



Source: Greater Lansing Food Bank

THE GARDEN PROJECT

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF THE GREATER LANSING FOOD BANK COMMUNITY GARDENING PROGRAM

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY PLANNING PRACTICUM
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THE GARDEN PROJECT PROFILE

- The Greater Lansing Food Bank (GLFB) is a non-profit organization that supports food needs through pantries, community kitchens, and a gardening program.
- Alex Bryan serves as the Garden Project manager and served as both our client and our partner in the creation of this report.

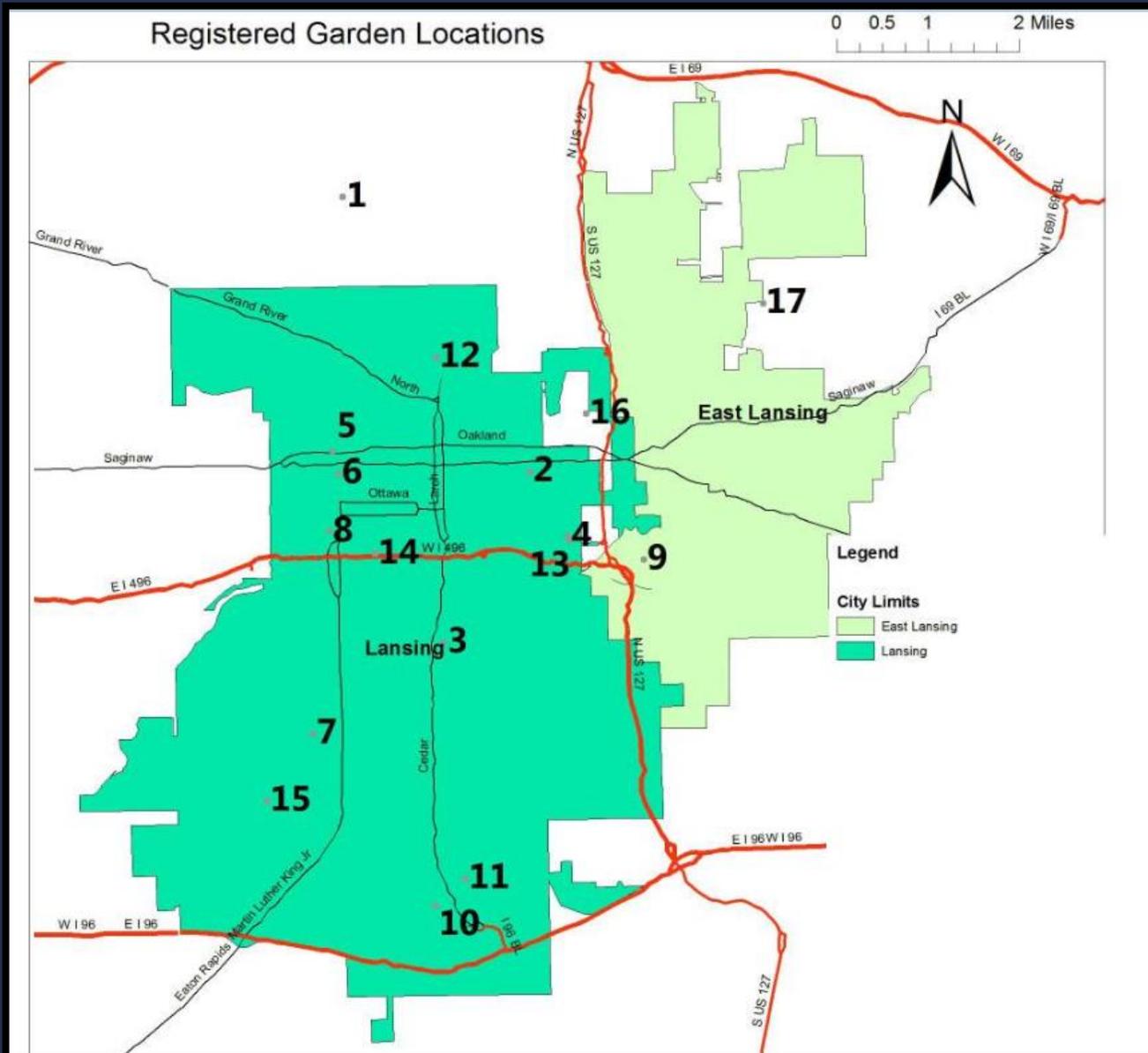
“Growing healthy food, cultivating connections”



