

## Chapter 2 COMMUNITY PROFILE

### Hometown College Town



**Memorial Hall** memorializes Delaware’s World War I dead. It was dedicated on May 23, 1925, as a library between the Men’s and Women’s Colleges. Funds were raised for the building from the people of Delaware, including a parade of school children soliciting funds through the streets of Wilmington. Source: [www.udel.edu/TheGreen/buildingN.html](http://www.udel.edu/TheGreen/buildingN.html)

In 2009, the City of Newark completed the Newark Resident Survey, which was sent out to approximately half the City’s residents and, for the first time, included a community-visioning component. One of the questions asked residents to list up to three things they liked about living in the City of Newark. The most frequent response was that they liked that Newark was a “college town.” Indeed, the City’s strongest association is as the home of the University of Delaware. Approximately 21,000 people are enrolled in classes, several thousand people are employed at or retired from the University, and hundreds of thousands of people throughout the world are alumni of the University of Delaware.

A second theme to come out of the Newark Resident Survey was that residents viewed Newark as their “hometown.” Indeed, many Newark residents have lived here all or much of their lives. Newark is a place where families raise their children; where children grow up, attend school, play in parks, participate in sports and educational activities, and hold jobs. Most “hometown” residents enjoy many of the aspects of living in a “college town,” but their primary relationship to the community is built around the quality of life in their neighborhoods.

This chapter examines the demographics that contribute to Newark’s “sense of place” and uniqueness. Although Newark is constantly evolving and continues to experience development pressure, the City is committed to protecting and enhancing those qualities that make Newark a wonderful place to live, study, work, raise a family, visit downtown, and enjoy recreation and the natural environment.

**Note regarding Census data:** Data from 1990 and 2000 were taken from the Decennial Census’s short-form, containing basic counts and demographics, and the long-form, which included detailed questions about population and housing characteristics. In 2006, the long form was discontinued

and replaced with the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS contains the questions previously contained in the Census long form. Data from the ACS is expressed as “estimates” from data collected over 5 years. At the time of this report, the latest data available is from the 2019 American Community Survey.

**College Town Attributes**

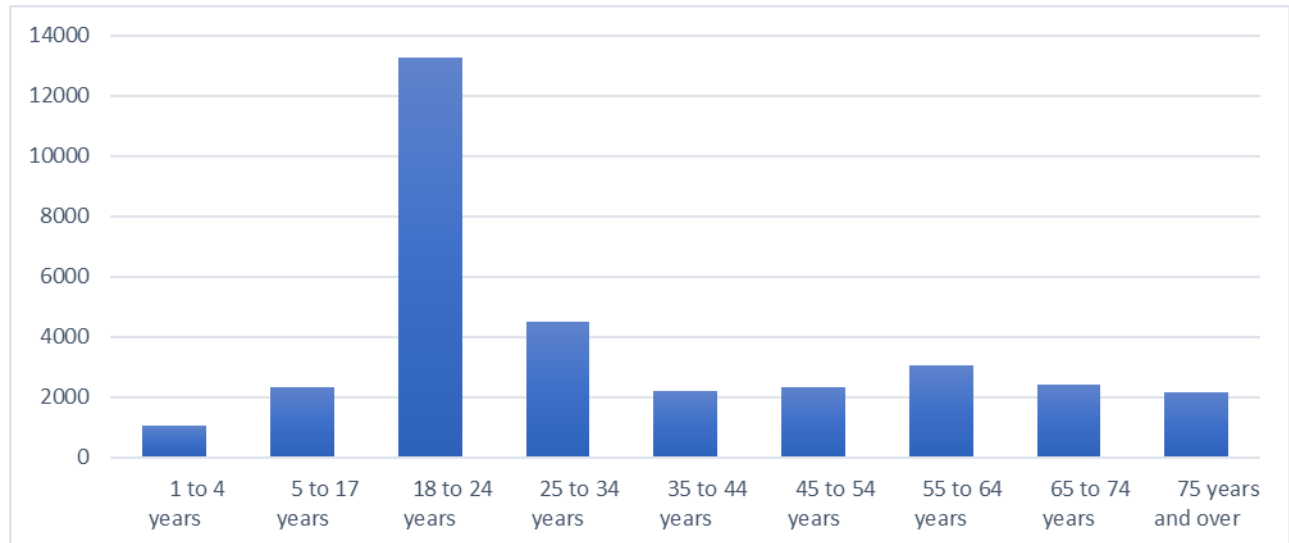
In his book *The American College Town* (2008), Blake Gumprecht identifies several distinguishing traits common in college towns that make them fundamentally different from comparative (non-college) towns in the United States. Among the common traits of college towns, that also characterize Newark, using the five-year estimates from the U.S. Census American Community Survey, are the following:

