



Chapter 2: Demographic and Housing Characteristics
Census blocks-level presentation



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This chapter provides demographic and housing information for South Wilmington at the geography defined by the U.S. Census Bureau (Census) blocks shown in Figure 2.1., for the year 2000. The specific blocks selected to represent the study area provide the closest match between available 2000 Census blocks and the geography targeted for SAMP revitalization. As discussed in Chapter 1 (pages 6 and 7), a Census block is the finest geographic level of data available from the Census; however, due to disclosure regulations, the Census only releases a limited number of demographic variables at the block-level resolution. This chapter presents several available demographic variables for the South Wilmington study area defined by the 91 Census blocks shown in Figure 2.1. These variables provide additional detail beyond the Census block groups-level demographic information provided in Chapter 3.

For the remainder of Chapter 2, references to “South Wilmington” represent the area bounded by the 91 Census blocks selected to represent the South Wilmington study area, which includes Southbridge and the New Castle/Route 9 corridor developments (see Figure 2.1.).

Chapter 2 presents data on population and household and residential development characteristics for South Wilmington, as well as for the comparative areas of the City of Wilmington and New Castle County.

The Census defines a housing unit as a space designated as separate living quarters that is directly accessible by the occupant(s), be it a house, an apartment, a mobile home, or a single room; a household includes all of the people who occupy a housing unit (Woodward & Damon, 2001).

South Wilmington blocks-level **Key Numbers:**

Total population: 2,184

Population density: 1,382.3 persons/mi²

Percent male: 47.1

Percent female: 52.9

Total number of households: 733

Percent family households: 72.2

Percent non-family households: 27.8

Percent households with children: 41.3

Total number of housing units: 881

Percent occupied housing units: 83.2

Percent vacant housing units: 16.8

Percent owner-occupied housing units: 40.0

Percent renter-occupied housing units: 60.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

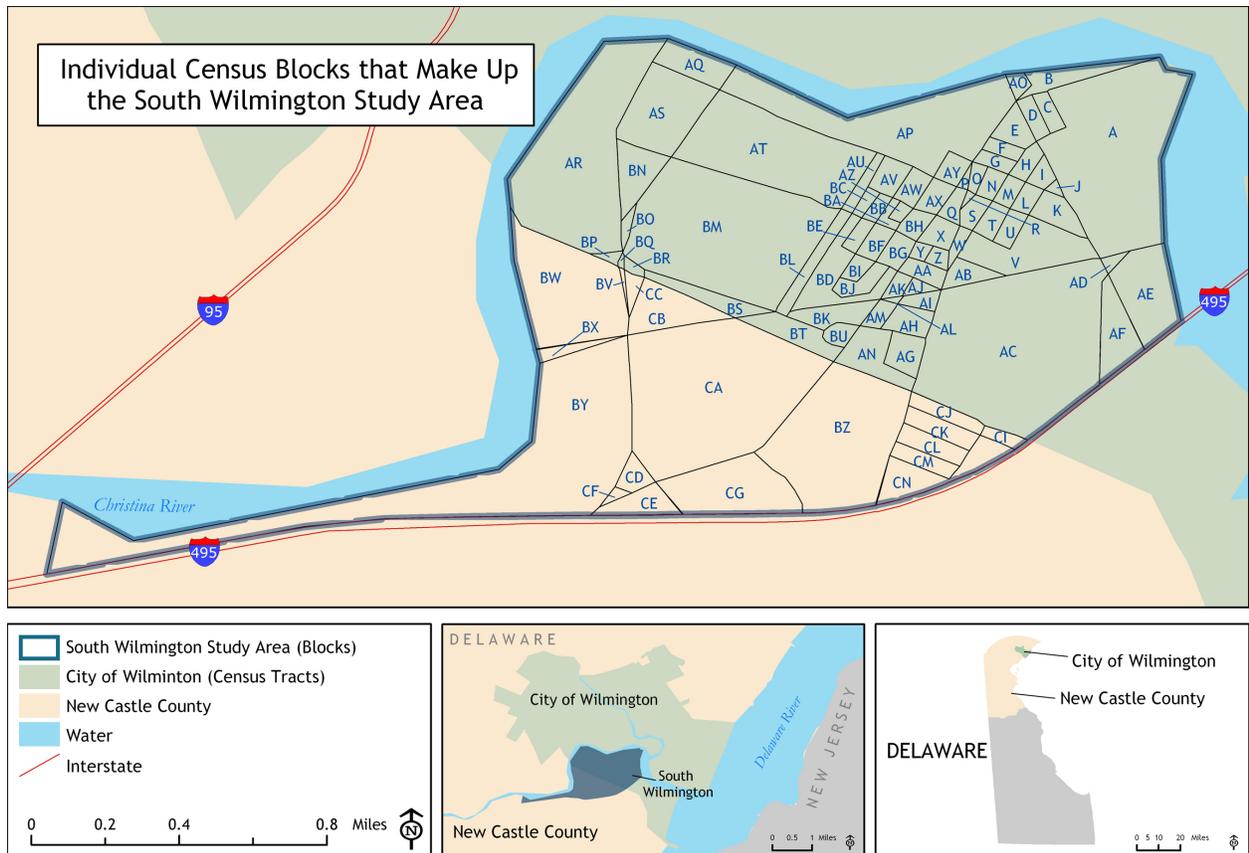


Figure 2.1. The 91 Census blocks that make up the South Wilmington study area used in this chapter of the report.
 Sources: Delaware Department of Transportation, 2001; U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

2.a. Population Characteristics

This section contains racial, gender, and age distributions for the residents of South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.