REGISTERED GARDEN LOCATIONS

The Garden Project

- Approximately 100 Gardens
- Two thirds in the Lansing Area
- Collects User Registration Data from 17 Gardens in Lansing and East Lansing



PROJECT DESCRIPTION



- The Garden Project commissioned the practicum team to conduct this study in order to increase their ability to understand and measure the impact of their work.
- Foundational materials for the project were provided by Alex Bryan and included the following:
 - User Registration Data
 - Relevant Literature
 - Gardener Survey Results

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Introduction to Lansing and GLFB



Literature Review of Community Gardening
and Case Studies of Relevant Comparables

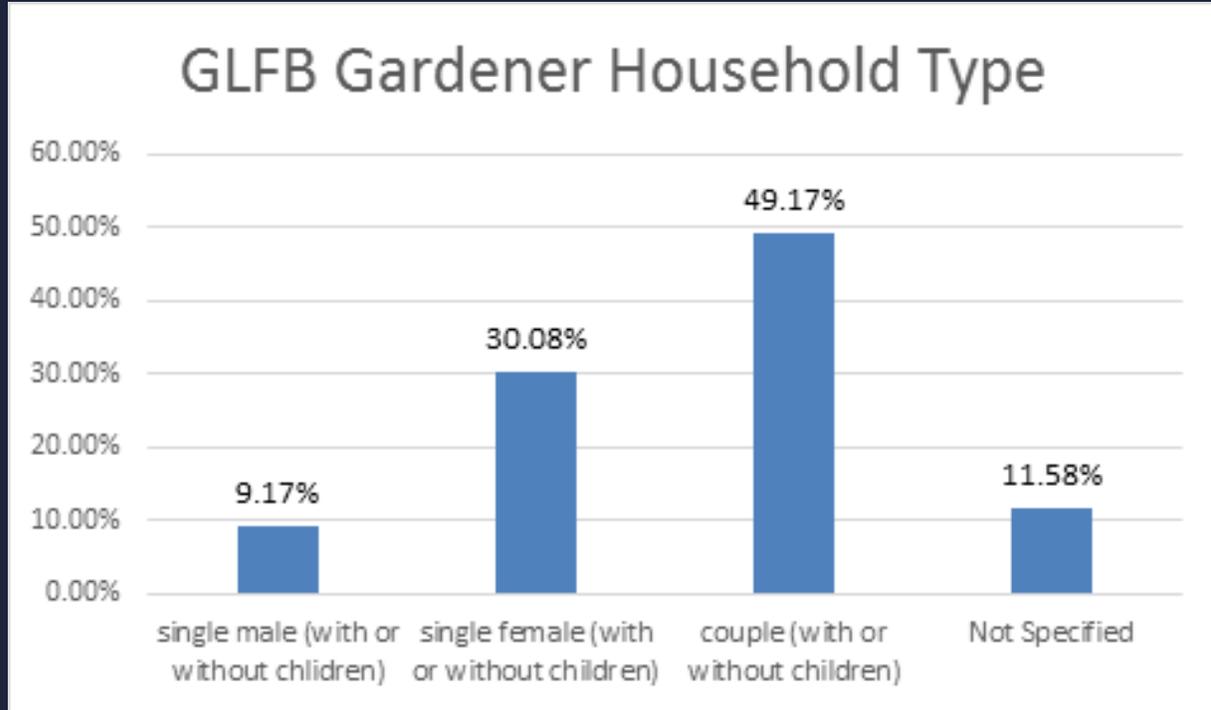


Analysis of Existing Database and GLFB
Efforts



Final Tools and Recommendations for
Determining Impact

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

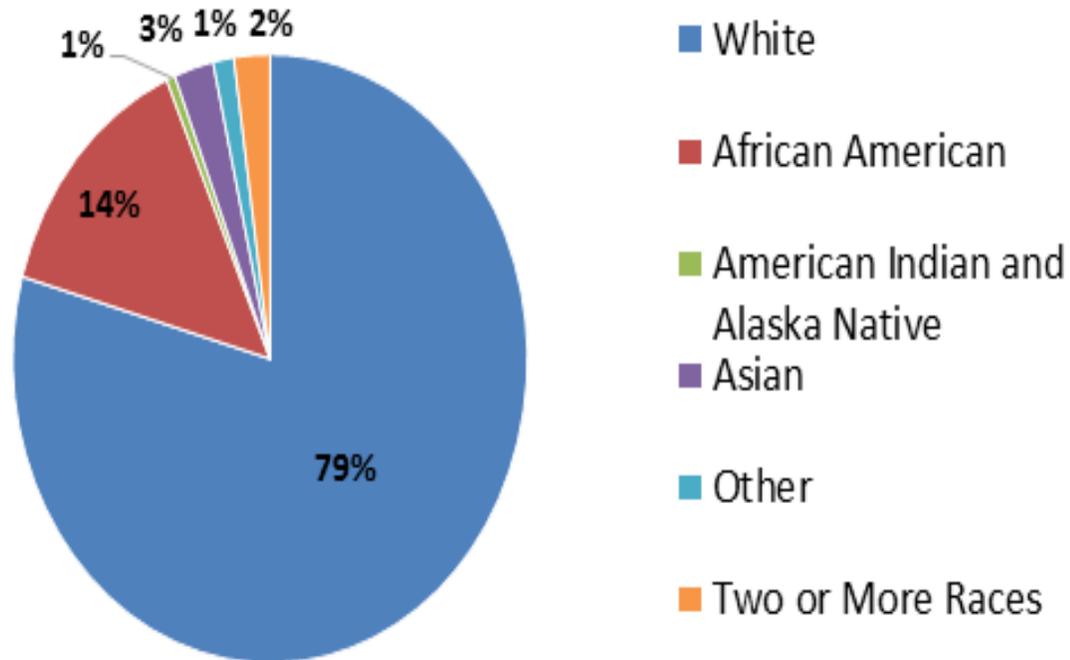


Lansing Gardeners	
Total Households	Average Household Size
664	3.43

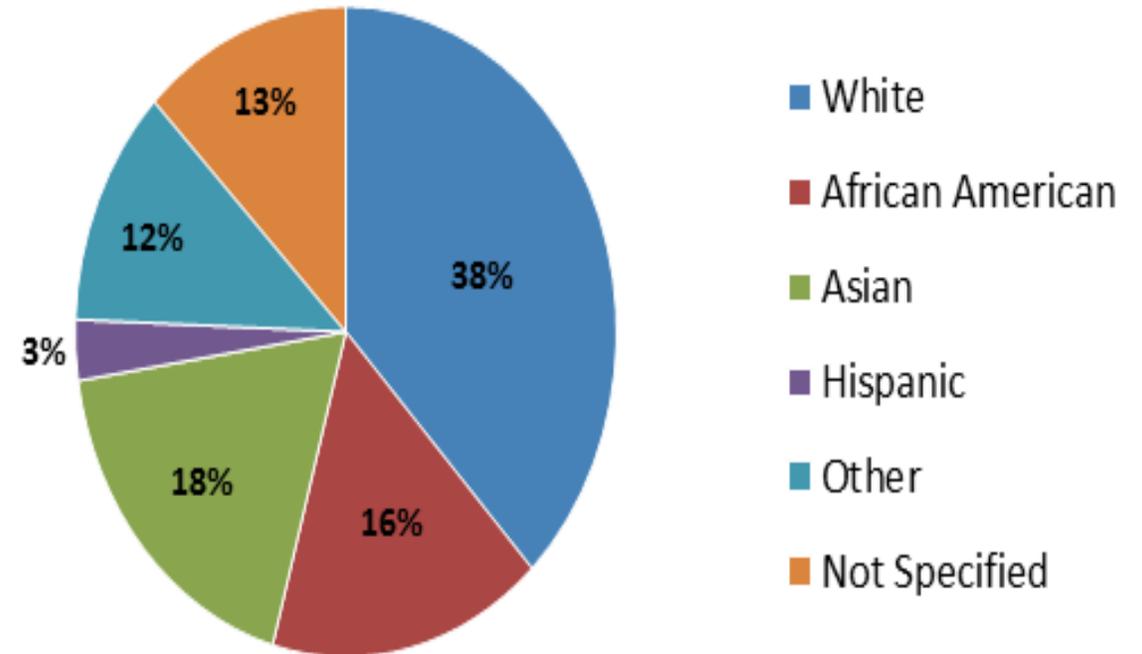
Lansing Residents	
Total Households	Average Household Size
48,207	2.36

