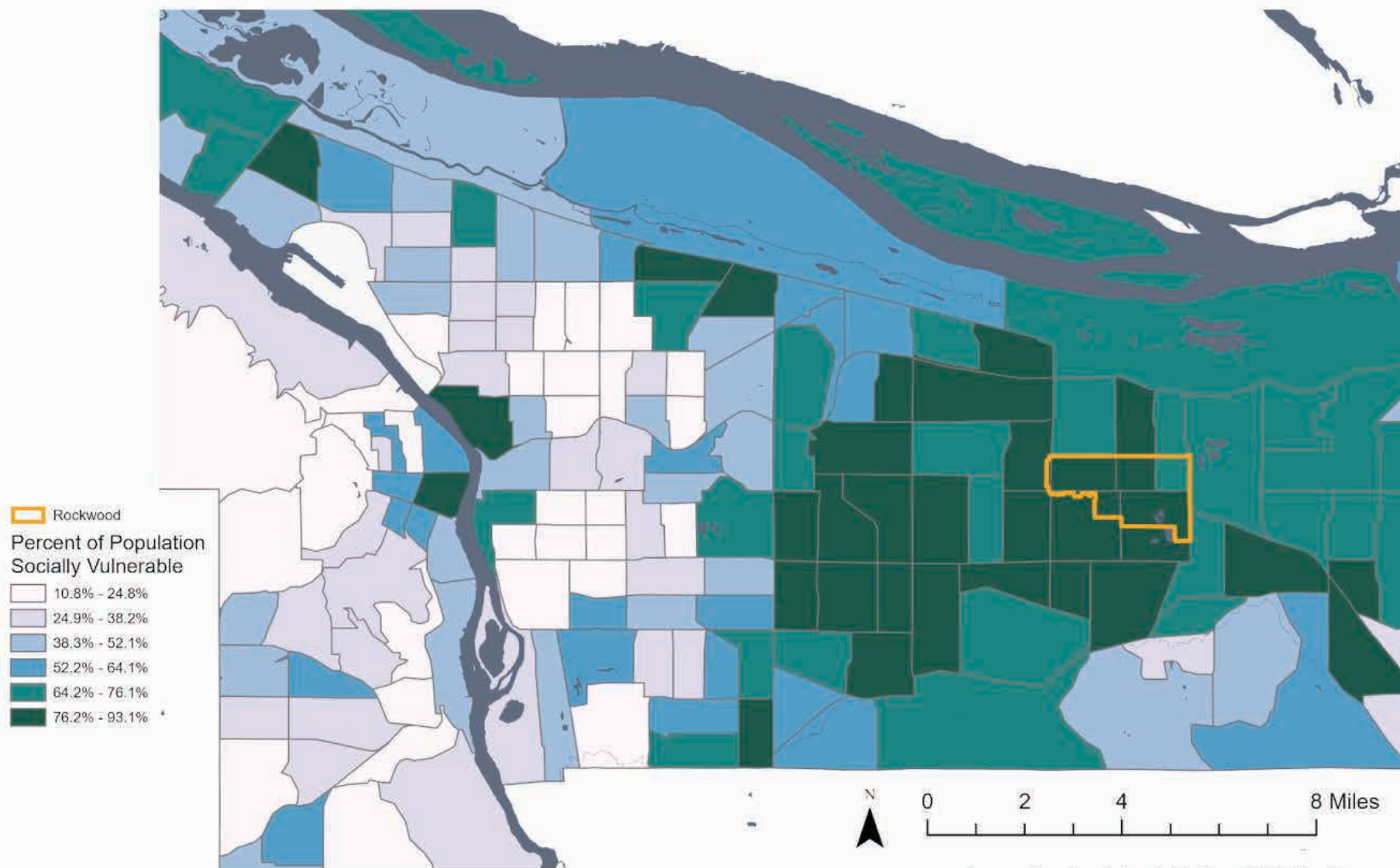
- * Percent of the population that is dependent (0-4 & 65+)
- * Percent with a bachelor’s degree (negatively weighted)
- * Percent of the population that is White, Not Hispanic (negatively weighted)
- * Unemployment rate
- * Percent of the population with a disability
- * Percent of renters that are cost burdened
- * Percent of homeowners that are cost burdened.¹¹

Social vulnerability in Multnomah County, as defined above, is startlingly demarcated by 82nd Avenue, fitting the narrative of neglect and othering experienced by East Portland residents through the structural and systemic manifestations of racism, xenophobia, and economic inequity. Despite its location in the city of Gresham, Rockwood more closely resembles the social vulnerability trends of East Portland while seeing the highest rates of social vulnerability in East Multnomah County. Additionally, Gresham and East County experience substantially higher rates of social vulnerability than the City of Portland and West County.

‘Social vulnerability’ is a measure of the conditions that contribute to a higher risk of physical and mental illness and overall burden that illness brings.

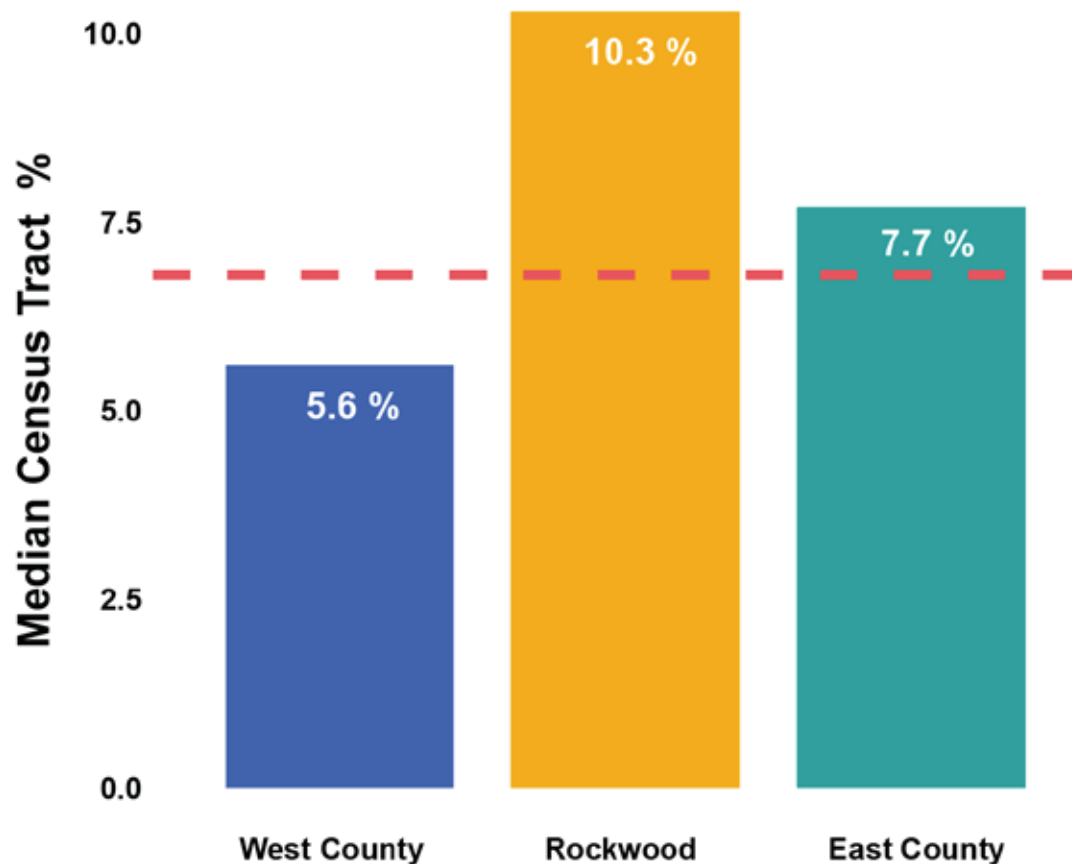
Socially Vulnerable Population, Multnomah County, 2018

In this map, the darker census tracts illustrate places where there is higher social vulnerability.



Percent of Population Without Health Insurance

Oregon Statewide: 6.8 %



Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

The social vulnerability experienced in Rockwood is heightened by the presence of disability and little access to healthcare and insurance. This creates a substantial financial barrier for those seeking medical care. Those with immediate medical needs are then subjected to out-of-pocket medical costs and the coinciding financial burden.

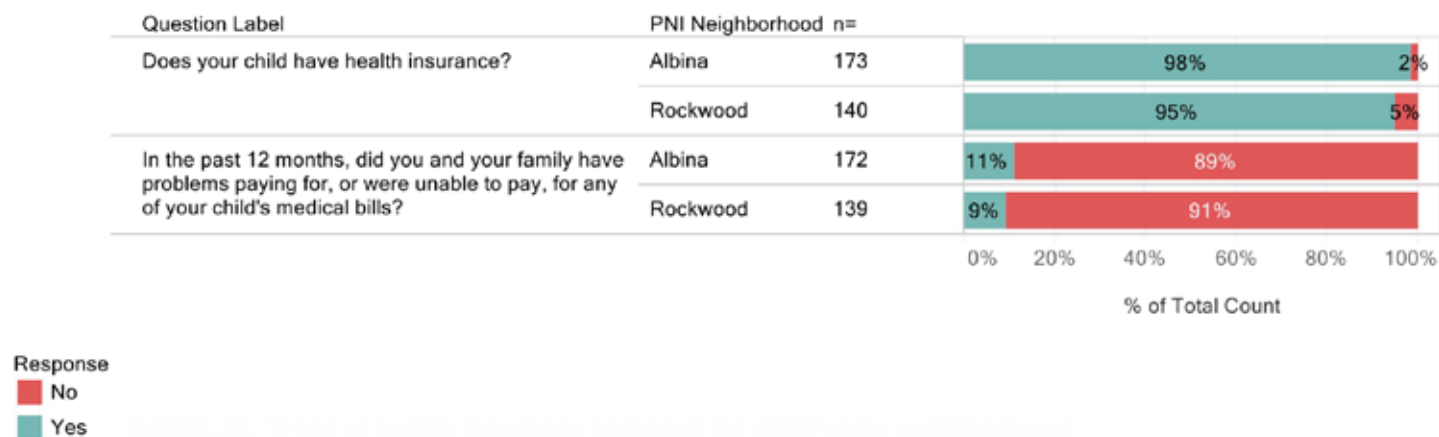
As of 2019, there were approximately 4% more Rockwood residents without health insurance than Oregon statewide.