As shown in Table 2.1., in 2000, the total population of South Wilmington was 2,184. The City of Wilmington had a total population of 72,664, making it the largest city in the state of Delaware. With a total population of 500,265, New Castle County was largest of the three Delaware counties. South Wilmington had a population density of 1,382.3 persons per square mile, while the City of Wilmington was the most densely populated, having a population density of 6,698.1 persons per square mile (Table 2.2.).

	Total population
South Wilmington	2,184
City of Wilmington	72,664
New Castle County	500,265

Table 2.1. Total population as of 2000 for South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

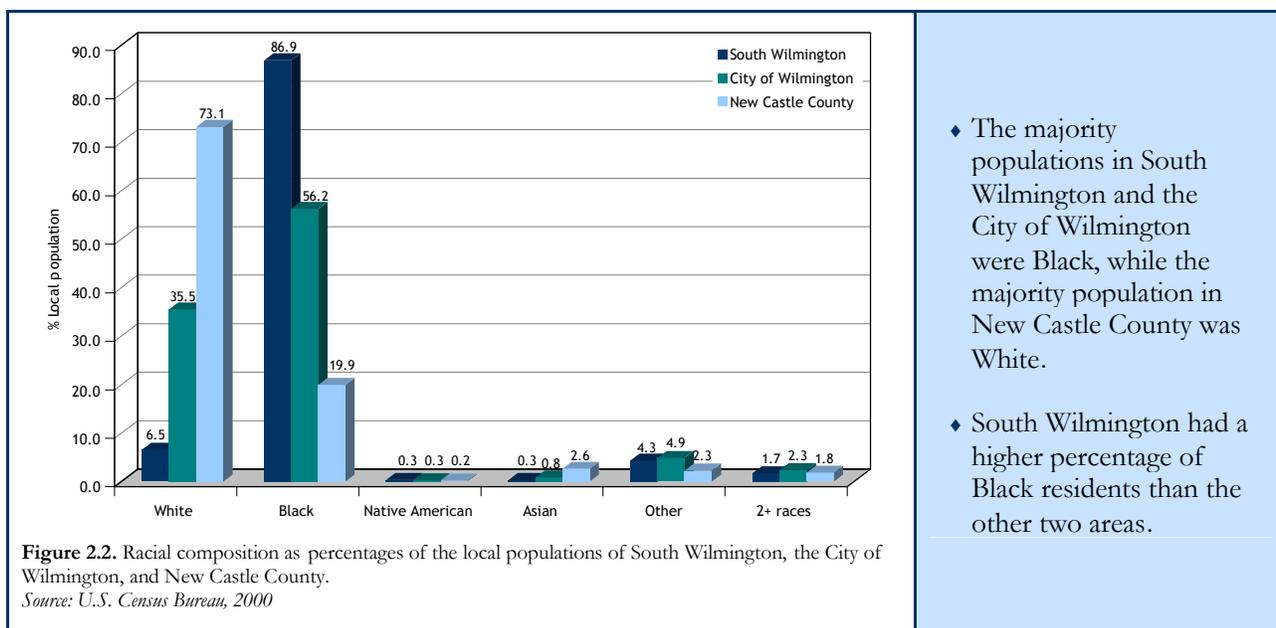
	Total area	Population density
South Wilmington	1.58 mi ²	1,382.3 persons/ mi ²
City of Wilmington	10.85 mi ²	6,698.1 persons/ mi ²
New Castle County	426.27 mi ²	1,173.6 persons/ mi ²

Table 2.2. Area and population density for South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

Racial composition

In 2000, in South Wilmington, the majority of residents were Black (86.9 percent), with a smaller representation (6.5 percent) of White residents (see Figure 2.2). In contrast, New Castle County was predominantly White (73.1 percent), with a smaller Black population (19.9 percent).

With regards to other races reported in Census 2000, in South Wilmington, 1.7 percent of residents were of two or more races, and less than one percent of the population was of Asian or Native American race; no residents of South Wilmington reported being of Pacific race. In South Wilmington, 4.3 percent of residents classified themselves as some other race, meaning that they did not consider themselves one of the racial classifications used by Census 2000 (which included White, Black, Native American, Asian, or Pacific).