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

Lansing Population by Race and Ethnicity

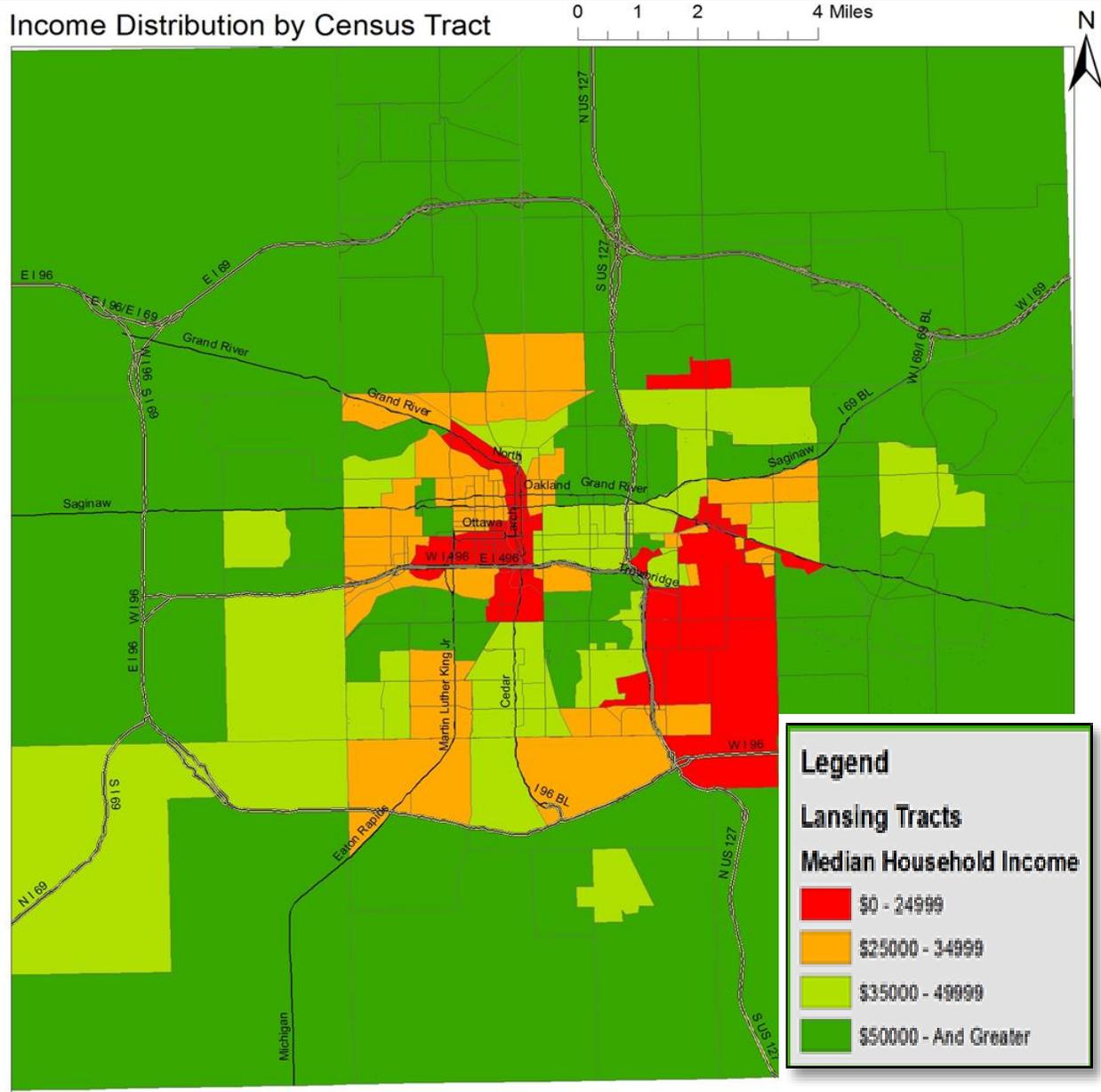


GLFB Population by Race and Ethnicity