People in Rockwood experience a higher prevalence of disability than those in both West and East County and in comparison to Oregon statewide.

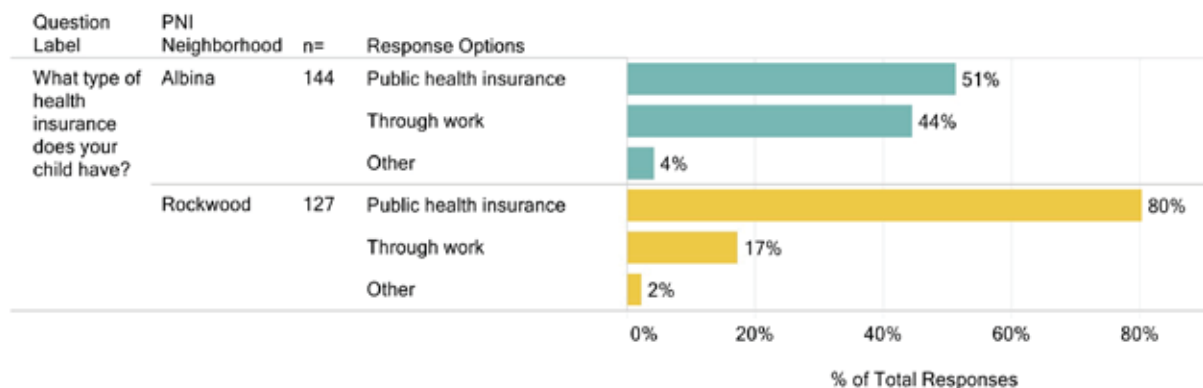
The following graphs were produced for the 2019-2020 neighborhood survey administered by the Albina-Rockwood Promise Neighborhood Initiative. They provide additional context for families in these two neighborhoods.

Exhibit 27. Access to health care for children by neighborhood

Health Insurance and Access to Health Care



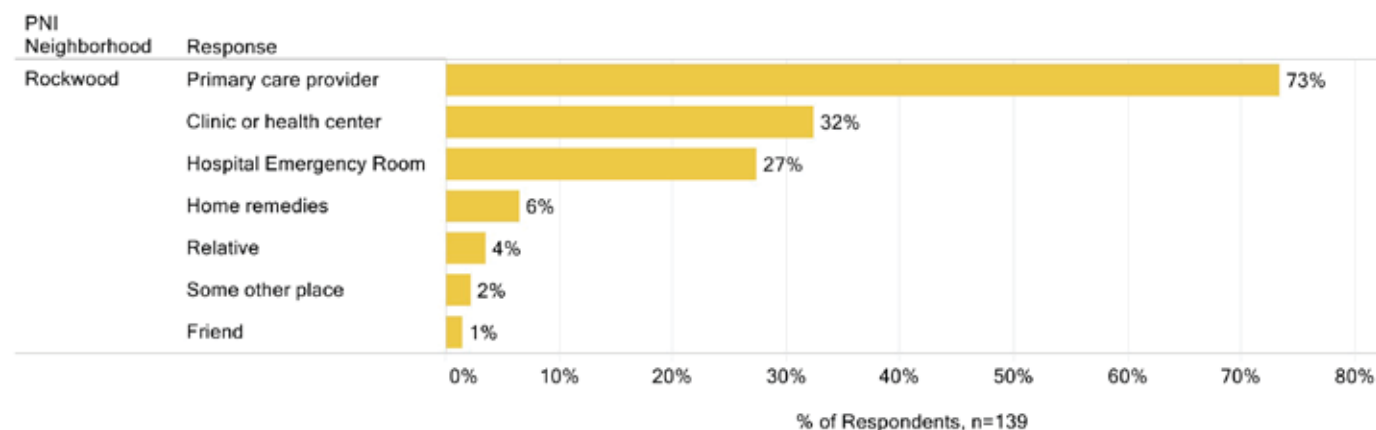
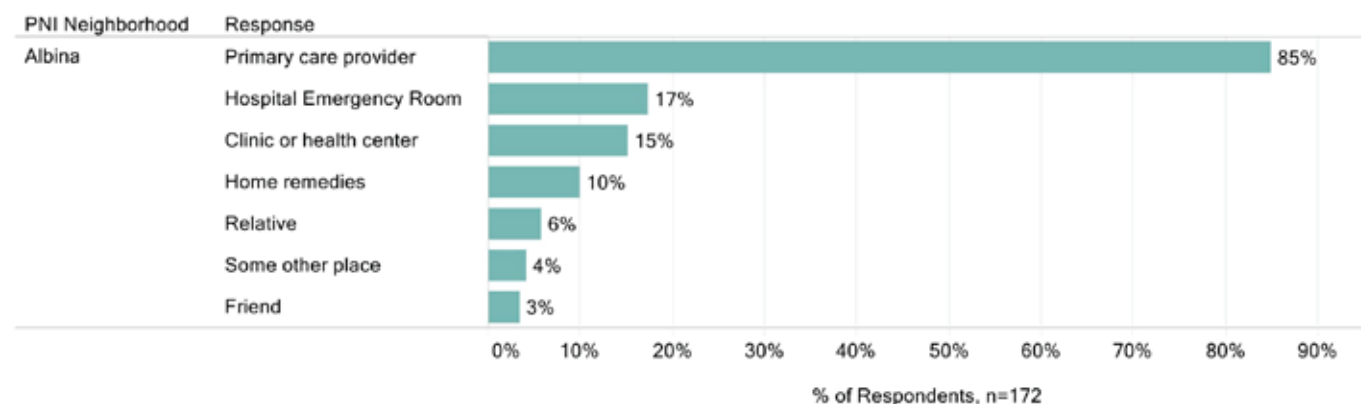
Type of Health Insurance



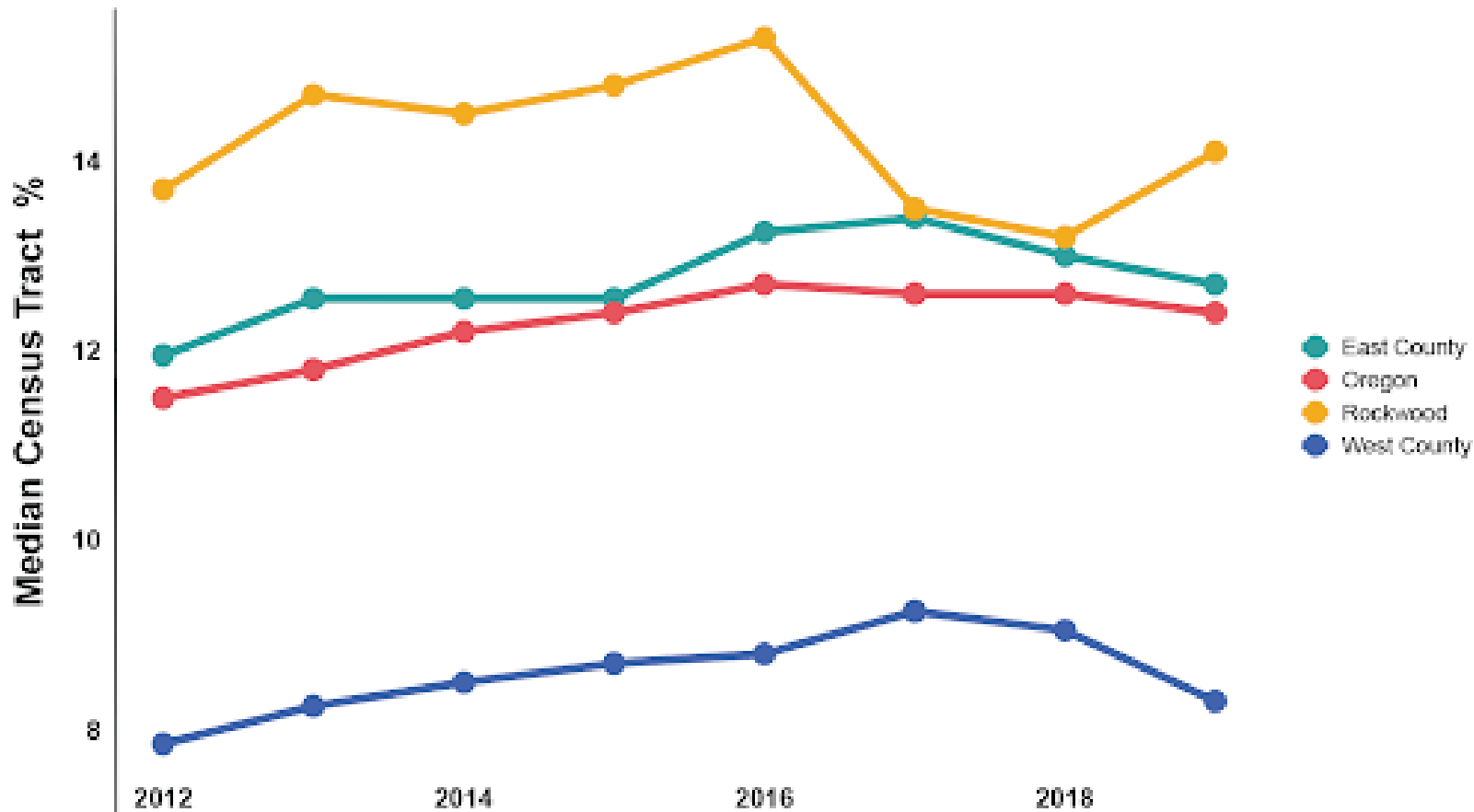
A higher percent of families in the Rockwood neighborhood (32%) compared to the Albina neighborhood (15%) also reported utilizing clinics or health centers, suggesting that such facilities are important resources for the Rockwood community.

Exhibit 29. Medical home for child by neighborhood

Where Do You Take Your Child When They Are Sick or When You Have Questions about Their Health?