Gender and age distribution

Gender and age distributions in 2000 for South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County are illustrated in Table 2.3. and Figures 2.3., 2.4., and 2.5. Among the 2,184 people living in South Wilmington, approximately 53 percent were female and approximately 47 percent were male. This distribution is similar to that seen in both the City of Wilmington and New Castle County, which both had slightly higher female than male populations (see Table 2.3. and Figure 2.3.).

In 2000, all three of the reviewed geographic areas showed similar age distributions across the population, with slight variations (Figure 2.4). The majority of South Wilmington residents fell into the five to 17 and 25 to 44-year old age groups. The percentages of South Wilmington residents in the zero to four and 18 to 24-year old age groups were approximately even. The lowest percentage of South Wilmington residents fell into the 65-year-old and over age group. In contrast, both the City of Wilmington and New Castle County had the smallest percentages of residents under the age of five. Also, in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County, the largest percentages of residents were between 25 and 44 years of age.

When examining age distribution by gender, the majority of South Wilmington males were between the ages of five and 17, while more South Wilmington females were between 25 and 44 years of age than any other age group (Figure 2.5). Otherwise, overall age distributions by gender in South Wilmington did not vary much, although a slightly higher percentage of females than males were over the age of 65. In both the City of Wilmington and New Castle County, relatively equal percentages of men and women fell into each age range, and the distribution patterns between these two areas were roughly the same. In contrast, relative to the City of Wilmington and New Castle County, greater percentages of both South Wilmington males and South Wilmington females fell into the zero to four-year old and five to 17-year old age groups, suggesting that, overall, South Wilmington has a younger population than the City of Wilmington and New Castle County.

	Males	Females
South Wilmington	1,028	1,156
City of Wilmington	34,711	37,953
New Castle County	242,823	257,442

Table 2.3. Total number of males and females living in South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

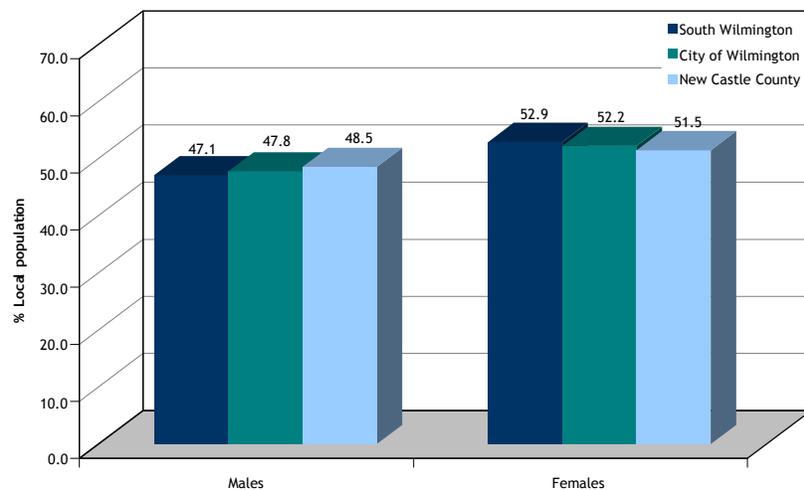


Figure 2.3. Gender distribution as percentages of the local populations in South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

- ◆ Women outnumbered men in South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
- ◆ The female-male ratios in all three areas were similar.

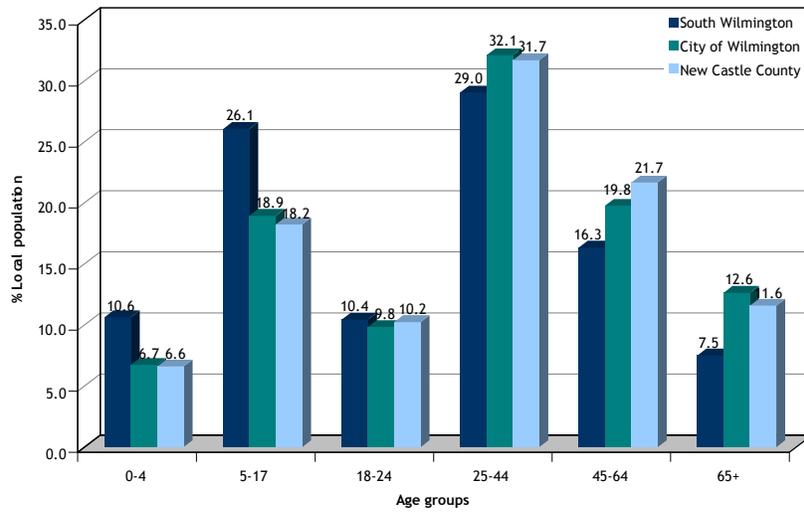


Figure 2.4. Age distribution as percentages of the local populations of South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

- ◆ Compared to the City of Wilmington and New Castle County, a higher percentage of South Wilmington residents were under the age of 18.
- ◆ Overall, the City of Wilmington and New Castle County had older populations than South Wilmington.