**College Towns Are Youthful Places**

During the school year, Newark’s median age is 24.9; compared to the median age of the United States, 38.5. Nearly half of Newark’s population (40%) is in the 18–24 age range (Chart 2-1). The 2016 results, using the data set for 2014, showed the 44% of Newark’s population was in the 18-24 age range. The greatest shift seems to be from the 25-34 age group, which increased from 11% of the population to 13% of the population, and from the 65 and over age group, which increased from 11% of the population to 14% of the population.

While American Community Survey data are estimates that fluctuates each year, the data appears to indicate that our population has gotten somewhat older and more diverse in age ranges.

**Chart 2-1: City of Newark Population by Age (2022 Update)**

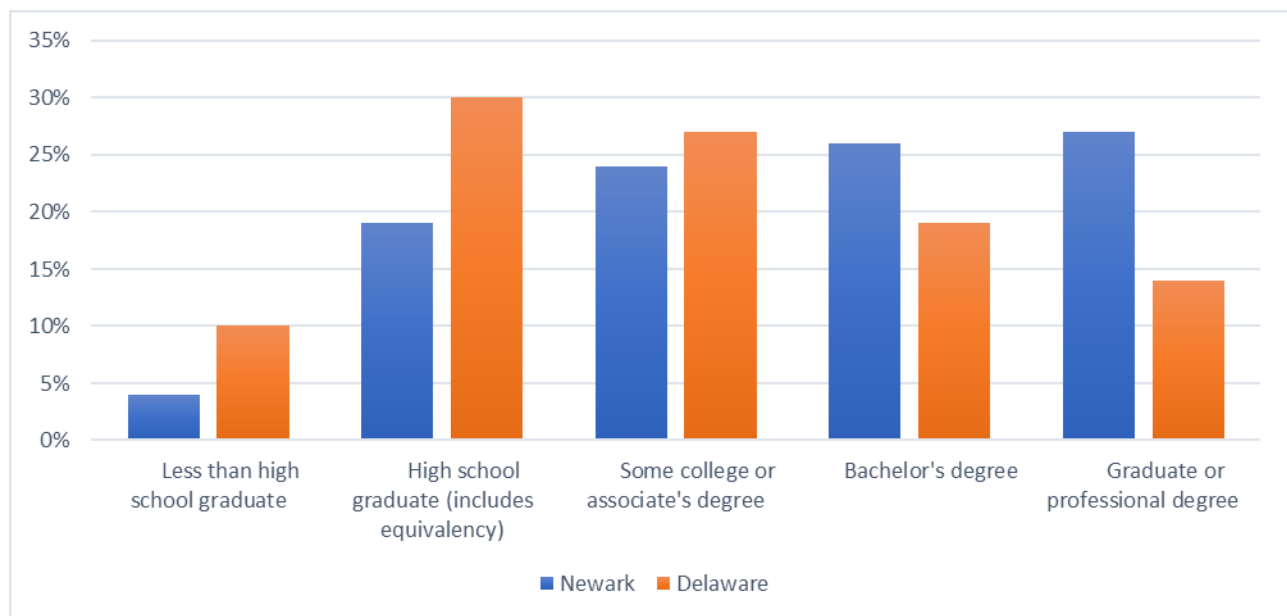


Source: 2019: American Community Survey (ACS), 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles; U.S. Census

College Towns Have Highly Educated Residents

Because many universities have a large graduate school enrollment and require faculty and some staff to have Ph.D.s, college towns have a high concentration of highly educated residents. Chart 2-2 shows a comparison of educational attainment of Newark residents compared to that of Delaware residents. Among adults 25 years of age or over, Newark has nearly double the percentage of residents who have a “graduate or professional degree” (27% vs. 14%) and significantly higher percentage of residents with a bachelor’s degree (26% vs 19%). 53% of Newark’s population are college graduates, compared to 33% of Delawareans. Likewise, Newark has less than half of the State of Delaware’s percentage of residents age 25 and over who do not have a high school diploma (4% vs 10%).