Percent People With a Disability



Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

Note: This axis does not begin at 0

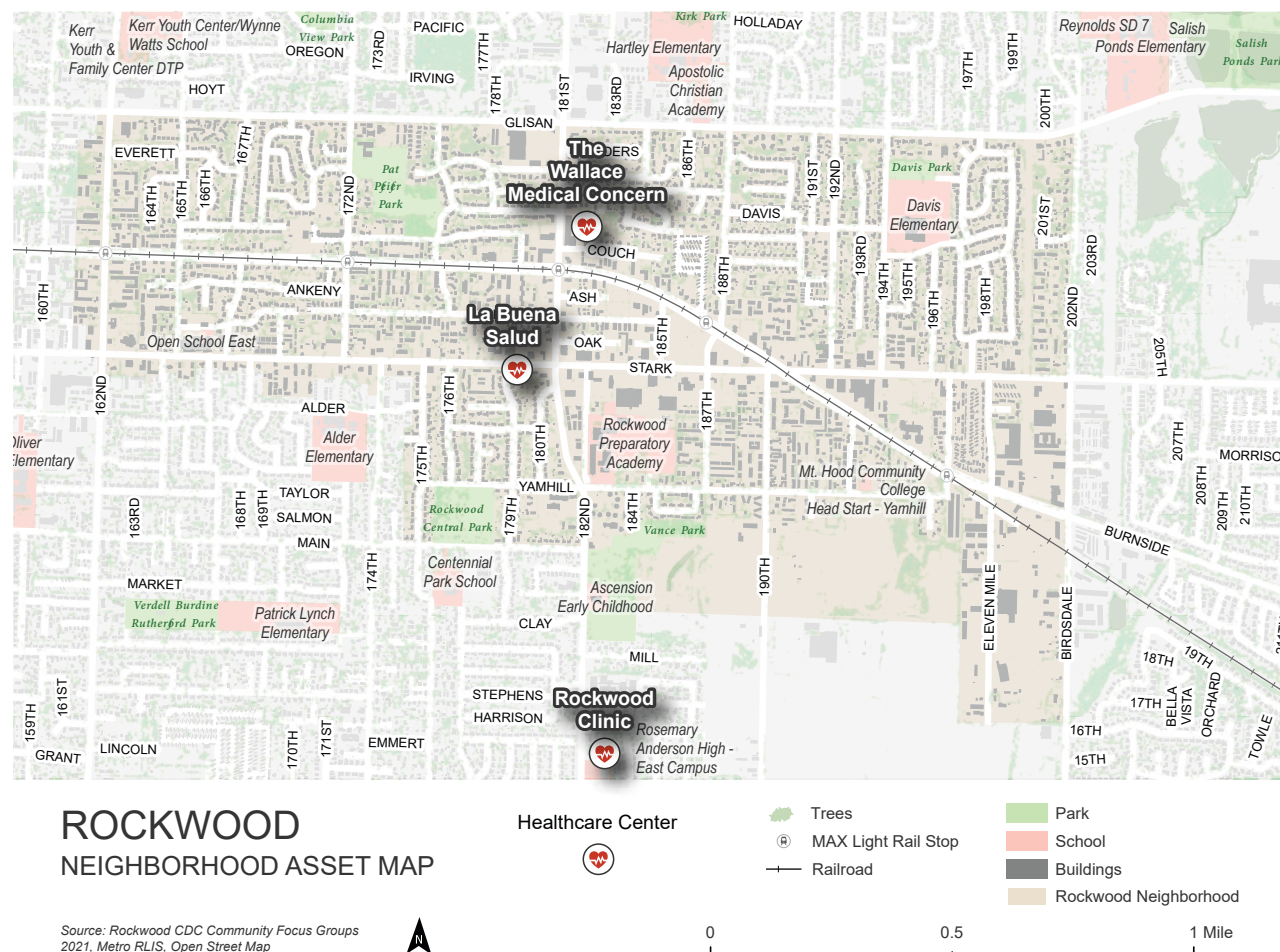
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
East County	11.95	12.55	12.55	12.55	13.25	13.40	13.00	12.7
Oregon	11.50	11.80	12.20	12.40	12.70	12.60	12.60	12.4
Rockwood	13.70	14.70	14.50	14.80	15.30	13.50	13.20	14.1
West County	7.85	8.25	8.50	8.70	8.80	9.25	9.05	8.3

Health Care Services

Many Rockwood residents leave the neighborhood for health care services, traveling to clinics like East Multnomah Clinic, Emanuel Medical Center, Providence Medical Center, and clinics in Oregon City. Some people go to different clinics for specific services, while others go to one clinic for all their health services.

Residents emphasized the importance of timely access to healthcare services for their community. The assets identified in the neighborhood are nearby, however, these places offer basic rather than specialized healthcare services. These clinics also do not serve the entire community.

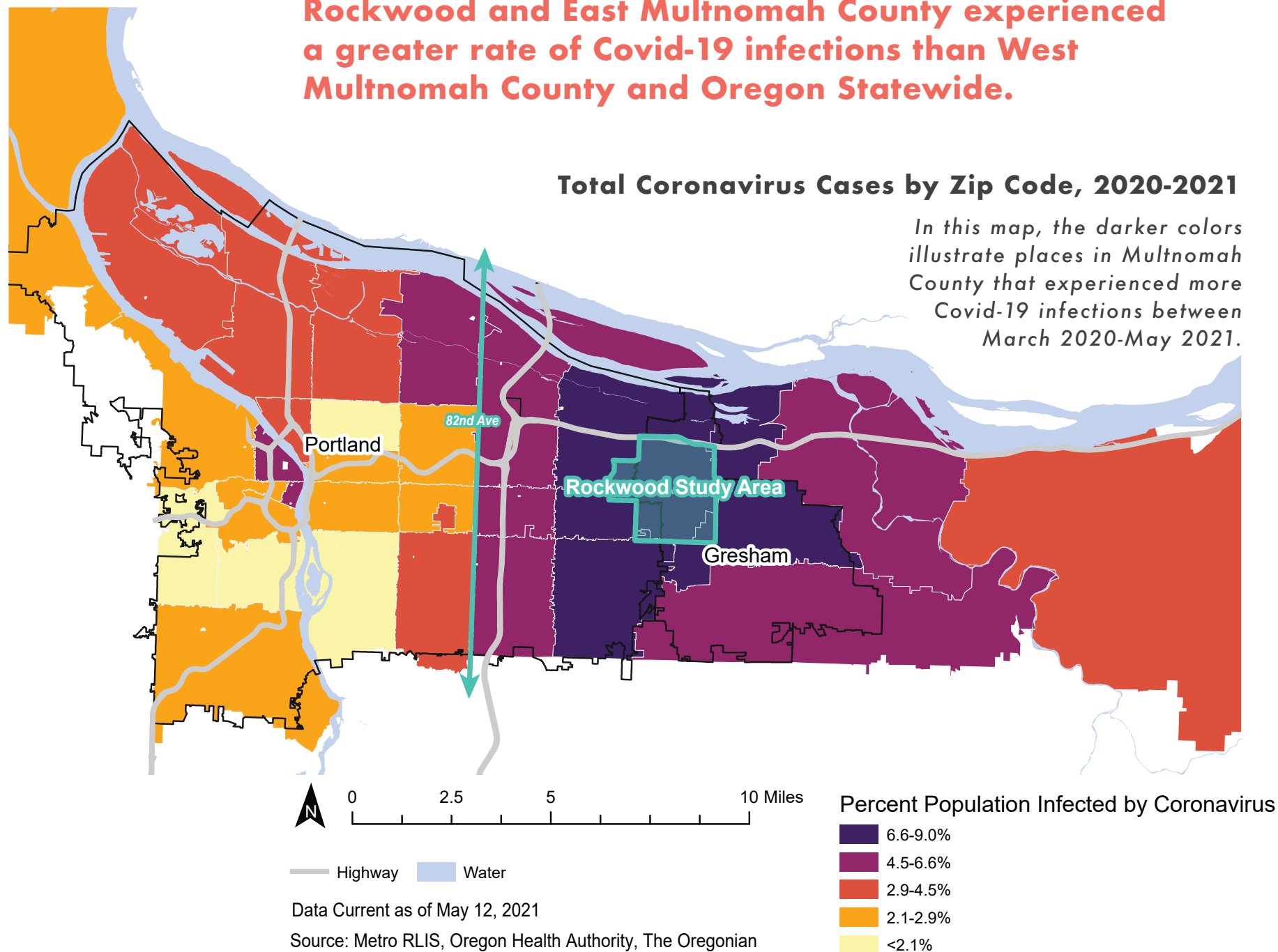
There is a substantial gap in the healthcare services offered in Rockwood, especially for people with disabilities which supports the statistics showing a higher prevalence of disability and low access to healthcare in the neighborhood.



Rockwood and East Multnomah County experienced a greater rate of Covid-19 infections than West Multnomah County and Oregon Statewide.

Total Coronavirus Cases by Zip Code, 2020-2021

In this map, the darker colors illustrate places in Multnomah County that experienced more Covid-19 infections between March 2020-May 2021.

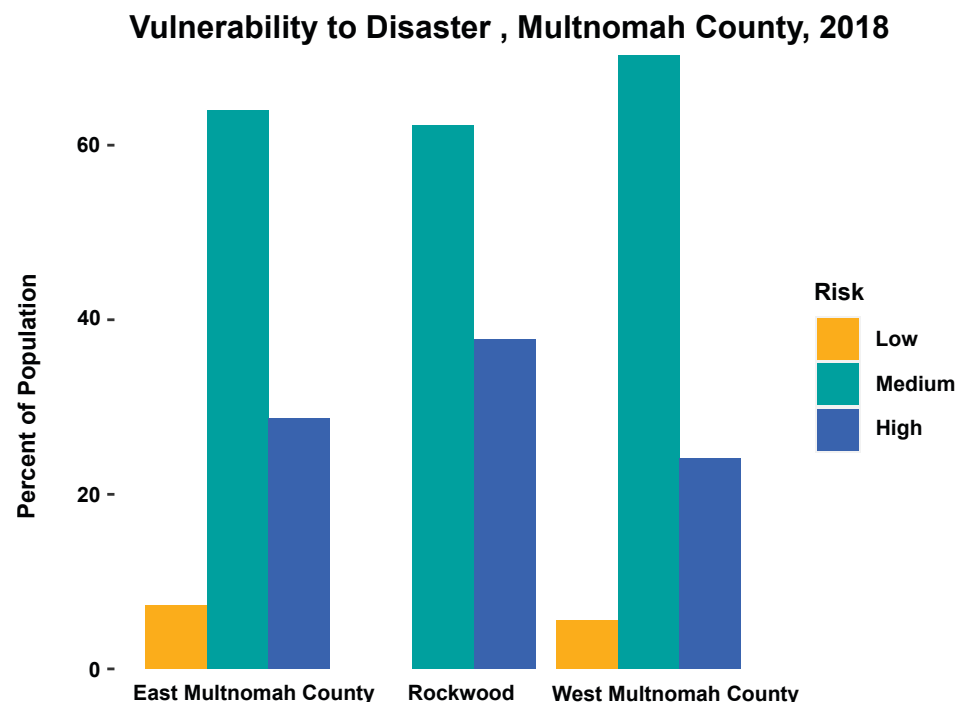


The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 in East Portland and Rockwood compared to West and East Multnomah County can be partially explained by vulnerability to disaster. Vulnerability in this context is defined by a risk index determined by:

- * Poverty status & unemployment
- * Single or zero caregivers in the home
- * Unit crowding and population density
- * Limited English proficiency & low educational attainment
- * Disability status, cardiac illness, asthma, and/or diabetes
- * Little to no health insurance coverage
- * Age ≥ 65 ¹⁰

Higher risk indicates a greater susceptibility to the impact of a disaster. Out of the three geographies studied, Rockwood has the largest percent of high-risk individuals at 37.7% and a percentage of medium risk individuals slightly trailing both East and West Multnomah County. It is also worth noting that Rockwood has zero low-risk individuals, according to the above index.