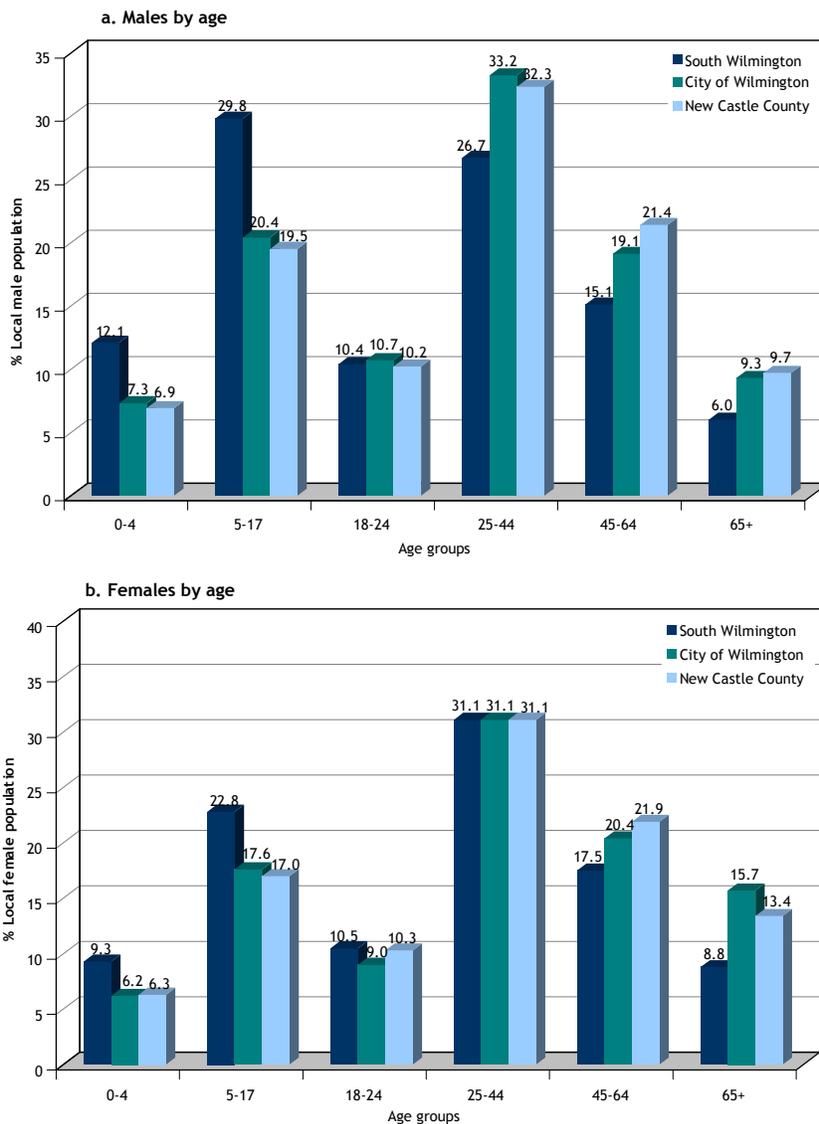


Figure 2.5. Age distribution of males (top) and females (bottom) as percentages of the male and female populations in South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

- ◆ Relative to the City of Wilmington and New Castle County, South Wilmington had a smaller proportion of men between the ages of 25 and 44.
- ◆ South Wilmington men between five and 17 years of age outnumbered South Wilmington women in this age group.
- ◆ There were more South Wilmington women than men between 25 and 44 years of age.
- ◆ South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County had equal proportions of women between the ages of 25 and 44.

2.b. Household Characteristics

This section presents information on the households in South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County. As defined by the Census Bureau, a household includes all of the people who occupy a housing unit; a housing unit is defined as a space intended as separate living quarters, be it a house, an apartment, a mobile home, or a single room. A housing unit must also provide direct access from outside the building or through a common hall (Woodward & Damon, 2001).

In each household, Census 2000 identified a single “householder,” typically as the person who owns the home or whose name appears on the rental lease; however, the householder can be anyone in the household who is over the age of 15 (Simmons & O’Neill, 2001).

Information in this section is presented by household type and sex of the householder. The Census Bureau defines two household types: (1) family households, where the householder and the people in the household are related and (2) non-family households, where the householder is living alone or with nonrelatives (Simmons & O’Neill, 2001).

According to Census 2000, there were 733 total households in South Wilmington; 28,661 households in the City of Wilmington; and 188,974 households in New Castle County (see Table 2.4).

	Total households
South Wilmington	733
City of Wilmington	28,661
New Castle County	188,974

Table 2.4. Total number of households in South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

Household types

The majority of households in South Wilmington were family households (see Table 2.5. and Figure 2.6). Relative to the City of Wilmington and New Castle County, a greater percentage of South Wilmington households were family households. However, a smaller percentage of South Wilmington households was occupied by married-couple families. Nearly half (47.2 percent) of all South Wilmington households were single-mother families, where the householder was female with children, but no husband was present. By contrast, in New Castle County, approximately half of all households (50.8 percent) were married-couple families.