**Chart 2-2: Educational Attainment (Population 25 years and over) (2022 Update)**



Source: 2019: American Community Survey (ACS), 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles; U.S. Census

College Towns Are Comparatively Affluent

College towns tend to be more affluent and economically stable. Nonetheless, 23.6% of Newark residents actually have income levels *below* the federal poverty level. As shown in Table 2-1, the per capita income of Newark residents is \$28,092, below that of both the United States and the State of Delaware. However, these figures are skewed by the high percentage of Newark residents who are full-time college students, who tend to either not work or work part-time in low-wage jobs. The difference becomes apparent when separating and examining median “family income” and “non-family income.” Newark’s median family income is \$115,607, compared to the Delaware median family income of \$109,065 and United States median family income of \$108,587.

Because of the economic stability brought by universities and supported by state appropriations, endowment income, and tuition revenues, college towns are more insulated from economic recessions than other cities and towns. In addition, residents of college towns tend to be more

highly educated, be more stably employed, and make more conservative investment choices that foster slow but steady prosperity.

**Table 2-1: Newark Income Comparisons (2022 Update)**

	United States	Delaware	Newark
Median Family Income	\$ 80,944	\$ 87,148	<b>\$ 94,583</b>
Mean Family Income	\$108,587	\$ 109,065	<b>\$ 115,607</b>
Median Non-Family Income	\$ 39,871	\$ 44,071	<b>\$ 29,968</b>
Mean Non-Family Income	\$ 58,110	\$ 58,190	<b>\$ 46,605</b>
Per Capita Income	\$ 35,672	\$ 36,858	<b>\$ 28,092</b>

Source: 2019: American Community Survey (ACS), 1-year & 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles; U.S. Census

*College Towns Are Cosmopolitan*

The University of Delaware attracts students and faculty from all over the world. As a result, Newark tends to be more diverse than other municipalities its size. Table 2-2 shows the percentage of Newark’s population who are foreign-born.

**Table 2-2: Foreign-Born Newark Residents (2022 Update)**

	% Foreign-Born
New York, New York	<b>37%</b>
United States	<b>14%</b>
<b>Newark, Delaware</b>	<b>14%</b>
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	<b>14%</b>
New Castle County	<b>12%</b>
Delaware	<b>10%</b>
Middletown, Delaware	<b>9%</b>
Dover, Delaware	<b>8%</b>
Wilmington, Delaware	<b>8%</b>
Effingham, Illinois	<b>4%</b>

Source: 2019: American Community Survey (ACS), 1-year & 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles; U.S. Census

By this metric, Newark is the most diverse area within the State of Delaware. The percentage of Newark’s population who are foreign-born (14%) surpasses those of New Castle County, the State of Delaware, Wilmington, and Dover. Perhaps surprisingly, Newark’s percentage of foreign-born residents equals that of Philadelphia and the United States. By contrast, one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the United States is New York City, with 37% of its population having been

born outside the U.S. Only 4% of the population of Effingham, Illinois, a Newark-sized small city without a major university, were born outside the U.S.

### **Newark's Population Trends**

When Newark received one of its early charters from the State of Delaware in 1852, it was estimated that the town comprised 700 inhabitants. As shown in Table 2-3, during the latter half of the 19th century, our small village grew at a relatively leisurely pace, influenced primarily by the coming of the railroads and industry. By 1900, the population in Newark had nearly doubled. During the ensuing half century, from 1900 to 1950, the City's population quadrupled to a total of 6,731 persons. These decades were marked by considerable population growth, largely as a result of the impact of additional industrialization and the development of the City as a center of trade. When the pace of industrial growth slowed—for example, during the Great Depression of the 1930s — the City's population grew at a correspondingly slower rate. Typical of many smaller cities during economically difficult times, a slowing of the growth rate was brought about by a decrease in the birth rate and an increase in migration from the community.

Following the economic slump of the 1930s and the end of World War II, Newark's population resumed a more rapid rate of growth. For example, between 1960 and 1970, Newark's population increased 82% (more than three times that of New Castle County during the same time period)—by far the highest ever recorded for the City. The second highest decade of population growth (69.4%) occurred between 1950 and 1960. This trend is attributed to regional development pressures, which were related to a rapidly expanding suburban industrial base, the further development of the City as a center of western New Castle County trade, and the significant increase in University of Delaware enrollment. The severe recessions of the 1970s and early 1980s, associated primarily with the increases in the cost of oil, slowed Newark's post-World War II population boom. More recently, the City's rate of increase in population has followed the relatively slow growth that began in the 1980s.