The impact of COVID-19 on Rockwood exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and the health and social inequities existing between Rockwood and both East and West Multnomah County.



Source: Community Resilience Estimates; Social, Economic, and Housing Statistics Division; U.S. Census Bureau

Health Factors & Outcomes

Rockwood is home to a young population yet experiences a significant rate of chronic illness. Life expectancy in Rockwood is reportedly 10 to 15 years lower than the rest of Multnomah County,¹² which may reflect why the prevalence of cancer, often an age-related disease, is lower than other serious health outcomes. Given the low rate of insured residents, and the severity of out-of-pocket medical expenses, doctor visits are also likely lower than in East and West Multnomah County. Thus, it is possible that the health estimates explored in the Rockwood Identity Atlas underreport the current state of health in Rockwood.

Out of the 19 health outcomes and indicators included in this report taken from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's data on chronic disease and health promotion, the population living in Rockwood had the highest crude prevalence in 16 of the indicators. In comparison, West Multnomah County had the lowest crude prevalence in all but two of the outcomes and indicators listed. East Multnomah was consistently in the middle except for experiencing the highest crude prevalence for cancer and high cholesterol.

To further explore the health outcomes in Rockwood and their social and environmental determinants, the following sections will focus on food insecurity, green space and transportation, and housing and financial insecurity.



Image: Rockwood Community Health Center. Source: Upstream Cartography Collective+

“There is not equal health care for everyone. There are people who do not qualify for many things. I don’t have health insurance because I didn’t qualify, and I’m a disabled person. Sometimes we put up with a lot of things.”

- Javier Cruz, neighbor

This table compares Rockwood, West Multnomah county, and East Multnomah county on every measure found in the CDC's Chronic Disease and Health Promotion Indicator list. Rockwood scores the highest in every chronic disease indicator except cancer, high cholesterol, and binge drinking. In fact, Rockwood scored the lowest on cancer and binge drinking.

Estimated Health Outcomes and Indicators for Adults 18-64, Multnomah County, 2017-2018			
Prevalence Proportion (% Population)	Rockwood	West Multnomah County	East Multnomah County
Total Population	38,391	430,991	265,944
Lack of Health Insurance, Adults 18-64	20	9.2	14.4
Arthritis	26.4	21.8	26.3
Asthma	12.3	10.4	11.5
High Blood Pressure	29.2	24	28.6
Cancer (excluding skin cancer)	5.7	5.9	6.4
High Cholesterol	31.8	28.4	32.1
Chronic Kidney Disease	3.1	2.2	2.8
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease	8.3	4.7	7.2
Coronary Heart Disease	7.1	4.6	6.5
Diabetes (I&II)	11.5	7.4	10.3
Mental Health Not Good for >= 14 Days	18.9	13.2	16.2
Physical Health Not Good for >= 14 Days	18.3	11.2	15.6
All Teeth Lost	23.4	9.9	16.9
Stroke	3.7	2.3	3.3
Binge Drinking	19	22	19.5
Current Smoking	23.7	14.3	19.8
No Leisure-Time Physical Activity	24.4	13.8	20.3
Obesity	31.1	24.7	27.5
Sleeping Less Than 7 Hours	34.5	29.5	32.4

Source: CDC. (2021). PLACES: Chronic Disease and Health Promotion Data & Indicators

Out of the 19 health outcomes and indicators included in the adjacent table, Rockwood scored highest in 16 and the lowest in 2.

Legend

Lowest

Middle

Highest

Food Access

In 2003, a Fred Meyer grocery store in the heart of Rockwood closed, citing low profits, crime, and theft as their reasoning.^{13,14}

This site was later purchased by the Gresham Redevelopment Commission in 2006 as a strategic location for the future development of a marketplace and official town center.^{13,15}

However, these plans were never realized and instead, Rockwood's Plaza del Sol, a public space and community asset was created and, as of 2021, is now the future home to the Rockwood Rising Redevelopment Project which plans to incorporate residential and retail space, a market hall, and a public plaza in the heart of Rockwood.¹⁶

However, some residents would still like to see a grocery store placed in the center of Rockwood to replace the Fred Meyer.¹⁵

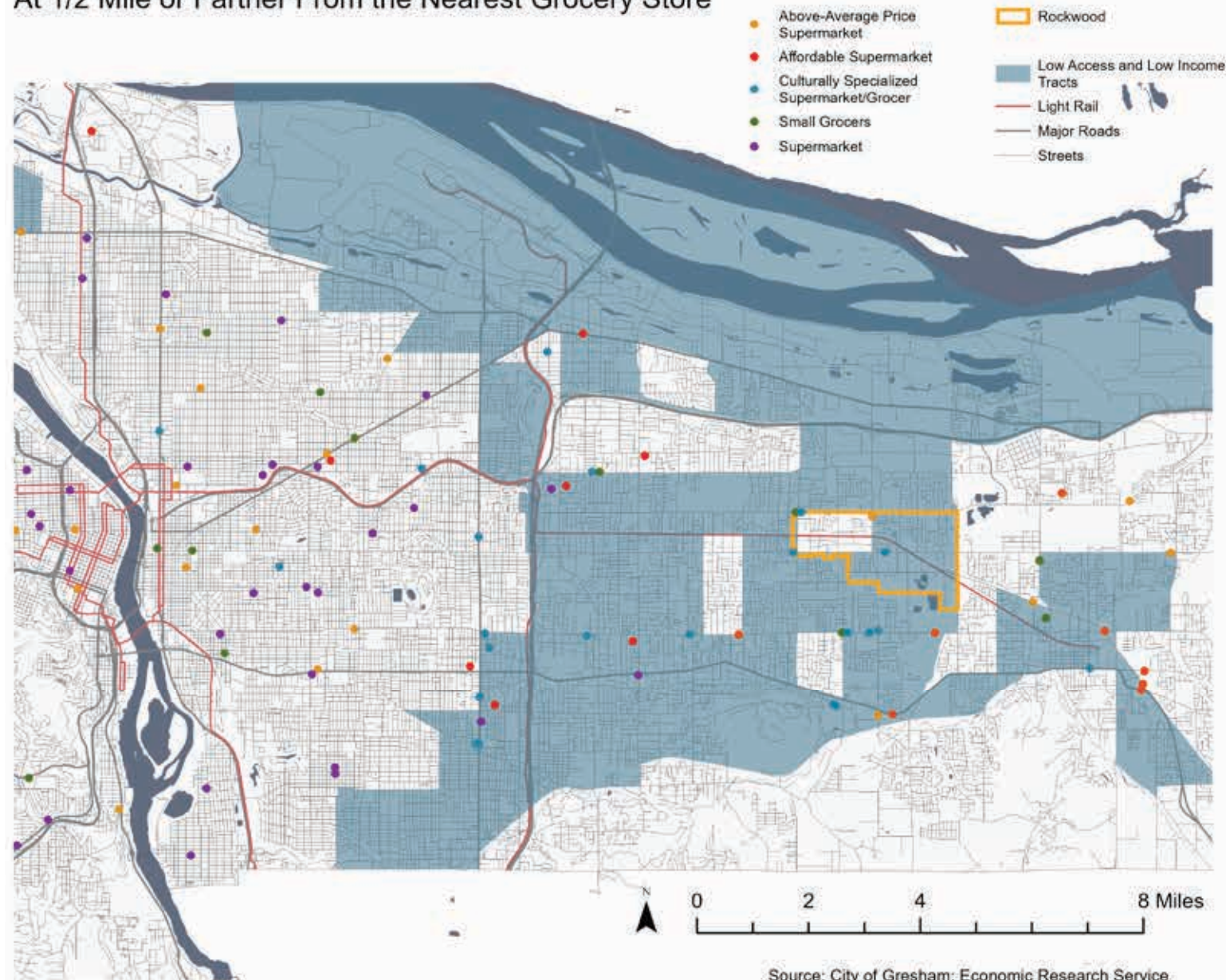
Without an affordable grocery store that is easily accessible, community members without a car are forced to make longer trips by foot or public transit or look to convenience stores and restaurants for food. Residents buying their groceries at convenience stores are then subjected to a selection of highly processed foodstuffs. This limitation in food selection, among other factors, can contribute to the high prevalence of hypertension, diabetes, and coronary heart disease in the area.

Access to food in Rockwood is limited, forcing residents to make longer trips to provide food for their households.

Few grocery stores in and near Rockwood offer affordable foodstuffs, making food both physically and financially challenging to obtain.

Low Food Access and Low Income Tracts, Multnomah County, 2019

At 1/2 Mile or Farther From the Nearest Grocery Store

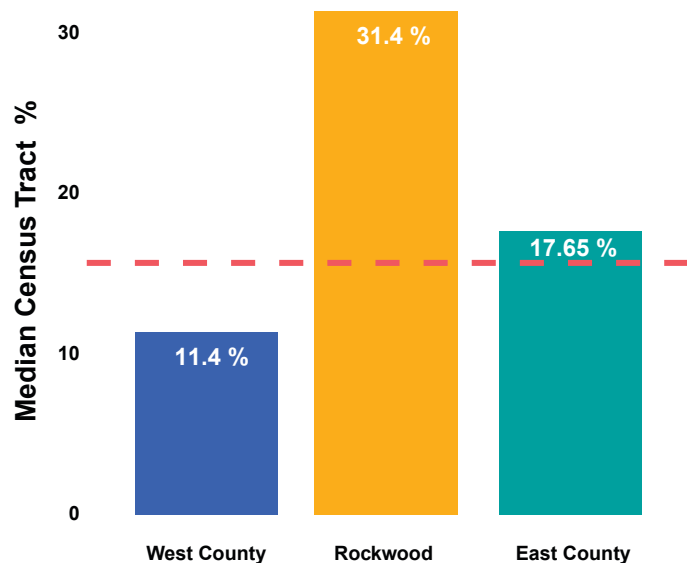


Source: City of Gresham; Economic Research Service (ERS), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food Access Research Atlas; Metro RLIS

In this map, grocery stores are illustrated by colored circles. Blue census tracts show areas where there is lower food access and lower incomes.