South Wilmington had the lowest percentage of people living alone, with approximately 23 percent of households being occupied by a single person. The City of Wilmington had the largest percentage of people living alone and also had the largest percentage of non-family households with two or more persons.

	South Wilmington	City of Wilmington	New Castle County
Total number of households	733	28,661	188,974
Family households	72.2	55.6	67.7
<i>Married-couple households</i>	18.0	27.7	50.8
<i>Female householder, no husband present</i>	47.2	23.2	12.9
<i>Male householder, no wife present</i>	7.0	4.8	4.1
Non-family households	27.8	44.4	32.3
<i>One person</i>	22.9	37.0	25.7
<i>Two or more persons</i>	4.9	13.5	8.6
<i>65 years and over</i>	7.9	7.4	6.6

Table 2.5. Percentages of households by type for South Wilmington, Wilmington, and New Castle County.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

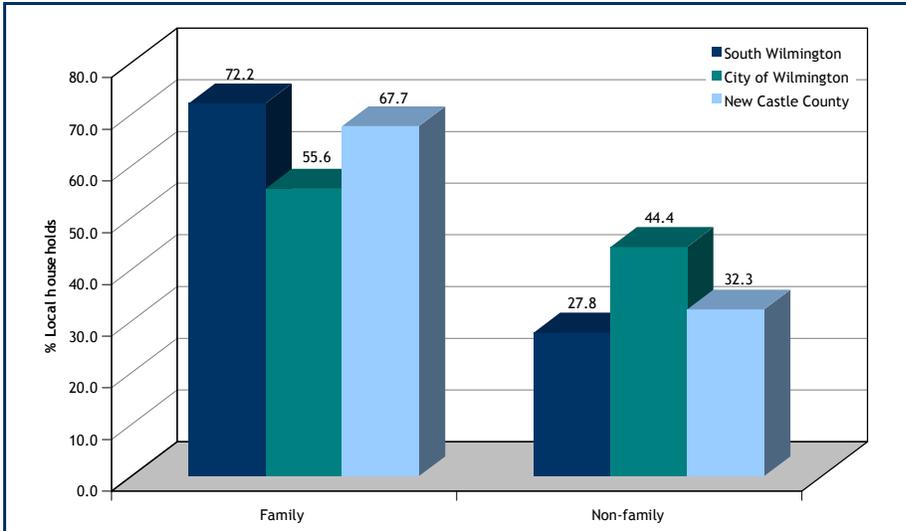


Figure 2.6. Family and non-family households as percentages of local households in South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

- ◆ Compared to the City of Wilmington and New Castle County, a higher percentage of South Wilmington households were family households.
- ◆ In all three areas, family households outnumbered non-family households.

Head of household characteristics

In 2000, three-quarters of South Wilmington householders were between the ages of 25 and 64, with the majority of householders falling in the 25 to 44-year old age range; similar householder-age distributions were found in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County, as shown in Figure 2.7. Relative to the City of Wilmington and New Castle County, South Wilmington had a slightly higher percentage of householders in the 15 to 24-year old age range and a lower percentage of householders over the age of 65. This is consistent with the conclusion that South Wilmington, overall, has a younger population than either the City of Wilmington or New Castle County.

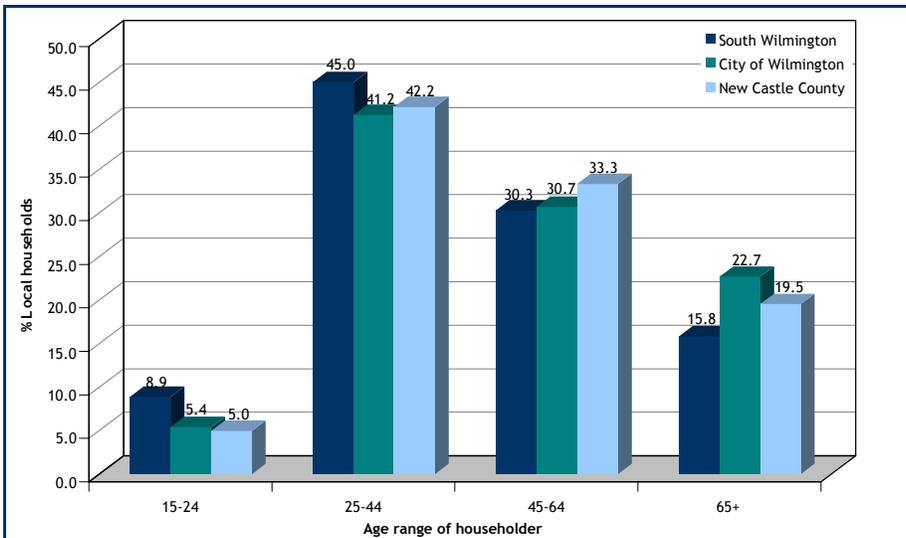


Figure 2.7. Percentages of head of households by age for South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

- ◆ Overall, the distribution patterns of householder age are similar in South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
- ◆ The greatest percentage of householders in the three areas fell between the ages of 25 and 44.