As Table 2-3 implies, the ebb and flow of Newark's population since the Civil War has been linked generally to changes in the national economy. While this should not be construed to mean that local and regional events do not matter, the obvious impact of macroeconomic conditions on Newark's historic rates of growth underscores the inherent limitations on local efforts to overcome market and demographic forces beyond the City's control.

**Table 2-3: City of Newark Population, 1860-2019 (2022 Update)**

CENSUS YEAR	POPULATION	NUMERICAL CHANGE	PERCENT CHANGE	NATIONAL EVENTS
1860	787			
1870	915	128	16.3%	
1880	1148	233	25.5%	<b>Post-Civil War Period</b>
1890	1191	43	3.7%	<b>Recovery/Industrialization</b>
1900	1213	22	1.8%	<b>Depression of 1893</b>
1910	1913	700	57.7%	<b>Panic of 1907</b>
1920	2183	270	14.1%	<b>World War I</b>
1930	3899	1716	78.6%	<b>Depression 1920-1921/"New Era Boom"</b>
1940	4502	603	15.5%	<b>The Great Depression</b>
1950	6731	2229	49.5%	<b>World War II</b>
1960	11,404	4673	69.4%	<b>Postwar Expansion</b>
1970	20,757	9353	82.0%	<b>The Go-Go Years</b>
1980	25,247	4490	21.6%	<b>Oil Price Shocks</b>
1990	26,463	1216	4.8%	<b>Recession/Recovery</b>
2000	28,547	2084	7.9%	<b>Prosperity/Internet "Bubble"</b>
2010	31,454	2907	10.2%	<b>Great Recession/Recovery</b>
2019*	33,448	1994	6.3%	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population 1860-2010

\*Source: 2019: American Community Survey (ACS), 1-year & 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles; U.S. Census

Age Characteristics

The examination of population by specific age groups is important in order to determine the kinds of housing and community services needed in Newark. Table 2-4 shows important population trends over the past 30 years.

1. The proportion of Newark’s population less than 5 years of age has fallen from almost 4% in 1990 to less than 2.9% in 2010. However, according to ACS estimates, the population of residents under the age of 5 has rebounded to near 1990 levels as a portion of the population. This trend is not seen among ages 5-9 and 10-14 demographics that have been decreasing as an overall portion of the population.
2. Approximately 36% of the total 2019 City population estimate were between the ages of 20-34, the “*childbearing cohort*.” Such a high percentage of the population within prime childbearing age might indicate a surge in births over the next 10 years in Newark; however, since a significant portion of this population are University of Delaware students, many of whom will relocate after they complete their studies and before they start families, Newark’s birthrate is anticipated to remain comparable to the national average over the next 10 years.

3. The college-age cohort (highlighted in yellow in Tables 2-4), primarily represented in the U.S. Census in the age groups 15–19 and 20–24, has increased from a combined 11,426 residents in 1990 to a combined 15,683 in 2010, a net gain of 4,257 residents. This accounts for nearly 67% of Newark’s population growth over that census period. However, according to ACS estimates for 2019, the college-age cohort decreased to 13,934, a net loss of 1,749 residents. Over that same period, the age cohort of 25-34, the Millennial demographic just above the college-age cohort, increased from 2,947 residents to 4,485 residents, a net gain of 1,538 residents. As a result, this age group representing approximately 9.4% of Newark’s population in 2010 to 13.4% of Newark’s population in 2019. This increase in the post-college age Millennials may represent both an increase in graduate students and young professionals/families living in Newark. Coupled with this trend is an increase in children ages 0-4, as described in # 1.
  