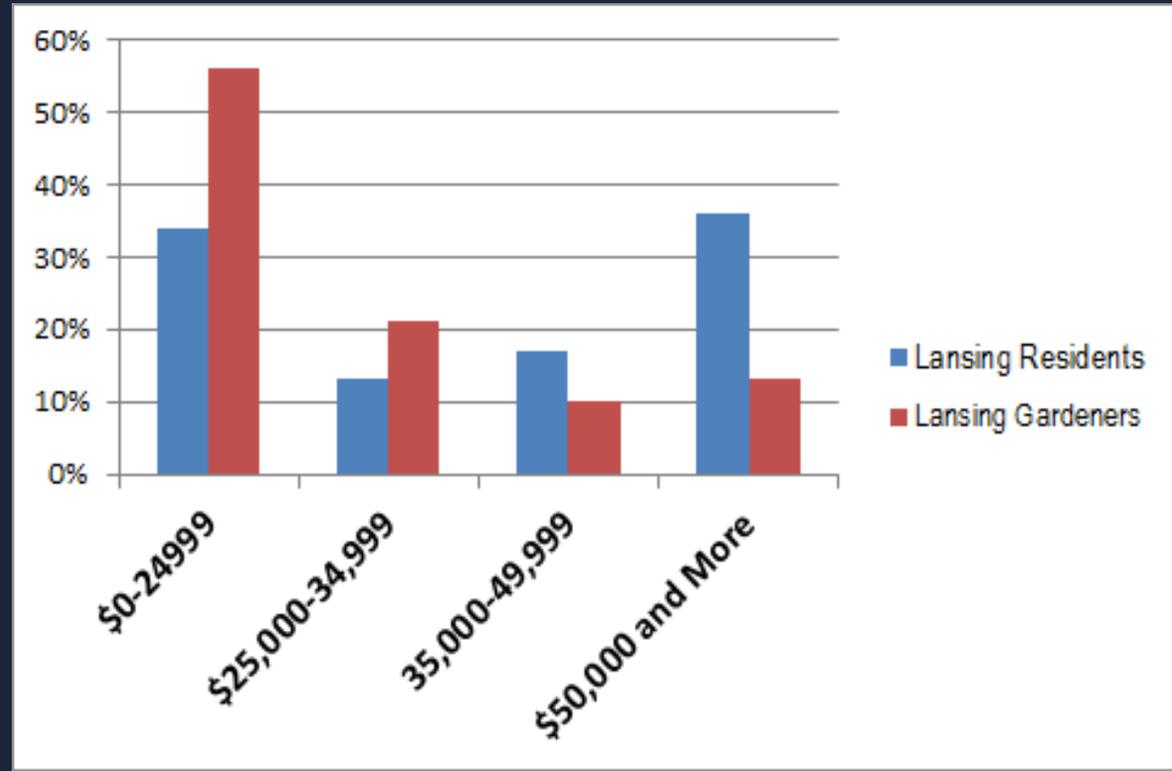


Groups served by Garden Project include:
Bhutanese, Burmese, Somalian, Ethiopian, Meskhetian Turks
and others