	South Wilmington	City of Wilmington	New Castle County
Total number of households	733	28,661	188,974
Family households	72.2	55.6	67.7
<i>Householder aged 15-24</i>	7.8	2.9	2.1
<i>Householder aged 25-44</i>	37.2	2.6	30.9
<i>Householder aged 45-64</i>	19.2	17.7	24.1
<i>Householder aged 65+</i>	7.9	8.6	10.6
Non-family households	27.8	44.4	32.3
<i>Householder aged 15-24</i>	1.1	2.5	2.9
<i>Householder aged 25-44</i>	7.8	14.9	11.3
<i>Householder aged 45-64</i>	11.1	13.0	9.2
<i>Householder aged 65+</i>	7.9	14.0	8.9

Table 2.6. Percentages of head of household by age and household type for South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

Household size

In the three areas examined, the majority of people lived in households occupied by three or fewer persons (see Figures 2.8. and 2.9.). In both South Wilmington and New Castle County, the largest percentages of households were those that had two people. In the City of Wilmington, 37 percent of households were single-person households, which is greater than the percentages seen in South Wilmington and New Castle County.

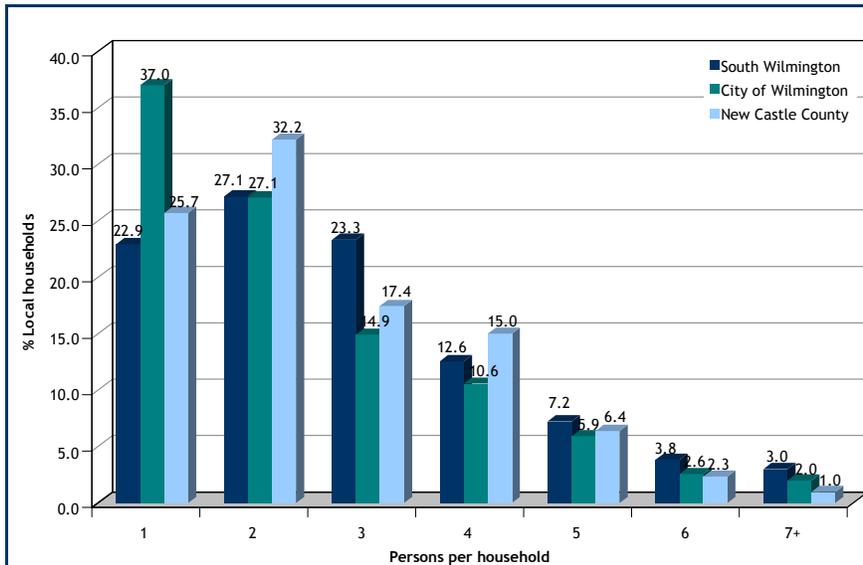


Figure 2.8. Number of persons per household as percentages of local households for South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

- ◆ More people in the City of Wilmington lived alone than in either South Wilmington or New Castle County.
- ◆ Most South Wilmington households had three or fewer people.
- ◆ The greatest percentage of New Castle County households had two persons.