4. The “baby boom” cohort (highlighted in blue in Tables 2-4), primarily represented by the age groups 35–44 and 45–54 in the 1990 Census, represented approximately 17% of the City’s population with 4,274 residents. By the 2000 Census, these baby-boomers were primarily represented by the age groups 45–54 and 55–64. While their population totals stayed approximately the same from 1990 to 2000 (down slightly to 4,252 residents), their overall percentage of Newark’s population decreased to 14.9%. By the 2010 Census, these baby-boomers were primarily represented by the age groups 55–64 and 65–74, their total population decreased to 3,902 residents (a loss of 350 residents) and made up approximately 12.4% of Newark’s population. In the 2019 ACS estimates, the Baby Boom cohort, now represented by the age groups 65-74 and 75+, has increased to 4,541 residents, a net gain of 639 residents. This may indicate that a large portion of Newark’s “Baby Boom generation”, many of which are in retirement age, are not only choosing to “aging in place” in their home or in an “Adult Community” neighborhood, but also many new residents of this age cohort are choosing to move to Newark as part of their retirement.
  
5. The fastest growing age cohort in Newark is the age group 75+. In 1990, the population of Newark residents age 75+ was 833 (3.3% of the population). By 2019, Newark residents 75+ now total 2147 (6.4% of the population), a net increase of 1314 residents and nearly tripling in size. This trend is likely due to three factors. First, the Baby Boom cohort, one of the country’s largest generations, is gradually shifting into this age-cohort. Second, since this age group includes everyone age 75 till the end of life, Newarkers are living longer (like people nationwide), and this age group is increasing in number. And third, Newark, like many “college towns” in the United States, is a favorable destination place for people to retire and live a culture-filled life. As the baby-boomer generation continues to age into this cohort ages over the next 10 years, it is also anticipated this age group will continue to grow in number and increase as a portion of Newark’s overall population.

**Table 2-4: City of Newark Population, 1990 – 2019 (2022 Update)**

**City of Newark  
POPULATION CHANGE BY AGE GROUP (1990 - 2019)**

Age Group	1990 Population	1990 % Pop	2000 Population	2000 % Pop	2010 Population	2010 % Pop	2019 Population	2019 % Pop	% Change 1990-2019
0-4	988	3.9%	857	3.0%	886	2.8%	1244	3.7%	26%
5-9	944	3.8%	1003	3.5%	956	3.0%	864	2.6%	-8%
10-14	982	3.9%	1072	3.8%	926	2.9%	818	2.4%	-17%
15-19	4845	19.3%	5379	18.8%	6072	19.3%	6364	19.0%	31%
20-24	6581	26.2%	7726	27.1%	9611	30.6%	7570	22.6%	15%
25-34	2821	11.2%	3187	11.2%	2947	9.4%	4485	13.4%	59%
35-44	2491	9.9%	2477	8.7%	2167	6.9%	2181	6.5%	-12%
45-54	1783	7.1%	2557	9.0%	2528	8.0%	2323	6.9%	30%
55-64	1531	6.1%	1695	5.9%	2393	7.6%	3058	9.1%	100%
65-74	1299	5.2%	1321	4.6%	1509	4.8%	2394	7.2%	84%
75+	833	3.3%	1273	4.5%	1459	4.6%	2147	6.4%	158%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25098</b>		<b>28547</b>		<b>31454</b>		<b>33448</b>		

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population 1990, 2000, 2010  
Source: 2019: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles; U.S. Census

University Population

The University of Delaware (UD) is an integral part of Newark’s economic, social, and population profiles. The students living within Newark boundaries, on- or off-campus, are *included* in the U.S. Census population counts, as well as those of the Delaware Population Consortium, as Newark residents.

In 1950, the University student body living in Newark was estimated to represent approximately 29.5% of the population. By 1960, that percentage had dropped to 24.4%. This decrease occurred as a result of the City’s rapid growth during that same period, including annexations. While full-time University undergraduate enrollment remained as low as 6,500 in 1968, enrollment jumped to 9,000 by 1970 and to 12,000 by 1974. As Table 2-5 illustrates, the total number of undergraduates at UD as a percentage of Newark’s population increased dramatically between 1970 and 1995 and has remained high ever since. Note, as well, that these figures do not include the approximately 3,504 current full-time University graduate students who, by and large, live off-campus.

As a result of the size of the University population, the City faces unusual planning and development issues. As a university community, Newark has had to respond to the impact of off-campus student housing on the local rental market and the related problems of the late-night noise and disorderly conduct sometimes associated with off-campus living. The combination of students in off-campus housing, especially downtown, and the daily influx of University faculty and staff commuters also impacts off-and on-street parking throughout the City. Beyond that, hourly class changes significantly impact automobile traffic flows on roadways near UD, and University special events (such as football games and graduation ceremonies) tax the local transportation system. On the other hand, the University student population, faculty, and staff provide a ready market for local businesses, and the University provides employment for many Newarkers. Finally, the University



expansion has obvious and direct impacts on the City’s land-use patterns, utilities, and tax base. UD has announced plans to keep its undergraduate enrollment steady, but the slow growth seen in the last few years is likely to continue.