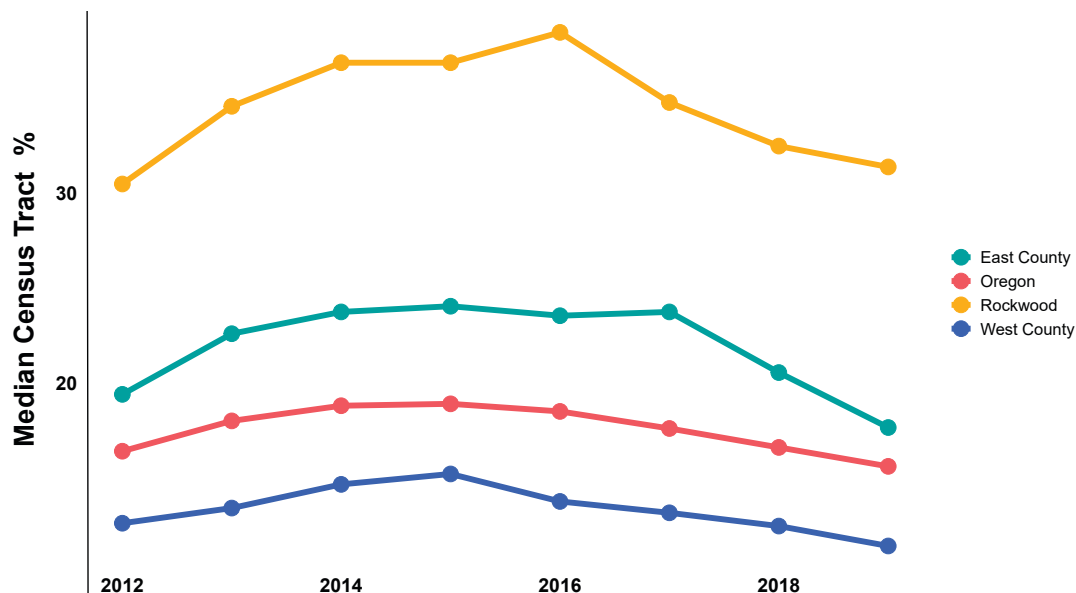
Percent of Total Population Receives SNAP Benefits

Oregon Statewide: 15.6 %



Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

Percent of Total Population Receives SNAP Benefits



Source: 2019 US Census Bureau ACS 5 Year Estimates

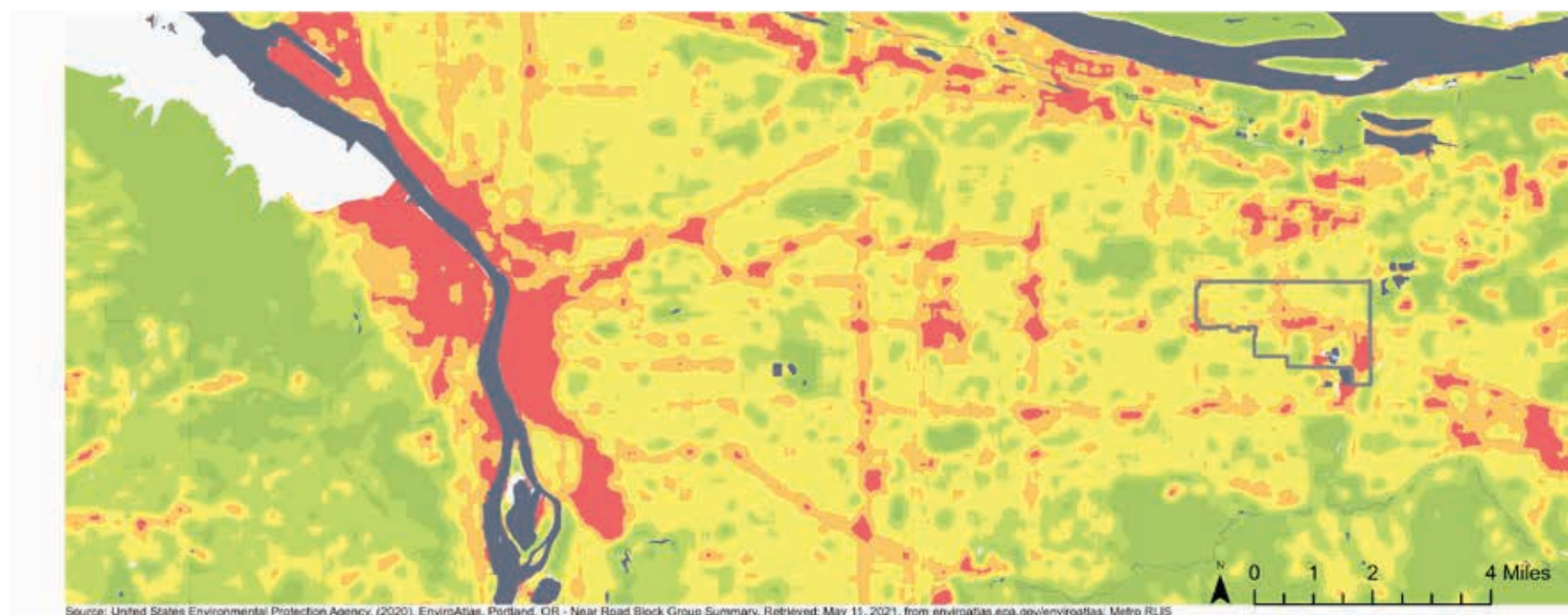
Note: This axis does not begin at 0

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
East County	19.4	22.6	23.75	24.05	23.55	23.75	20.55	17.65
Oregon	16.4	18.0	18.80	18.90	18.50	17.60	16.60	15.60
Rockwood	30.5	34.6	36.90	36.90	38.50	34.80	32.50	31.40
West County	12.6	13.4	14.65	15.20	13.75	13.15	12.45	11.40

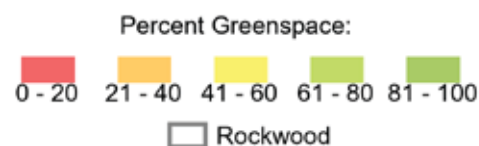
While there are more SNAP* beneficiaries in Rockwood than the rest of Multnomah County, some residents continue to face difficulties accessing food.

**The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the largest federal nutrition assistance program. SNAP provides benefits to eligible low-income individuals and families via an Electronic Benefits Transfer card. This card can be used like a debit card to purchase eligible food in authorized retail food stores. (Benefits.gov)*

In this map, redder areas have less greenspace.



Percent of Total Land Per Quarter Square Kilometer Covered by Greenspace

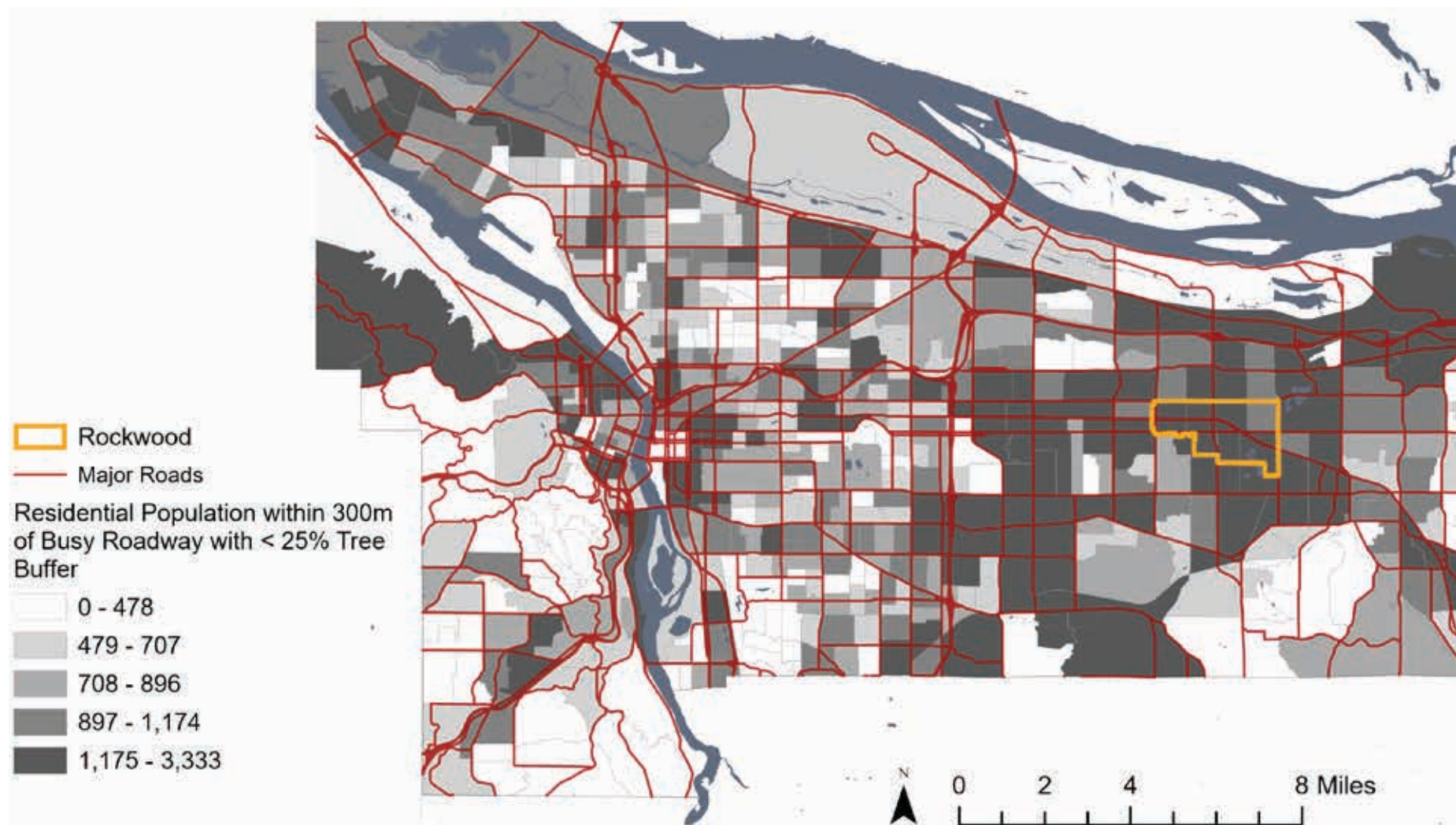


Compared to many other areas in Multnomah County, Rockwood is covered by fewer trees, lawns, parks, and gardens. Low green space coverage means less vegetation to reduce heat, manage rainwater, regulate air quality, and fewer parks for recreation and to promote health and social cohesion.