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE



Income Level of Lansing Residents & Lansing Garden Users



Lansing Median Household Income: \$34,833



ARMORY GARDEN

54 Users
\$0-23,100----- 19%
47,451 or more---- 31%



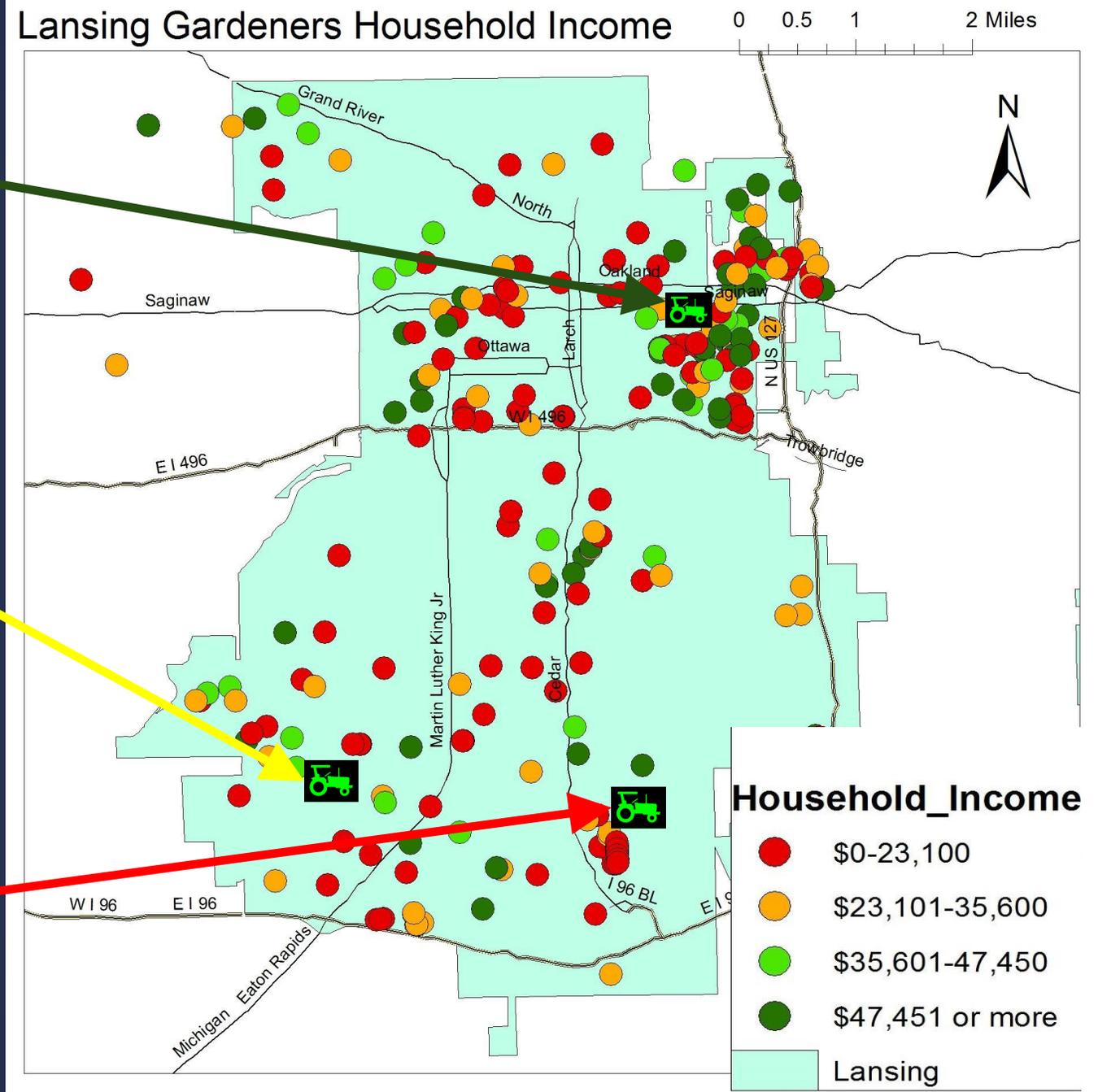
RISDALE GARDEN

25 Users
\$0-23,100----- 36%
47,451 or more---12%



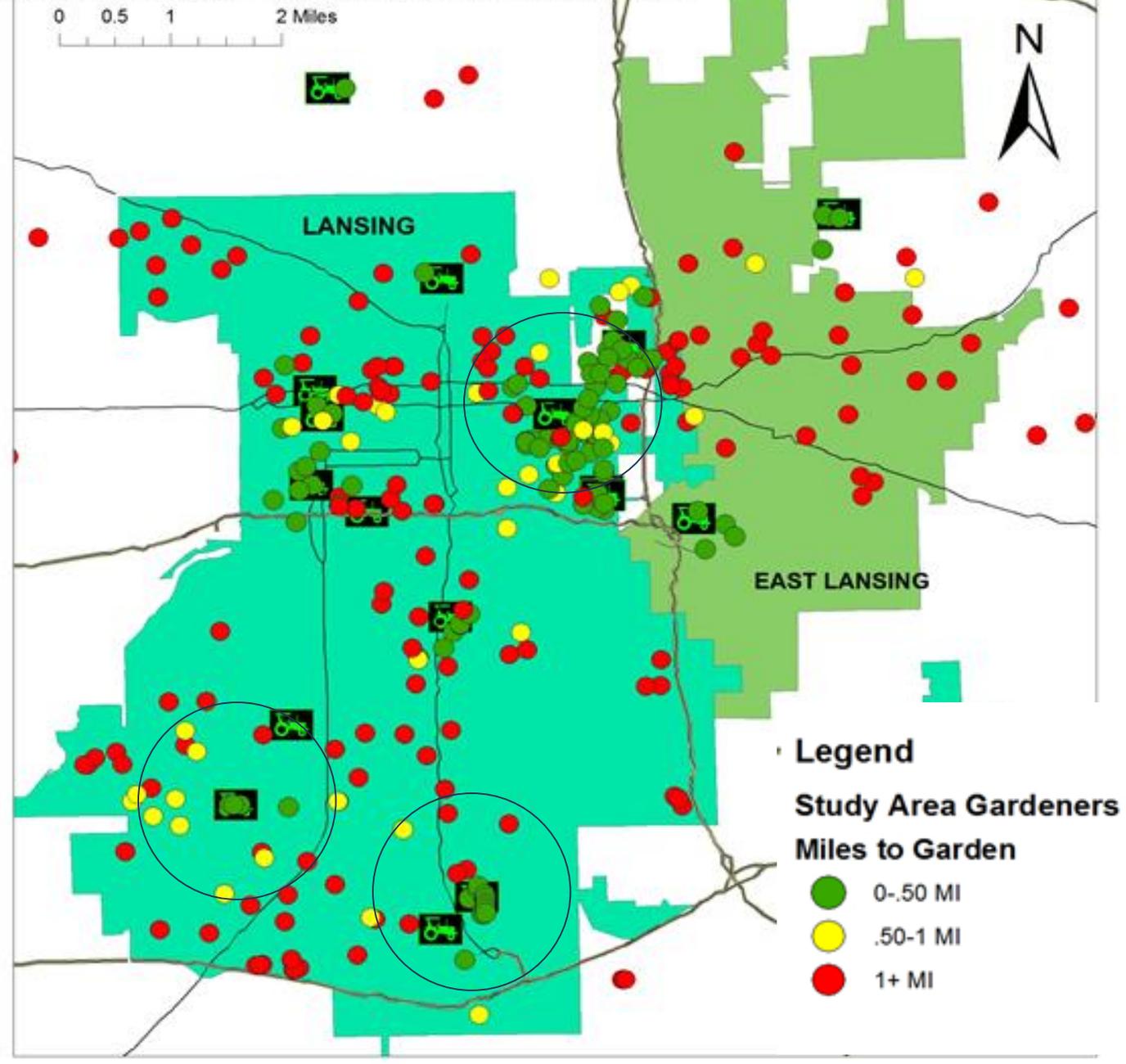
ORCHARD COURT GARDEN

57 Users
\$0-23,100 ----- 84%
\$47,451 or more-----0%



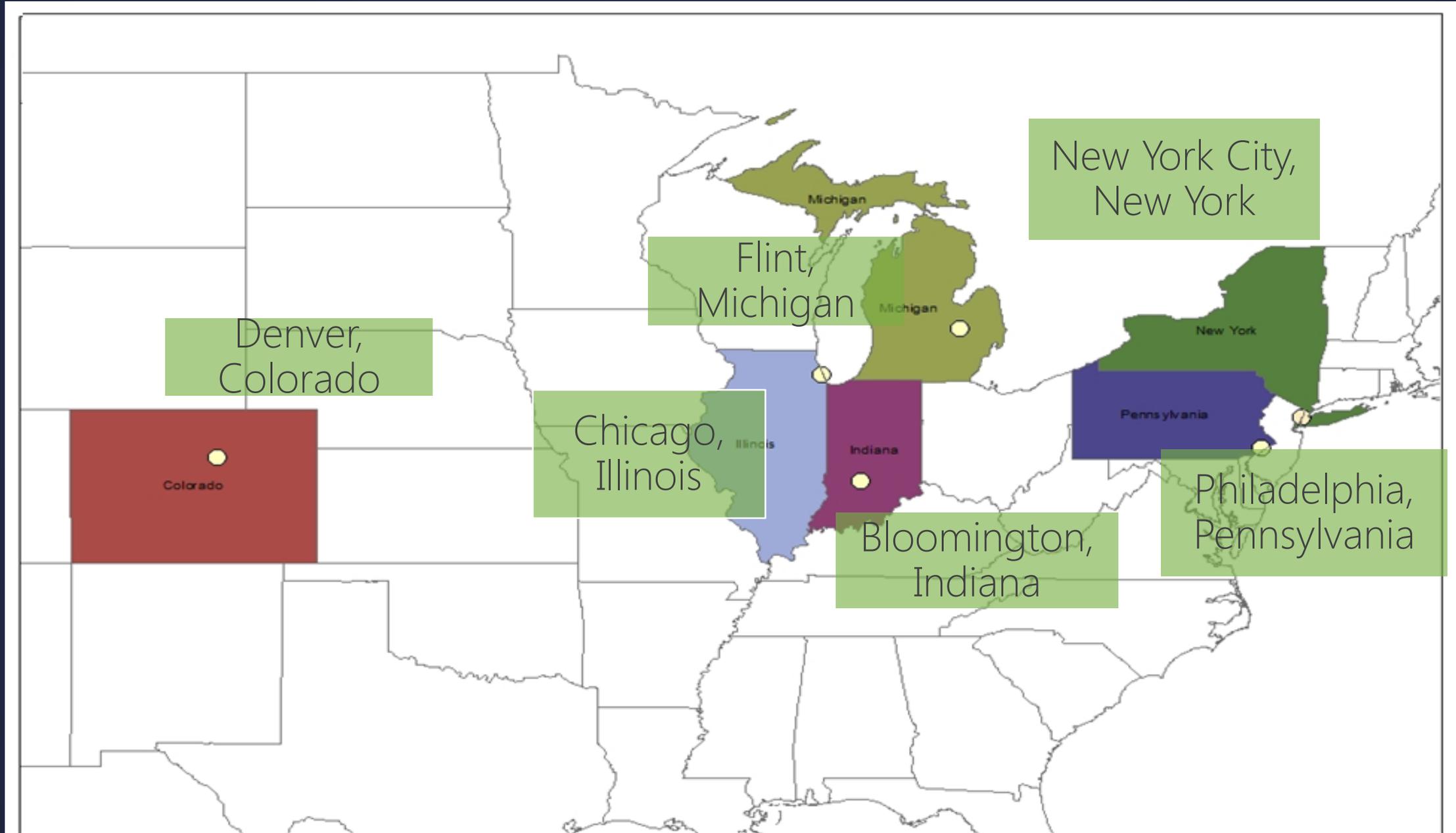
ACCESSIBILITY OF GARDENS

DISTANCE GARDENERS TRAVEL TO GARDENS



- 368 Lansing and East Lansing Households are Registered at the 17 Gardens.
- 1.60 Miles average distance gardeners travel to their garden plot
- 47% of Gardens Travel over 1 mile.

CASE STUDIES



IMPACT VARIABLES

SOCIAL

- Neighborhood Attachment
- Safety
- Efficacy
- Civic Engagement

HEALTH

- Fruit and Vegetable Intake
- Outdoor physical activity
- Chronic Disease Prevention

ECONOMIC

- Property Values
- Money saved on food
- Money saved by Municipality
- Food Security

SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS

Social