While it is likely too early to measure the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, initial observations based on enrollment figures provided by the University of Delaware suggest that enrollment for both undergraduate or graduate students remains stable. Furthermore, there does not seem to be a significant increase in the number of students attending classes virtually, but living outside of Newark, that would impact future housing needs in Newark.

**Table 2-5: City of Newark Population and UD Full-Time Undergraduate Enrollment (2022 Update)**

	1970	1995	2000	2005	2015	2021
UD Undergrads Newark Campus (1)	9,000	14,668	15,463	15,498	16,789	17,986
Total City Population (2)(3)	20,757	27,777	29,037	30,009	32,278	33,448
UD Undergraduate Enrollment as % of City Population	43.4%	52.8%	53.3%	51.6%	52.0%	53.7%

(1) Source: University of Delaware, [udel.edu/ir/facts-figures/2021-2022](http://udel.edu/ir/facts-figures/2021-2022)

(2) Source: Comprehensive Development Plan IV

(3) Source: 2019: American Community Survey (ACS), 1-year & 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles; U.S. Census

*Race and Ethnicity Composition*

In 1950, as shown in Table 2-7, 93.1% of Newark’s population were reported by the U.S. Bureau of Census to be White, while 6.9% of the population were non-White, nearly all of them Black/African-American. The racial patterns remained similar for the next two decades, with slowly rising representation of non-White/non-Black residents, accompanied by a slow decline in the proportion of Black residents. By 2010, Black/African-American residents represented 6.7% of the population, as they did in 1950. As of the 2019 ACS estimates, the Black/African-American population now represents 9.3% of the population, the highest percentage in 70 years or more. In addition, other non-White populations are increasing in Newark, as well, representing an additional 13.8% of the population. According to the 2019 ACS estimates, approximately 8.6% of Newark residents identify as Asian, and 3.2% of Newark residents identify as “More than one race.” Also, the number of Newark residents indicating that they are of Hispanic origin rose from 1.6% of the population in 1990 to 7.1% in 2019.

The demographic trends, particularly over the last 30 years, are showing that Newark is becoming a more racially and ethnically diverse place. Newark’s increased diversity is likely due, in part, to trends nationally as the United States becomes more diverse. Other factors may include increased diversity in the University of Delaware population, as well as the efforts of organizations and individuals in Newark, such as the NAACP, local churches, and The Newark Partnership.

**Table 2-6: Racial Mix of the City of Newark, 1950-2019 (2022 Update)**

	1950 Percent	1960 Percent	1970 Percent	1980 Percent	1990 Percent	2000 Percent	2010 Percent	2019 Percent
<b>White</b>	93.1	93.2	94.8	93.2	90.4	87.2	82.4	76.9
<b>Black</b>	6.7	6.5	4.3	4.5	5.7	6.0	6.7	9.3
<b>Other</b>	0.2	0.3	0.9	2.3	3.9	6.8	10.9	13.8
<hr/>								
<b>% Hispanic Origin*</b>	<u>NA</u>	<u>NA</u>	<u>NA</u>	<u>NA</u>	<u>1.6</u>	<u>2.5</u>	<u>4.8</u>	<u>7.1</u>

\*Of any race (as a result, some totals exceed 100%)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010

Source: 2019: American Community Survey (ACS), 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles; U.S. Census