With busy roads and less vegetation to act as a buffer, Rockwood is vulnerable to air pollution exposure from nearby traffic.

Compared to the rest of the county, Rockwood experiences a higher prevalence of asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), as is presented in the following maps. Unlike inner Portland neighborhoods, Rockwood has few multi-use paths and no neighborhood greenways to offer residents a pedestrian and bicycle environment safe from motor vehicles and the coinciding harmful air quality.

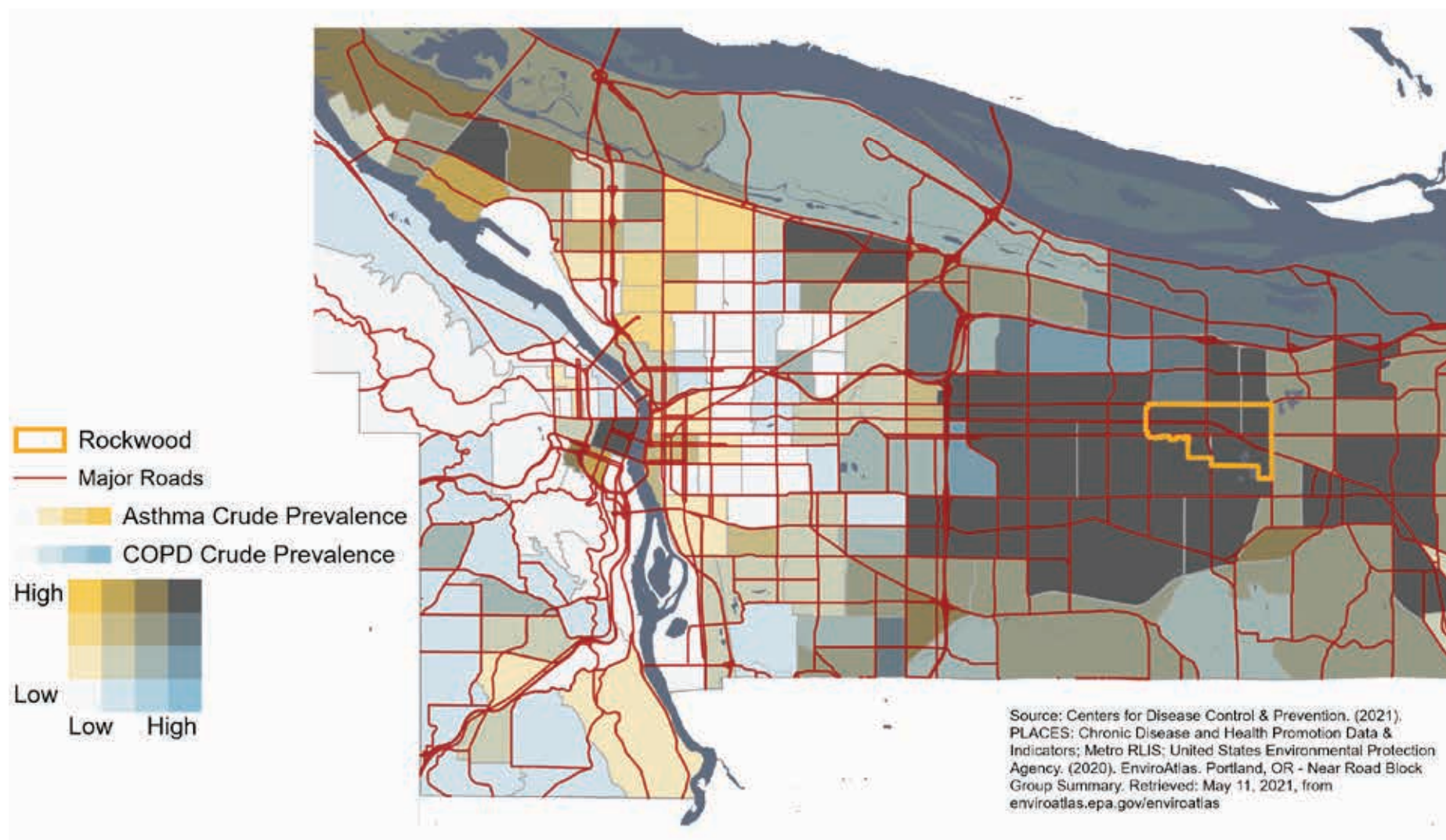
Traffic Proximity and Respiratory Health, Multnomah County



In this map, major roads are shown in red. Darker census tracts represent areas with minimal tree coverage compared to the amount of roadway exposure.

Source: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention. (2021). PLACES: Chronic Disease and Health Promotion Data & Indicators; Metro RLIS; United States Environmental Protection Agency. (2020). EnviroAtlas. Portland, OR - Near Road Block Group Summary. Retrieved: May 11, 2021, from enviroatlas.epa.gov/enviroatlas

Prevalence of Asthma and COPD, Multnomah County

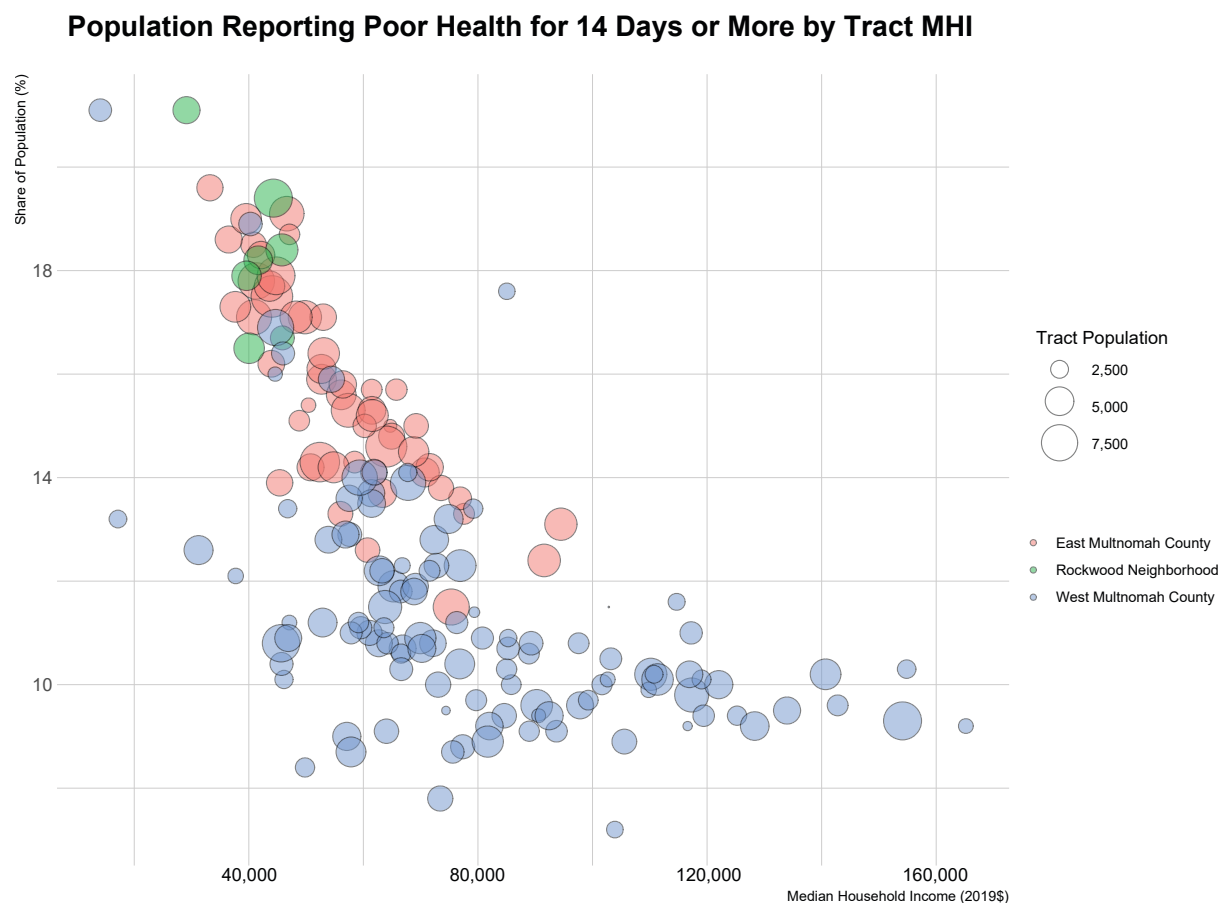


In this map, major roads are shown in red. Census tracts that are more yellow have a higher prevalence of asthma. Census tracts that are more blue have a higher prevalence of COPD. When combined together, the darkest census tracts represent areas that have both a high prevalence of asthma and COPD.

The population in Rockwood experiences lower incomes, a greater proportion of income spent on housing, and more single female headed homes compared to the rest of Multnomah County. The resulting financial instability has a detrimental effect on both the mental and physical health of those experiencing it.