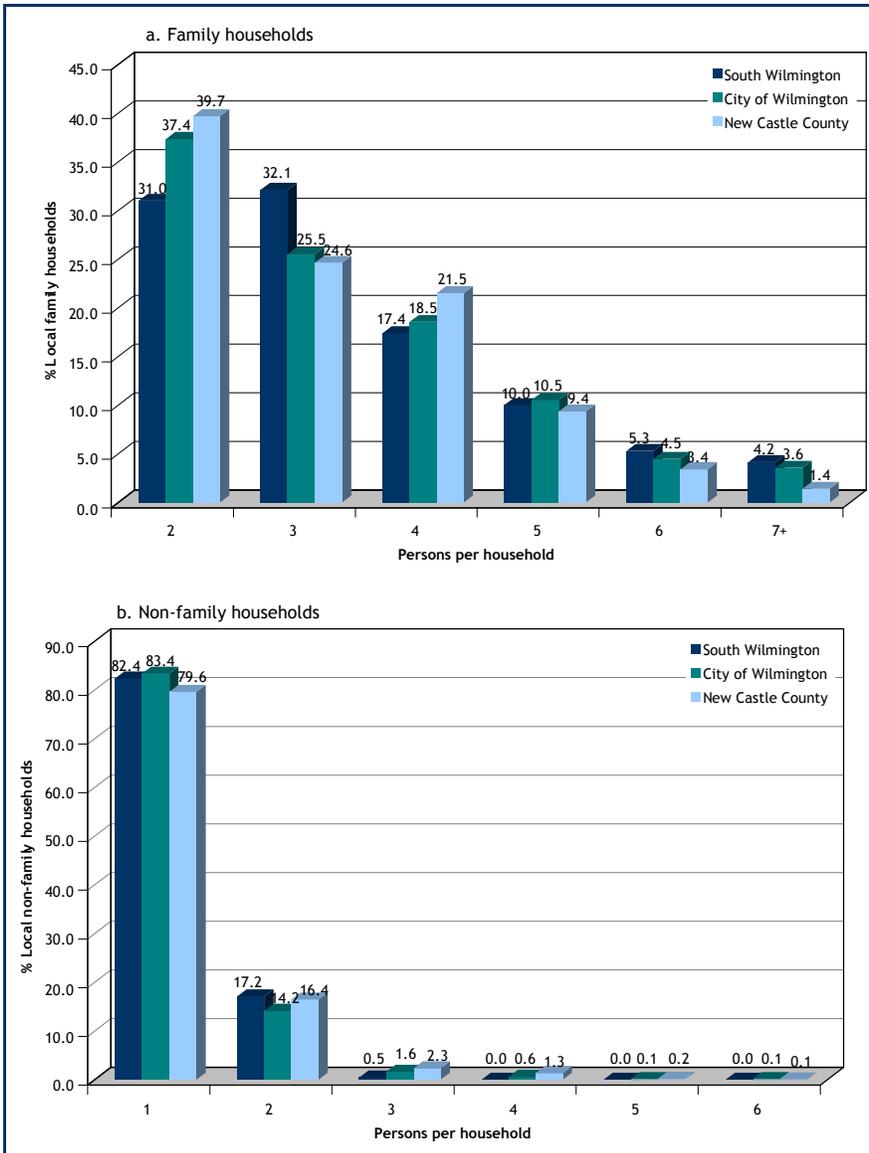


Figure 2.9. Number of people per family household (top) and non-family household (bottom) as percentages of local family and non-family households in South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

- ◆ Most New Castle County families had two persons, while South Wilmington families most often had between two to three persons.
- ◆ Most non-family households were limited to one to two persons in all three areas.

Characteristics of households with children

In South Wilmington, a greater proportion of family households had children under the age of 18 (57.3 percent) than in the City of Wilmington (49.2 percent) or New Castle County (48.8 percent) (Figure 2.10). Of the South Wilmington family households with children, 20.1 percent were married-couple families; 71.6 percent were households with female householders and no husbands present; and 8.3 percent were households with male householders and no wives present. In contrast, 71.4 percent of New Castle County family households with children were married-couple households. All three areas had greater percentages of households with female householders and no husbands present than households with male householders and no wives present.

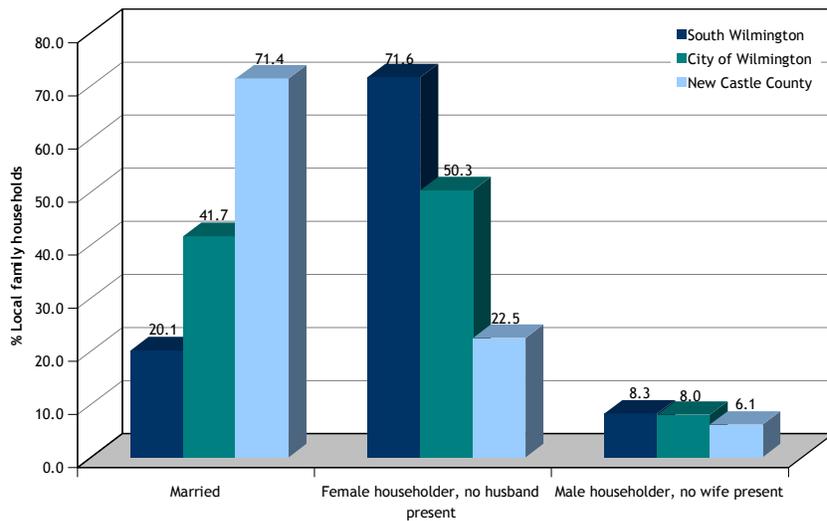


Figure 2.10. Percentages of family households with children under the age of 18 in South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County, by type of household.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

- ◆ Family households with female householders and no husbands present were more common than households with male householders and no wives.
- ◆ Relative to the City of Wilmington and New Castle County, fewer South Wilmington married couple-families had children.

2.c. Residential Housing Characteristics

In this section, information is presented on the occupancy and ownership of housing units in South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County. As mentioned previously, a housing unit may be a house, an apartment, a mobile home, or even a single room—as long as the space is designated as separate living quarters and directly accessible by the occupant (Woodward & Damon, 2001).