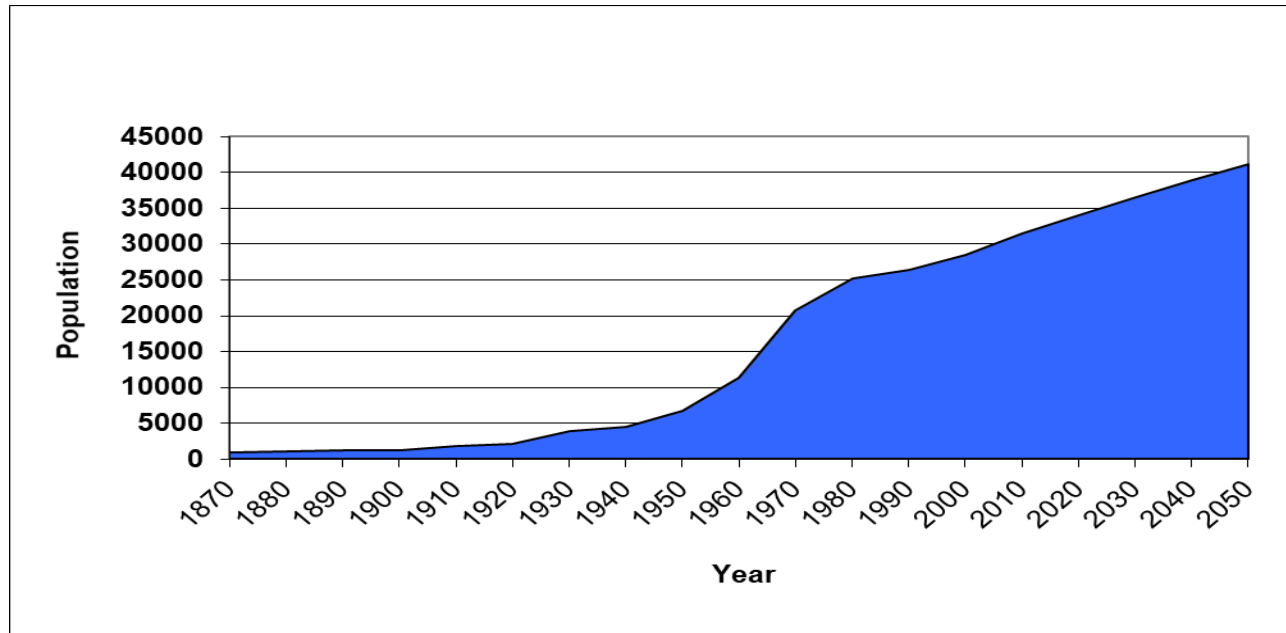
While Newark may be becoming more diverse, we are less diverse than both the United States and Delaware. In the U.S., Black/African Americans make up 12.8%, Asians make up 5.7%, and Hispanic/Latino make up 18.4% of the population. In Delaware, Black/African Americans make up 24.4%, Asians make up 4.7%, and Hispanic/Latino make up 9.6% of the population.

**Growth Estimates for the Future**

Newark population projections for the years 2008–2030 (Chart 2-3) are provided by the Delaware Population Consortium. Organized in 1975 as a federation of local data users, the Consortium produces a set of Delaware population projections for the counties and incorporated areas. These projections are based on assumptions of birth, death, and migration rates, including the major drive in Newark’s current growth - UD enrollment. The accuracy of the projections, of course, is dependent upon the soundness of these assumptions.

Present projections, based on the assumption that current demographics and employment trends will continue, forecast a continued steady increased rate of population growth over the next 30 years. The City should continue to monitor growth in UD’s enrollment and development trends for multi-family (apartment) development. Consequently, this *Plan* designates the City’s existing single-family neighborhoods for low-density land use. Higher densities continue to be shown in the areas with existing apartment complexes. The Population Consortium projects that Newark’s population will increase by approximately 7,079 persons by 2050 (Table 2-7). Newark’s growth rate projections outpace Delaware, New Castle County, Wilmington, and Dover. The land-use recommendations in Chapter 10 reflect that trend. Note that these projections do not take into account any substantial annexations or economic development activity by the City in the future.

**Chart 2-3: Total Population Changes and Projections (1870–2050) (2022 Update)**



Source: Delaware Population Consortium, October 31, 2020

**Table 2-7: Population Growth Projections: 2020 to 2050 (2022 Update)**

	30-Year Total Population Increase	30-Year Growth Rate
Delaware	75,369	7.7%
New Castle County	7,501	1.3%
Wilmington, Delaware	-824	-1.2%
Dover, Delaware	6390	16.6%
Newark, Delaware	7,079	20.8%

Source: Delaware Population Consortium, Annual Population Projections; October 29, 2020

The demographic information contained in this report is a *snapshot in time* using the best available information at the time of Plan V 2.0's adoption. More recent demographic information may be available at the following links:

United States Census Bureau – Explore Census Data  
<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>

The Delaware Population Consortium  
<https://stateplanning.delaware.gov/demography/dpc.shtml>

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