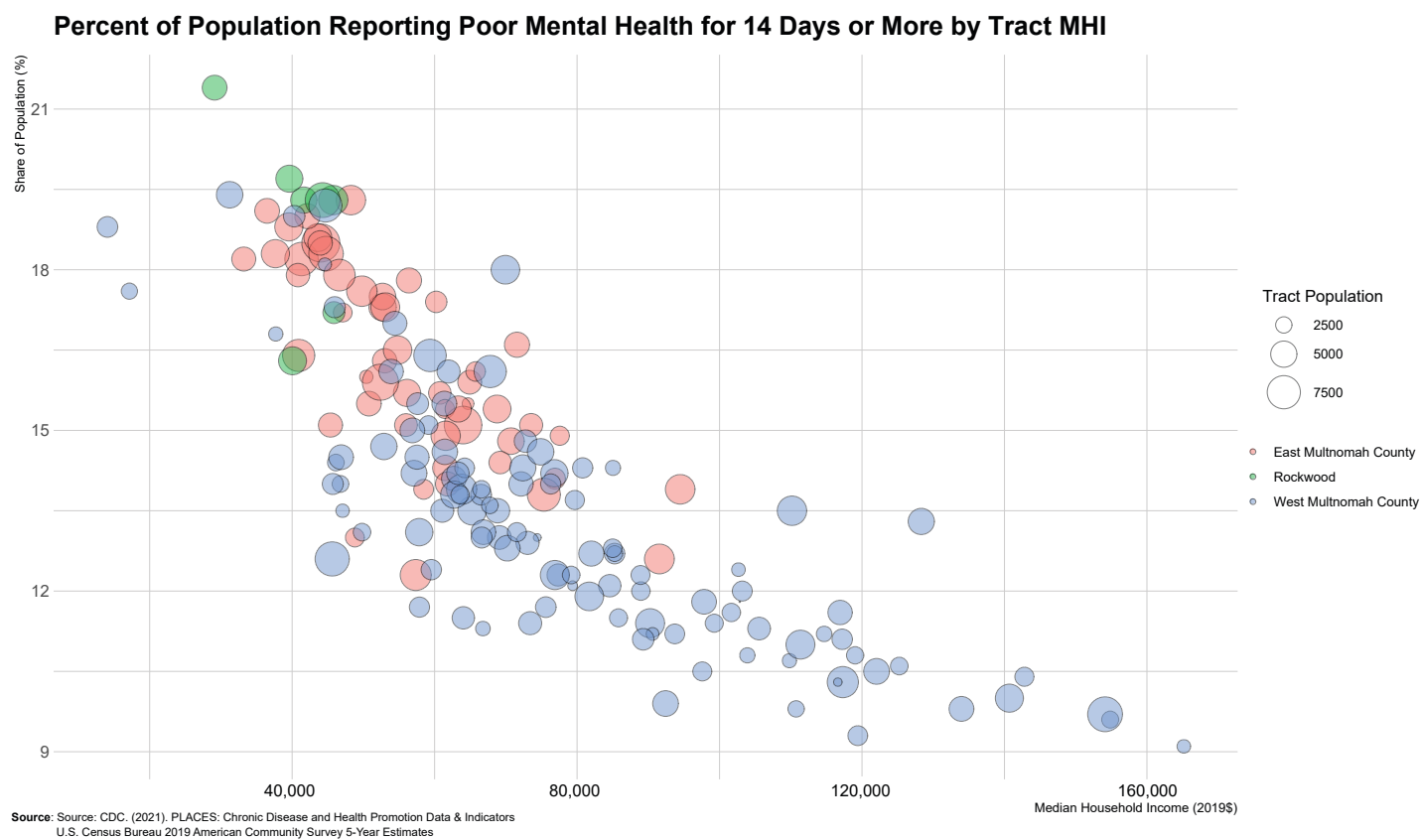
For residents displaced into the neighborhood, financial insecurity offers substantial risk of further displacement and difficulty obtaining essential goods and services. Chronic stress experienced by continual neglect and disinvestment from local government and the deterioration of social support that comes with displacement increases susceptibility for both mental and physical illness. For Rockwood, reported poor mental and physical health statuses are consistently higher than the rest of the County.

In Multnomah County, there is a strong relationship between household income and physical health.



Source: Source: CDC, (2021). PLACES: Chronic Disease and Health Promotion Data & Indicators
U.S. Census Bureau 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

In Multnomah County, there is a strong relationship between household income and the reported number of poor mental health days.





COMMUNITY 8

Urban and regional planning graduate students at Portland State University completed an analysis of Rockwood for their capstone project under the name Upstream Cartography Collective (UCC). Their qualitative analysis involved a community engagement program which included a brief survey of people getting a COVID-19 inoculation at the Sunrise center, two tabling events at La Tapatia grocery store, interviews with individuals, and two video conversations with multi-generational community members. The overall “intention [of the community engagement was] to create a collaborative process to complement the existing conditions analysis defined in the previous sections, to identify the perceptions of and satisfaction in the neighborhood, [and to] collectively create an asset map for the neighborhood.”

Unfortunately, the realities of the pandemic made engagement extremely challenging, and therefore the sample size of each outreach is statistically insignificant; so while the data collected was interesting, it is impossible to generalize across the whole community. The community engagement process continues at Rockwood CDC, and the following themes that emerged will be explored further.

The biggest transformations respondents reported seeing over the span of their time living in Rockwood included:

- * An increase in the population
- * An increase in the cost of living, including the costs of rent and food at local grocery stores

- * An increase in development (housing and civic infrastructure), such as Rockwood Rising and Rockwood Village
- * A need for redevelopment of aging apartment complexes
- * A decrease in crime
 - ◇ “Rockwood is consistently described from outside the neighborhood as being unsafe and crime ridden, yet most participants mentioned never being involved in any incidents.”
 - ◇ “For newcomers, there is fear based on what people have said rather than experiencing safety concerns themselves.”
- * A growing number of community organizations including Rockwood Community Development Corporation (RCDC)
- * Increased sense of community from neighborhood events, such as the Rock the Block festival which celebrates multicultural communities

UCC also built an interactive, multilingual website. The aim of this “platform [was] to provide a space where residents can connect and build trust and community.”

Their complete work can be found online through [PDX Scholar](#). Their work is summarized in the following sections.

Asset Mapping

Asset mapping provides information about the strengths and resources held by a community and can uncover ways to address concerns or challenges. With asset mapping, community members not only highlight community strengths and resources but also help to inventory and depict them on a map. These maps help to analyze how and where to build on community assets to address community needs and improve community health. The process of asset mapping also promotes community involvement, ownership, and empowerment.

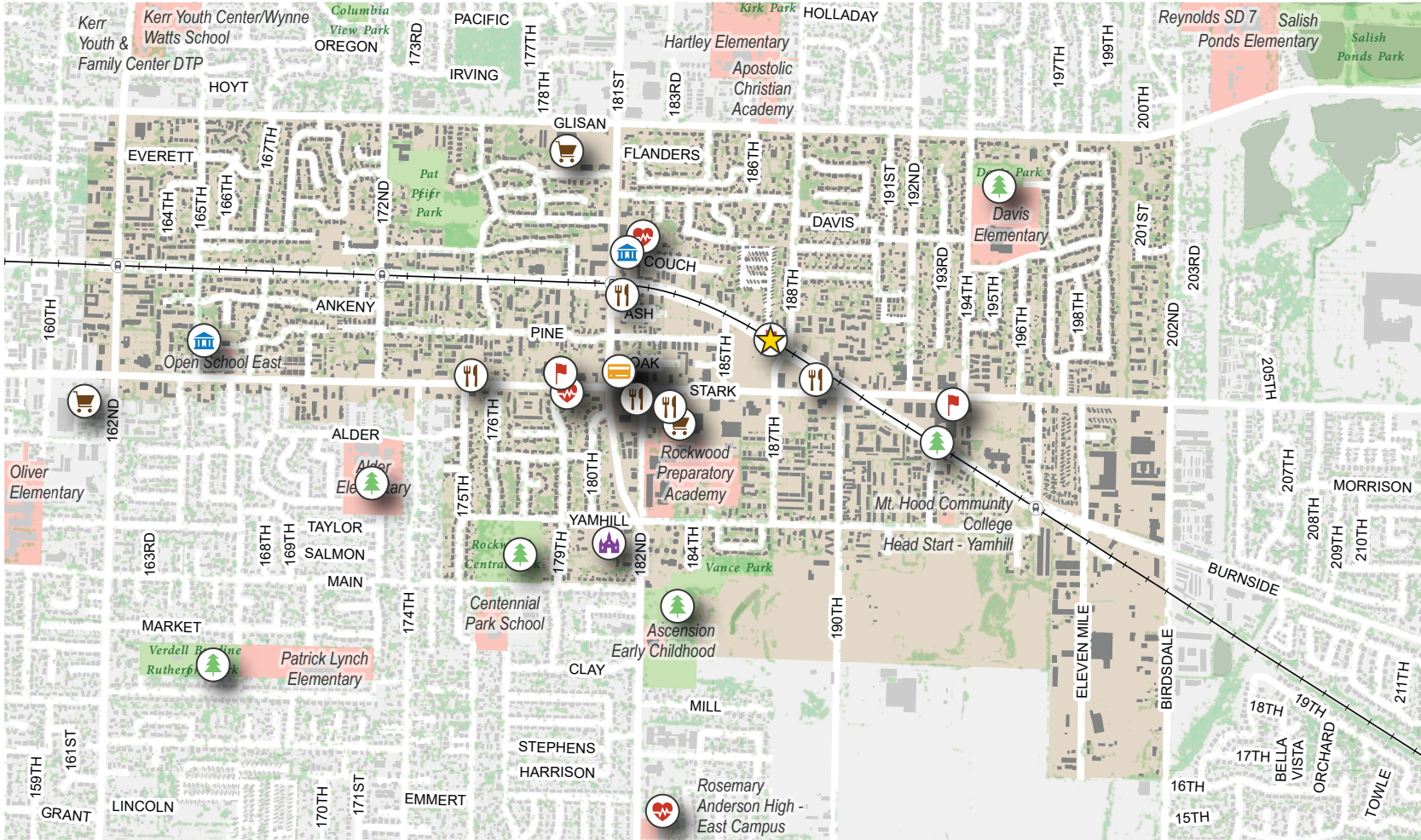
Advantages of Asset Mapping¹⁸

- * Builds on existing community assets and strengths
- * Creates a visual depiction of existing assets while identifying areas that need additional attention
- * Raises awareness about the availability of assets, to develop or improve services and programs, or to apply for funding
- * Generates substantial community participation

Asset Categories

- * Physical
- * Economic
- * Local associations
- * Organizations that the community looks to for support
- * Social and cultural hubs
- * Places where community members gather
- * Local institutions
- * Schools, libraries, parks, healthcare facilities, and other informal institutions
- * Memory and Identity (such as recognizable landmarks and places with a strong identity and sense of place.)