- Do you believe that you can make a difference in the community?
- Has crime decreased since the implementation of community gardening in your neighborhood?

Health

- How many servings of fruit and vegetables do you consume daily?
- How do you travel to your garden plot?

Economics

- Estimate the weight of food produced this growing season.
- Estimate how much money you have saved per month because of the Garden Project.

SOCIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Coordinate with local police reports to assess changes in crime
- End of season survey assesses:
 - Social capital - How many families/households working in community gardening do you know by name?
 - Sense of place - How much do you enjoy living on the block since the implementation of community gardening?



Source: Greater Lansing Food Bank

HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS

In-season garden yield information can be collected to determine added fresh produce and effect on user consumption habits.

- Compare to availability of fresh produce in proximity to gardens.
- This information, combined with gardener map data, can be used to understand how gardens affect Lansing's "food deserts."



Source: Capital Gains Media

ECONOMIC RECOMMENDATIONS

- Property values are available through City of Lansing's Assessor Department.
- Obtain and compare this information before and after the installation of community gardens.
- Assess value of food produced using gardener survey self-reported data and metrics such as food value formula created by USDA extension service.



Source: Greater Lansing Food Bank

DATA COLLECTION AND IMPLEMENTATION



- Use existing data sources like the American Community Survey and Ingham County Health Department to create a uniform standard; this allows clear comparisons of Garden Project to the region it serves.
- Increase presence of language-based inquiries in order to further understanding of Greater Lansing Food Bank's non-English speaking clientele.
- The variables gathered through all these recommended methods would allow the Garden Project to measure how gardeners are affected by the program and how to enhance this impact.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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