In Census 2000, a housing unit was considered “occupied” if it was the permanent (usual) place of residence for its inhabitants. If no one was living in the housing unit, but the unit *could be* inhabited, it was designated as being “vacant.” Condemned units or those lacking roofs, walls, windows, and/or doors were not included in the Census inventory and thus are not reflected in this report.

South Wilmington had greater percentages of vacant housing units and lower percentages of owner-occupied units when compared to residential housing in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County (see Table 2.7. and Figures 2.11. and 2.12.). In 2000, there were 881 total housing units within South Wilmington. Of these housing units, 83.2 percent were occupied while 16.8 percent were vacant. Of the occupied South Wilmington housing units, 40 percent were owner-occupied and 60 percent were renter-occupied. While the ratio of occupied to vacant housing units in the City of Wilmington did not differ much from South Wilmington occupancy, the City of Wilmington did have a more equal split between renter- and owner-occupied housing units. By contrast, in New Castle County, nearly 95 percent of all housing units were occupied and of these units, approximately 70 percent were occupied by their owners.

Total housing units	
South Wilmington	881
City of Wilmington	32,138
New Castle County	199,521

Table 2.7. Total number of housing units in South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

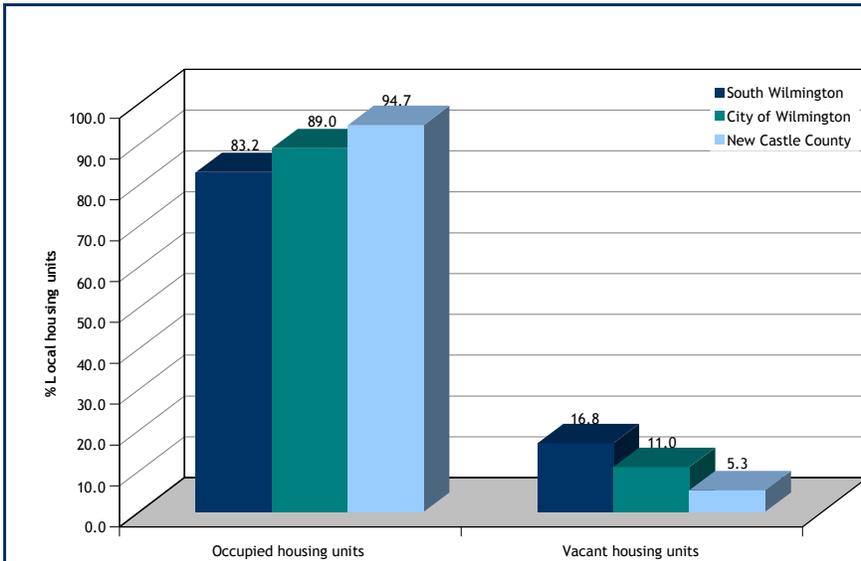


Figure 2.11. Percentages of occupied and vacant housing units in South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

- ◆ In South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County, more housing units were occupied than vacant.
- ◆ Relative to the City of Wilmington and New Castle County, South Wilmington had a greater proportion of vacant properties.

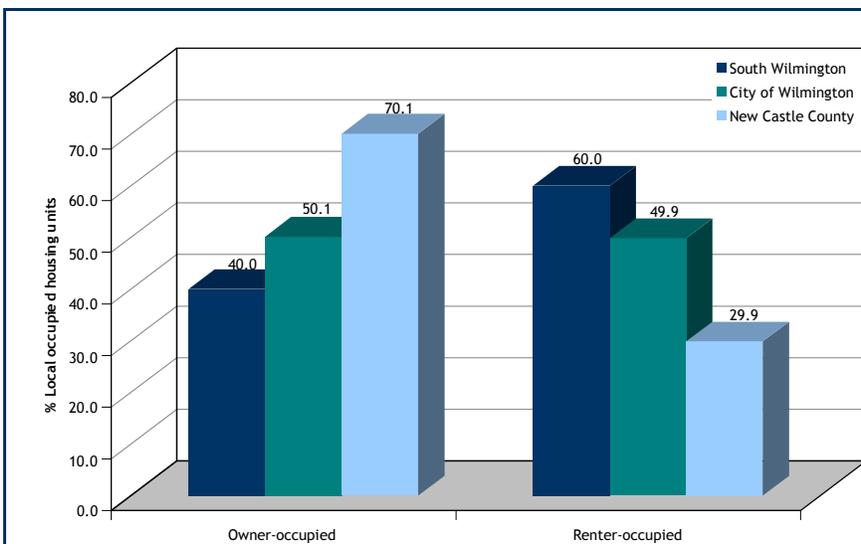


Figure 2.12. Owner- and renter-occupied housing units as percentages of local occupied housing units in South Wilmington, the City of Wilmington, and New Castle County.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

- ◆ In South Wilmington, the percentage of owner-occupied units was nearly one-third lower than the percentage in New Castle County.
- ◆ Most South Wilmington housing units were rented.