Community Asset Map



ROCKWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD ASSET MAP

Source: Rockwood CDC Community Focus Groups
2021, Metro RLIS, Open Street Map



- Groceries
- Restaurant
- Healthcare
- Social Services
- Church
- Arts & Recreation

- Memory
- First Impressions
- Other

- Trees
- MAX Light Rail Stop
- Railroad

- Park
- School
- Buildings
- Rockwood Neighborhood

0 0.5 1 Mile

Grocery Stores and Restaurants

Food is an important asset in the community. It is a cultural, recreational, memory, and economic asset, connecting communities over shared spaces and dishes. Rockwood residents speak to the importance of food in the neighborhood and how it creates a sense community and unity.

“Food is global. No matter where you go in the world... food has always been an entry point. Everybody has to eat.”—Willie Chambers

Healthcare, Social Services and Places of Worship or Church

- * There is a need for local, specialized, and multicultural healthcare.
- * Latino Network is the main provider of social services in the neighborhood and serves both the Latinx and non-Latinx communities.
- * Human Solutions
- * School districts, their partner organizations and Rockwood library provide resources and are social assets. The library is especially important to the youth.

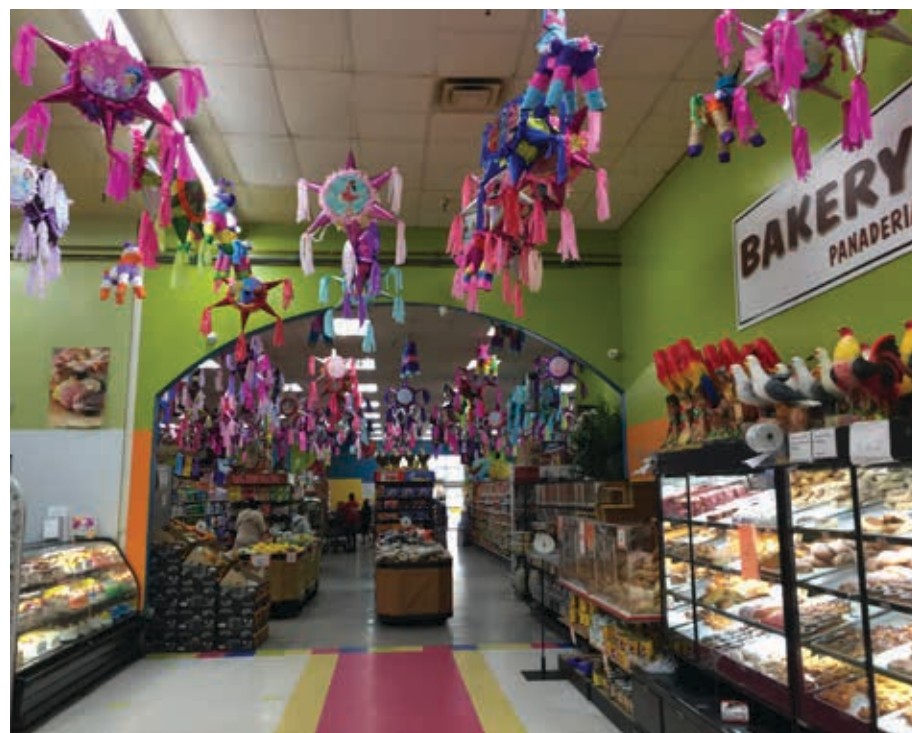


Image: La Tapatia. Source: Upstream Cartography Collective+

- * Social service assets outside the neighborhood include: Puentes, Rosewood Initiative, Juntos Aprendemos, St. Anthony Catholic Church in Tigard, and El Programa Hispano Católico.
- * Santa Ana (or St. Anne) Church is both a religious and social services asset.
- * Many residents attend church outside of the neighborhood.



Image: Rockwood Library. Source: Multnomah County Library

“People go to the library to use the computers because they don’t have a computer and also books; there they can get resources they need.”—Ian H., 13 years old

Arts & Recreation

- * Open spaces are key
 - ◇ Parks and trails in the area and in the greater Portland metro region
 - ◇ Locally, Vance, Rockwood Central and the school parks at Davis and Alder elementary were all mentioned
 - ◇ A point of tension is the conflicting uses of the parks between different communities. For example, the usage of recreational substances at the park conflicted with its role as a space for children to play.
- * None of the participants made references to hanging out with friends in Rockwood. Rather, natural areas, other neighborhoods, and Downtown were mentioned as gathering destinations.
- * COVID-19 has changed the habits of recreation in the community. Some of the community members emphasized that they tend to stay at home and gather with friends online, while others have explored the Gresham Fairview Trail and walked around the neighborhood.
- * Before COVID-19, there were a variety of recreational activities for community members, like Zumba classes at Omar’s Club. However, this kind of indoor activity was unavailable and groups of females from our focus groups are missing their once regularly attended physical community activities.
- * There were no art assets identified or mentioned during our focus group conversations. This shed light on the lack of artistic initiatives in the neighborhood. However, community members want to see artistic spaces for youth in the neighborhood.

Memory

- * The Max station at 188th Avenue, specifically the arches of the station. The arches represent a gateway for Rockwood.
- * La Pulga Fantastica, or the Flea Market. The community gathers here regularly during the weekends. It creates a sense of place based on the roots of the Latinx community. La Pulga is a typical Latino flea market with different shops that sell many beautiful items and food. Families and friends reunite here around activities that residents, specifically from Mexico and Latin America, are connected by based on their cultural backgrounds. People share food and spend time together dancing and listening to music.
- * The Rockwood Library: because it provides services and activities. It is a place where the community can access the internet and enjoy educational activities in a fun learning environment.
- * A negative impact on Rockwood recognized by the focus group participants is the negative connotation of 190th Ave. This street is an imaginary neighborhood boundary associated with the gangs in the neighborhood. In the past, this street saw violence and conflict, however, it has changed over time and is becoming safer and cleaner.



Image: Rockwood's MAX Station Arches. Source: Upstream Cartography Collective+



Image: La Pulga. Source: Google

First Impressions

The arches at Rockwood's MAX station serve as a landmark that represents the neighborhood. The community sees the MAX as an attraction that also enables people to explore Rockwood and the Portland Metro region. The MAX represents something new for most people and is seen as a recreational activity for families to use on the weekend with their kids to travel throughout the

city. Rockwood is seen mostly in a positive light by community members.

However, there is a negative perception of Rockwood that lingers. Some people still associate the neighborhood with gangs, drugs, and crime. As adults remember the past, it is interesting to hear the youth's impressions of the current state of Rockwood. The youth described their first impression of Rockwood as a place that can be noisy but is overall is nice and calm. The collective perception of Rockwood is as a place of opportunity.

What's missing in Rockwood?

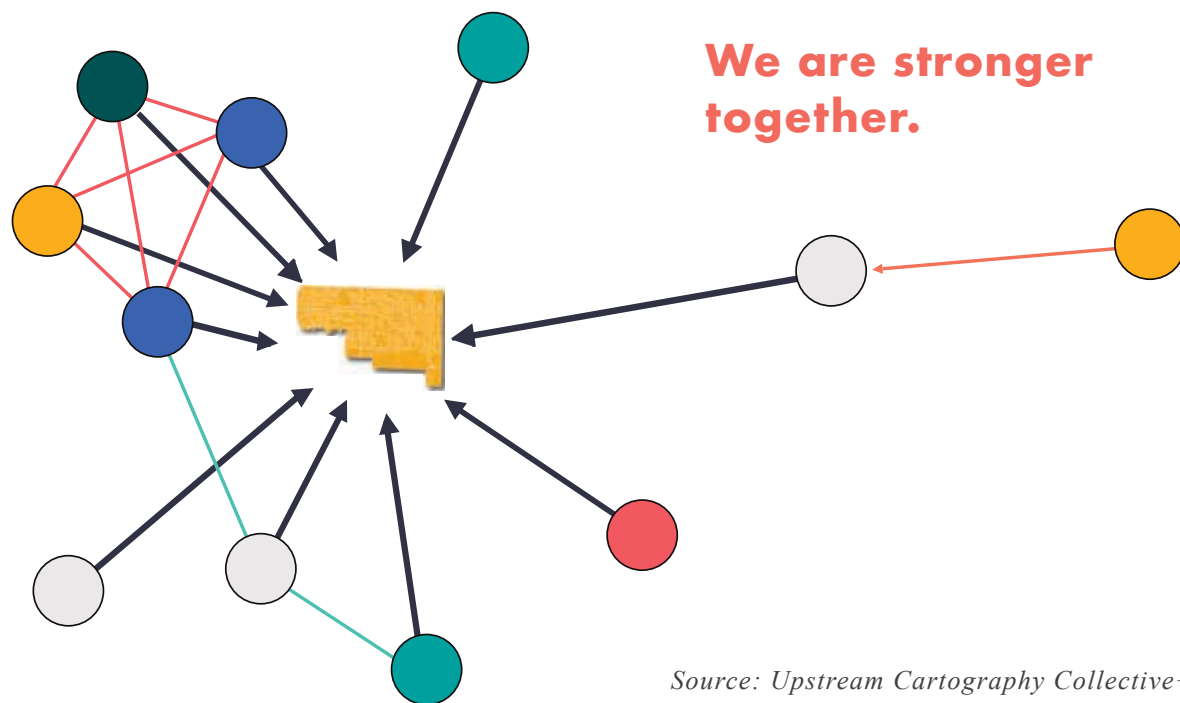
- * A public space for family-oriented activities where people can gather with friends and family
- * Parks specifically for family activities
- * A community center for youth and adults
- * Affordable recreational activities and classes
- * Daycare centers
- * Affordable grocery stores
- * Health care services accessible to community members beyond community health centers and hospitals
- * Either help signing up for healthcare, and/or clinics that are deeply affordable

Organizational Network Analysis: A Recommendation

It is our recommendation that future work in Rockwood strives to build connections between organizations and identify pathways to empower community-led organizations to diversify resources available to the neighborhood.

- * The ultimate goal is to empower and improve the skills and knowledge of those living in Rockwood and to increase organizations' ability to collaboratively meet needs. To begin this process,
 - ◇ Identify organizational commonalities and connections
 - ◇ Identify what services are currently offered
 - ◇ Identify how relationships between organizations can be formed or strengthened

Organizations that serve Rockwood residents should collaborate and coordinate with each other.



Source: Upstream Cartography Collective+

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